

Nkgabiseng Motau, CCO at Think Creative Africa

By  Emily Stander

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Nkgabiseng Motau, CCO and founding partner at Think Creative Africa, was once again selected to be part of the jury for Cannes Lions 2021 and is joining the final jury at Ad Stars 2021 in South Korea, a global festival based in Asia.



Nkgabiseng Motau, CCO and founding partner at Think Creative Africa

A giant in the industry, she holds creativity from the South African perspective close to her heart. Motau has been a recurring judge for Loeries, Pendorings, Creative Circle and Cannes Young Lions. She was a Jury Member for the 2020 D&AD Awards and is a member of the ABInbev Braintrust.

Here, we find out more about her day-to-day work and what her life looks like behind the scenes...

■ ***What does your role as CCO entail and what does your day at work look like?***

At Think Creative Africa, it often means finding insightful ideas and fighting for them. No day is like the next, and that is what is special about my work. Some days are spent before a screen in back-to-back meetings with the creative team or presenting ideas to clients. Other days are spent on set or in the studio overseeing productions.

■ ***What was your career path? Tell us about how you ended up in advertising.***

I attended an art school in Pretoria called Pro Arte which heightened my desire to work in the arts. I wanted a way to participate in the commercial world, but to also express my creativity. I then applied to Vega having heard about it from a friend. Vega really opened doors for me through their programme that placed students in agencies for an internship. The rest is pretty much history, all I needed was one foot in the agency door and the ad bug bit me.

■ ***What do you love most about your work?***

I love the ability to see an idea come to life and impact millions of people in our country.

■ ***You were appointed to be a judge on the Cannes Lions Print & Publishing jury, could you tell us about that experience?***

The experience was invaluable, a school of sorts. I learned what makes really great work while lending my voice and insight

to make sure the best work wins.

■ ***In your opinion, what does South Africa bring to the table in the creative industry?***

The diverse nature of our country brings a unique perspective and cultural sensitivity. We are able to tap into so many versions of reality, drawing on our history and our presence to create work that is really universal.



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■ ***Tell us a bit about some of your most successful campaigns and why they were successful.***

Think Creative Africa has achieved so much in a short time. One of my favourite pieces of work is a campaign called *Nothing To Hide* for a brand called Yalu. The campaign allowed us to take a challenger brand to the battlefield with the Goliath of the financial services industry. The campaign earned over 100% increase in sales, which is an incredible achievement.

■ ***What is the future looking like for you in your career?***

I hope to build impactful businesses that will change what it means to be a young Black businesswoman in South Africa.

■ ***What other skills and interests do you have besides your work?***

I have a podcast called *Why Is That* in which I explore various topics with field experts.

■ ***What advice would you give to young people looking to break through in the advertising and creative industries?***

Be relentless. It can be a difficult industry to get into, but it's in desperate need of young, free thinkers. If you have the talent and tenacity, there is a place for you.

Catch Nkgabiseng and selected Cannes Lions judges speaking at the forthcoming Cannes Lions Trend Talks 22 July, 2021. See footer for more info and bookings.

ABOUT EMILY STANDER

Freelancer specialising in games and entertainment | My first loves are writing, music and video games

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