

How creative boot camps add a fresh dynamic to the SA advertising landscape

By Leigh Andrews

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It's no secret that it's hard to make your break in advertising, especially in SA, where a large part of the population was formerly excluded from participating in the industry altogether. That's where the One Club for Creativity's diversity boot camps come in. Xolisa Dyeshana, chief creative officer at Joe Public, represents South Africa as part of the international board of the One Club for Creativity and shares the outcome of this year's diversity boot camps.



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When you're around one type of person all day, every day, it's easy to start to feel that's the only way of thinking. This becomes detrimental in both the boardroom, if you feel you're not represented and you [don't have a voice](#), as well as in the unfortunate advertising that relies heavily on stereotypes.



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Leigh Andrews 23 Jul 2018



Cue the One Club for Creativity's diversity boot camps to come to the rescue. Held annually in Johannesburg and Cape Town since 2015, these aim to flip the script on the current situation.

These are free for current students and recent graduates to attend and offer the country's emerging talent the opportunity to develop their confidence and skills in working on a real-life brief with some of the country's biggest brands and creatives guiding the way.

Watch the overview below for a taste of the 2018 Cape Town creative boot camp...

Sponsored by Joe Public United and Woolworths, the Cape Town 2019 version took place from 1 to 5 July at the AAA School of Advertising in Long Street and included mentorship presentations and lectures from the likes of Dyeshana himself as well as Sherina Florence, a creative director at Ogilvy NYC leading on Instagram global and Unilever; Tarryn Pickup, head of marketing at Joe Public United; and Mike Barnwell, chief creative officer at HelloFCB+. Mentors for Cape Town were Mike Beukes, ECD at Duke; Gareth Cohen, creative director at Duke; and Kassie Naidoo, creative director at The Imaginarians.

The Johannesburg version took place from 8 to 12 July and featured Albert de Andrade, creative partner at Ogilvy; as well as Ryan Liedeman, group head of design at Ogilvy Johannesburg; Bridget Johnson, ECD at The Riverbed Agency; and Lesaoana Makotoko, copywriter at TBWA\Hunt\Lascaris Johannesburg as mentors.



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It's an exciting opportunity for the young ones to step foot into the real world of advertising, but more than this, the boot camps serve as a way for advertising professionals to give back to the next generation of creative industry superstars.

Here, Dyeshana shares what he learned from this year's attendees, as well as how the One Club for Creativity's diversity boot camps, in particular, provide an opportunity to allow the youth that voice and encourage them to be more vocal in the boardroom...





■ ***Let's set the context with a quick recap of your role with the One Club's creative diversity boot camps in South Africa.***

As a One Club board member, I'm responsible for facilitating and putting together our annual One Club diversity boot camp in South Africa. In terms of putting those together, selecting the students and their mentors, it's a really intricate initiative, with many moving parts comprising a well-oiled boot camp machine.

Before we do anything else, the most important thing is to secure a corporate sponsor, as that ultimately becomes the brief that the kids will work on during the week.



With that in place, it's imperative to select the attending students. We cast the net as far as possible, reaching out to as many schools as possible in doing so to also find ones that will sponsor venues. That's what makes it such an intricate planning process, which takes place months beforehand, in order to best facilitate the boot camps.





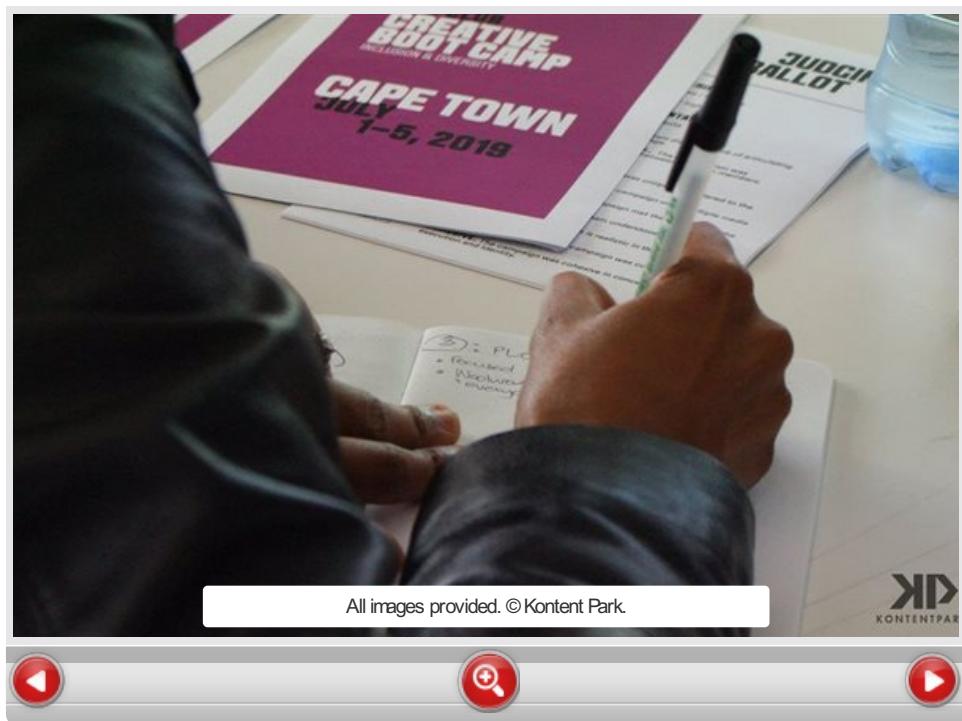
There's also the process of reaching out to creative leaders to become mentors. This is also a very involved process, as we have to ensure we have the right mentors in the right city. That's where the Creative Circle's involvement is so invaluable, as all the mentors come from Creative Circle member agencies.

We always have amazing participation from the agencies that get involved and send mentors or judges. Without any of these components, the boot camp simply would not be possible.

■ Amazing. What's the benefit on the boot camps – both for the young attendees and the mentors briefing and guiding them, as well as the client giving the brief?

The benefit for the students is that for most of them, this is the first time in their careers that they get to work on a real brief, from a real client, with some of the best creative minds from both South Africa and the US.

For the mentors, it's the fact that they get to interact with and guide some of the brightest young minds for a week – teaching them the basics and ultimately making sure that each of the teams they work with are able to put together a solid idea presentation by the end of the week, to stand a real chance of winning the entire competition.



For the sponsors, it's the fact that they get to see first-hand what some of our brightest young minds think of their brands. They also benefit from incredible solutions that come from the freshest new talent that's entering the advertising industry.

■ Let's get into the nitty gritty of it then: Describe the calibre of creativity seen this time around.

The calibre of creativity this time around was truly inspiring. I was blown away by the level of craft and level of thought that went into the ideas that were presented. I was also extremely impressed by the non-traditional way of thinking, where technology is starting to play more and more of a role in creative ideas and in amplifying those ideas.



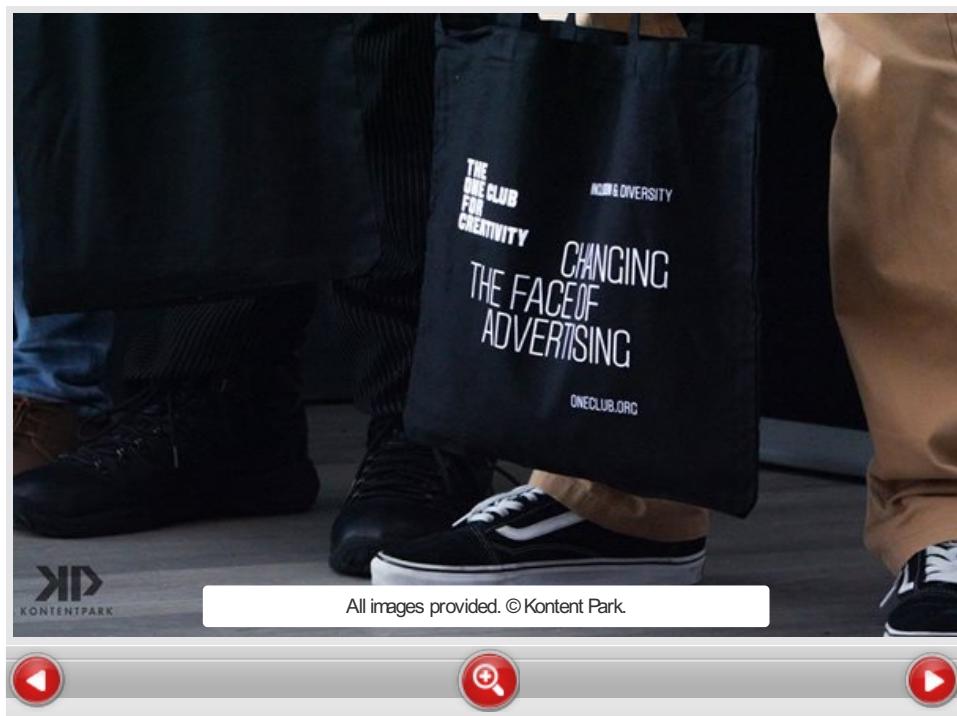
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I speak on behalf of the client, Woolworths when I say that the calibre of work was extremely high. We had very satisfied clients, who were presented with very relevant, new and novel ideas for their brand.

■ What did you in turn learn from this year's attendees?

Young people are really starting to add a fresh, new dynamic to the advertising landscape. A lot of the conversations that I had, particularly with the mentors, were about how we allow the youth that voice and encourage them to use that voice, which is so different to what we have in our industry now.



How do we help them to harness that and encourage that, so that our work as an industry is moved forward, as opposed to making them conform to the way that things are working now?

■ Love that. In closing, it's fitting that the boot camps took place in July, as we celebrate #CSIMonth. What more can SA agencies and clients alike do to help young creatives gain a firm footing in the industry?

The good thing about the boot camps is that these kids are exposed to so much of the industry and so much of the marketing fraternity through our sponsors and our mentors.



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Quite a few of them have already bagged themselves internships, and some have even secured employment through this process. That said, we can always try and do more – getting more brands to start looking at the youth and provide opportunities for them because I truly believe that their perspectives are what is missing in many boardrooms.

Those perspectives and views of the world simply cannot be ignored going forward.

Hear, hear! Hopefully, we'll hear more of those voices soon. Click through to our [One Club for Creativity special section](#), as well as Dyeshana on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and the One Club on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for the latest updates!

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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