

Q&A 2019 Loeries Africa and Middle East judges: Sarah Berro

Sarah Berro is an executive creative Arabic writer, and Loeries 2019 judge.



1. Please tell us a bit about your professional achievements.

My advertising journey started in Dubai in 2004. 15 years on, working as a creative writer, I enjoyed my fair share of success in creating prominent campaigns for clients like Emirates, Mars, KFC, Johnson's, Pepsi Co, Amazon, Google and NGOs like Red Cross, "Law 3andak Dam" and 28TooMany. My work has been recognised at award shows like the D&AD, the One Show, Cannes Lions, Loeries, Dubai Lynx and EFFIES among others.

2. What makes you excited about brand communications? What new skills and technologies do you see coming through in media and advertising right now?

What excites me most in what we do is seeing brands able to affect positive change by telling meaningful memorable and shareable stories. And while storytelling remains the main driver of the industry, today's digital transformation and technology gives marketers the power to be incredibly fast in targeting different groups with content that is relevant to them. I see opportunities of more immersive storytelling heading our way and collaborations unlike ever seen before in the realm of marketing.

3. What is unique about brand communications in Africa and the Middle East?

There are two unique aspects about Africa and the Middle East that pop to mind. The first one being how young the average population is in the region, making it a prized market for brands. Almost 50% of the region's population today are

under the age of 25, to put things in context. The second, which has always been a challenge, is the constantly changing political landscape of the region. And both of these unique aspects are undoubtedly intertwined because the youth in the region plays a very active role in the politics of the region. The legacy and lineage of brands often become the make or break factor in marking their success.

4. What kind of innovation and creative work will you be looking for as a judge of the Loeries 2019?

I am very curious to see the unique challenges that different markets and brands face in the region. The winning cases no doubt, will be the ones that not only stand up to these daunting challenges but go further to create a ding in the zeitgeist of our times.

5. Do you think the tenants of a successful media campaign are universal? What makes a campaign work in your country?

In retrospect, it's always easy to pin down the success of a campaign to the universal tenants of what a good idea should be. And more often than not, that remains to be the truth. But every year, there are those few ideas that redefine and rewrite those boundaries and take us further as an industry. I would say in that regard; the constitution is amended every year to include more possibilities and perspectives. The UAE is no different in that regard. The work that works best here has usually been very forward looking, something that adapts or leads new conversations, without delving too much on the past.

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