

Bernice Puleng Mosala, Joe Public's shining star



By [Karabo Ledwaba](#)

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Bernice Puleng Mosala is blossoming in a thriving marriage of creativity. The 27-year-old copywriter at Joe Public has found much success with art director Raphael Janan Kuppasamy, winning the local Cannes Young Lions twice, and bringing home the Gold award this year in the international film category with *Your Home A Classroom*.



Bernice Puleng Mosala is an award-winning copywriter at Joe Public. Source: Supplied.

Mosala and Kuppasamy are committed to growing their careers and becoming big names in the advertising world.

Growth mindset

"My creative partner, Raphael, and I had never seriously thought about leaving our last agency, but then we got a message on LinkedIn with the offer to move to the best creative agency in the Middle East and Africa, so of course we had to take the position. We got interviewed and everything felt right so we accepted the offer and we've been incredibly happy ever since. Joe Public has a really wonderful growth mindset and Raph and I are really focused on growing ourselves and our

careers, so we love it there,” she says.

Working on big brands such as TikTok and Chicken Licken are big milestones for the young creative.

“I’ve had so many highlights in my career. I feel so grateful for that. Raph and I launched TikTok’s first South African ad which was such a big deal for us. We also created the Big John Beats *Ya’hunga Forever* advert for Chicken Licken. We got to work with Greg Gray from Romance Films and that was an absolute dream come true. We grew up watching the ads that he directed so it was a full-circle moment. Another one, of course was going to Cannes and competing in the Cannes Young Lions competition on an international stage,” says Mosala.

Many hats

Mosala says it was always her dream to become either a fine artist or a fiction novel writer, but her family was concerned about whether she would be able to have a stable income.

“My first love was art in high school, so I wanted to be a fine artist, but it didn’t seem like the most stable career path for me. Then, I wanted to be a fiction novel writer, but my mom was really worried about the profitability of that profession. Normally children have to convince their parents that advertising is a ‘real’ job, but it was my mom who recommended it to me,” she says.



Joe Public's Bernice Puleng Mosala & Raphael Janan Kuppasamy named SA Cannes Young Lions

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After focusing her efforts on building a career in advertising, she received a one-year scholarship for a creative development diploma at Vega.

Adds Mosala: “Afterwards I was offered a three-year scholarship from Rockstart to complete my copywriting degree. What interested me most was that I could tell stories in my day-to-day job. I love that I get to think creatively and critically to produce something that others can enjoy.

In her copywriting role she has to wear many hats and master many different tones such as comedy and satire.

“ If I had my way, I'd only write emotional ads. That's what I like watching and that's what I want to produce but I'm also expected to write humorous ads. I'm happy to do so but I feel like I have to work twice as hard as other copywriters because I don't necessarily relate to mainstream humour. ”

She adds: "To be perfectly honest, I've sat through so many comedy shows and not laughed once or only faked laughed. I find that humour is so difficult to get right. Normally it comes off as slapstick or trying too hard. I'm grateful that I've been able to exercise this muscle while writing for Nando's in the past and Chicken Licken more recently. Nothing feels better than producing something that was challenging to create."

Step outside the box

Mosala's advice to young women who want to be successful in the industry is to be proactive and explore ideas without briefs.

She adds: "Celebrate when you win, and celebrate in the way that feels right to you. I'm not a big drinker or partier so I leave every industry party early. I've had to figure out that that is completely OK. It's more important to stay true to you than to be a copy of someone else."

What keeps her inspired is her relationship with God, running and activities that stimulate her creative side such as art museums.

"Running helps me process some of the anxiety that I feel as a creative person, and it helps me think more clearly. Art galleries and museums give me a lot of inspiration – to see what others have managed to create throughout time is such a privilege. You'll often find me reading or watching movies in my free time. I always keep a notepad nearby to jot down my favourite phrases or lines which I then try to share with others on social media. Sharing in creativity is one of the greatest gifts in my opinion, so I'm often the first to watch other people's favourite films or read their favourite books," says Mosala.

In the future she wants to create her first emotionally driven largescale TVC. "I just want to create more work that makes me proud and that can inspire others."

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