

# A shifting Cannes as diversity grows

By  Danette Breitenbach

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The world is shifting and Cannes is shifting with it. This year saw a more diverse event that, while still dominated by the US and Europe, was more representative of the world.



The Ster-Kinekor Cannes Wrap-up event took place this week in Johannesburg and Cape Town, and the diversification of Cannes in terms of jury members and the work entered - and awarded Lions - was a trend highlighted by a number of the speakers.

The official representative of Cannes in South Africa hosted creative and media agencies as well as clients, giving them the opportunity to hear from South African Cannes jury members first-hand.

## Feeling the shift

While the US and Europe countries still prevailed, there was a feeling that this is changing. Event host, Sylvester Chauke, founder of DNA Brand Architects, who attended his fifth Cannes, believes there has been a shift.

“I have seen the event come from a serious disconnect to more work from different countries being represented. This year there was more diversity than previous years, and despite work from the US and Europe still in the majority, we are seeing more work from over the world being entered.”

He says, of these, South American Argentina and Brazil were two stand-out countries for him.

## **Adding context to the jury**

Adding to the conversation was Khensani Nobanda, Nedbank group executive for marketing and corporate affairs and jury member for the Creative Business Transformation Lions, also a new awards category now only in its third year.

The Grand Prix winner in this category was awarded to Microsoft 365 and McCann New York for the ADLaM (An Alphabet to Preserve a Culture) campaign, which converted Pulaar, the language of the Fulani people of West Africa, into display fonts, to enable people to use the alphabet to communicate on laptops and computer, and via social media platforms.

She says her jury was mainly European, with herself the only person from Africa. “I am not sure this work would have won the Grand Prix if it was not for myself and a few other people on the jury as most of the jury could not understand what it means to be cut off from the rest of the world. We had to explain it to them.”

## **Where is Africa?**

Elouise Kelly, former CCO of Universal Music Group, who was a jury member for Entertainment for Music points out that in this category out of 274 entries, there were only two entries from Africa.

“There needs to be more entries from the continent. We are known for our entertainment, our music, and great artists.”

She thinks that the cost of entry could be a barrier, but also that Africa is unaware of the award.





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## ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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