

The Olympics of the advertising world

 By Leigh Andrews

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Cannes Lions kicks off this coming weekend, and we have ten SA jurors across the various categories. I spoke to direct juror Roanna Williams, ECD at Joe Public, about the areas she predicts SA agencies' work will excel in this year, and more.



Cannes Lions 2017 jurors announced, include 10 South Africans

5 May 2017



With international award season in full swing, I asked this year's SA jurors what makes Cannes Lions stand out to them over the numerous other award shows, why being appointed as a Cannes judge is a career bucket list item, a few of their favourite memories of past Cannes Lions events, and the sizzle factor that makes work in their specialised category stand out.



Roanna Williams, ECD at Joe Public and Cannes Lions' 2017 direct juror.

Williams responds below...

Explain why being appointed as a Cannes judge is a career bucket list item.

Imagine you're an athlete and have been training for years. You've put in the hours, made huge sacrifices, sweated, cried, experienced highs and lows and now you finally qualify to compete at the Olympics. This is how I feel about Cannes Lions. It's the Olympics of the advertising world. Being a judge is a remarkable privilege that allows you to be a part of a global dedication to creativity. It's also one of those on your bucket list that you don't cross off even if you've done it. It's such an honour that you want to be a judge again and again!

■ **What makes Cannes Lions stand out to you over the numerous other award shows?**

It's a truly global event that celebrates creativity, the world's best, the cream of the crop. It's the benchmark of our industry and an event that inspires greatness. It's a gathering of like-minded individuals, seminars, sharing of ideas and exposure to work from across the globe, all done in the sunny warmth of Cannes. That's what makes it a truly one-of-a-kind award show. Winning a Cannes Lion is also a tough task as there are so many entries, so winning a Lion means you have stood head and shoulders above the rest. It not only has the competitive edge that makes you want to win against your fellow agencies but also the unity of competing as a country.

■ **What's the sizzle factor that'll make something stand out to you in judging that work?**

I always look for a great idea first. It's a cliché to say this, but I still believe that the **idea is king**. I look for original, conceptual, smart, simple, insightful work with a purpose that delivers. Something I have not seen before. Work that connects.

■ **Talk us through a few of your favourite memories of past Cannes Lions events.**

I attended a talk in Cannes by Sheryl Sandberg a few years ago. Since then I have one of her quotes on my wall that says: "What would you do if you weren't afraid?" It inspires me every day. Other highlights I recall include the networking, the Google stand, the SA party (because we know how to party) and the ability to discuss ideas over a glass of French Rosé while staring at the ocean.

■ **Exciting! Which areas do you predict SA agencies' work will excel in this year, and why?**

Off the top of my head, there are a couple of pieces that come to mind. Ster-Kinekor's 'Open Eyes' campaign is a powerful fully integrated and well thought through piece. It's also a strong contender because it's a great idea that has heart, it got incredible engagement and it delivered results.



#Loeries2016: How Ster-Kinekor's Grand Prix campaign is changing lives

Leigh Andrews 31 Aug 2016



The second piece I will put forward is The Slave Calendar for the iZiko Museum. This is a super insightful, compelling, simple idea that is beautifully photographed and crafted.

We're all holding thumbs! The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity 2017 takes place from 17–24 June 2017, with Cinemark the local representatives of Cannes Lions for SA. Click through to our [special section](#) for the latest updates.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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