

Pendoring student winners keen to notch up another gold

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"Richness of Afrikaans makes it a great communication medium."



Vega copy navigators Roela Hattingh and Kate Binge, and 2008 Pendoring student winners, art director Trish Stewart and copywriter Mukondi Ralushayi.

"There was this big hype concerning Pendoring, and we just had to be part of it! Receiving the first prize in the student category was the cherry on top and meant a lot to me. It not only looks great on my CV, it also proves that I'm capable. The bursary of R10 000 was an added bonus - any assistance is always welcome."

So says Trish Stewart of Vega The Brand Communication School, who, as art director, teamed up with copywriter Mukondi Ralushayi to create the overall winning student entry, Fo*of, for Pendoring 2008. Vega copywriting navigators Roela Hattingh and Kate Binge assisted as creative directors.

The brief was specifically designed for Pendoring, and Hattingh and Binge selected a few students who were considered strong enough to go through to the finals. "And who in the industry does not want to be in the 'golden' spotlight at Pendoring?" enthuses Stewart.

"We were ecstatic when we received the Sunlight brief because it is a brand that we both grew up with, and to which we could therefore easily relate. We wanted to do something tongue in cheek, but at the same time had a human truth to it. So we looked at all the various uses for a Sunlight bar of soap - and there were many.

"But one that stood out in particular was 'I will wash your mouth with soap' - a saying that was commonly used by our parents and grandparents to scare children from cursing. It is interesting that this idiom is used in IsiZulu, SeSotho, SeTswana, Sepedi, Venda, Tsonga, Xhosa, Ndebele, SeSwati and Afrikaans.

"This is of course a lateral way of showing the benefit of Sunlight - it cleans really well. It takes away dirt. The dirt in our advertisement is a rude word - and only people who know the word, can actually decode the ad. So the concept is bigger than 'Wash out your mouth with soap'. We are using censorship to show the effectiveness of Sunlight.

As the very first advertisement they did in Afrikaans landed them a Pendoring and a bursary, both Stewart en Ralushayi would dearly like to do more Afrikaans creative work. "Afrikaans is one of our eleven official languages and has many idioms and traditions that work really well in communications, so why not use it?" asks Stewart.

Ralushayi adds: "The standards at Vega are really high, so when Roela told us she was entering our work for Pendoring, we were more than ecstatic. Then the joys continued when we found out that we were finalists. For Trish and me to be

given the mere opportunity to go and eat and mingle with the 'big shots' of the advertising industry, was mind-blowing enough, so an award was an unexpected but much appreciated added bonus.

"The whole night was like a dream and one I wouldn't mind reliving. So we are definitely trying our luck again this year. Winning the award and the doors this has opened for us, show that you must 'praat die taal, dit betaal!'"

Hattingh stresses that "Afrikaans matters because Afrikaans-speaking people matter. As long as people think, speak and create in Afrikaans, Afrikaans will have an impact."

She says Vega's philosophy of 'wisdom with magic' acknowledges and promotes the creative processes of all students. "In advertising it is just so logical to speak to the target market in its mother tongue. We support Afrikaans advertising from various vantage points - the 'language' of the brand, the target market, and of the creator of communication are some of the elements that encourage students to create Afrikaans advertising," she explains.

Hattingh believes advertising in Afrikaans, as well as in other indigenous language, needs to be stimulated in order to reach and speak to these target markets effectively. 'There are so many ways of achieving it: mother-tongue education, greater acknowledgement of artists and writers who create in their home languages and instilling a reading culture to mention but a few.

"Students and learners deserve more support when they read, learn and write in Afrikaans and other African languages... that's why we are absolutely ecstatic about the Pendoring organisers' decision to launch a 'Truly South African' student category this year."

According to Hattingh, Vega entered a number of advertisements in different South African languages to stress the need for the incorporation of a Truly South African category for students. "Supporting students who create in their mother tongues and spreading the message that all South African languages have impact, will certainly have an influence on the market of the future," Hattingh stresses.

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Pendoring

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