

# Celebrating creativity only SA would understand

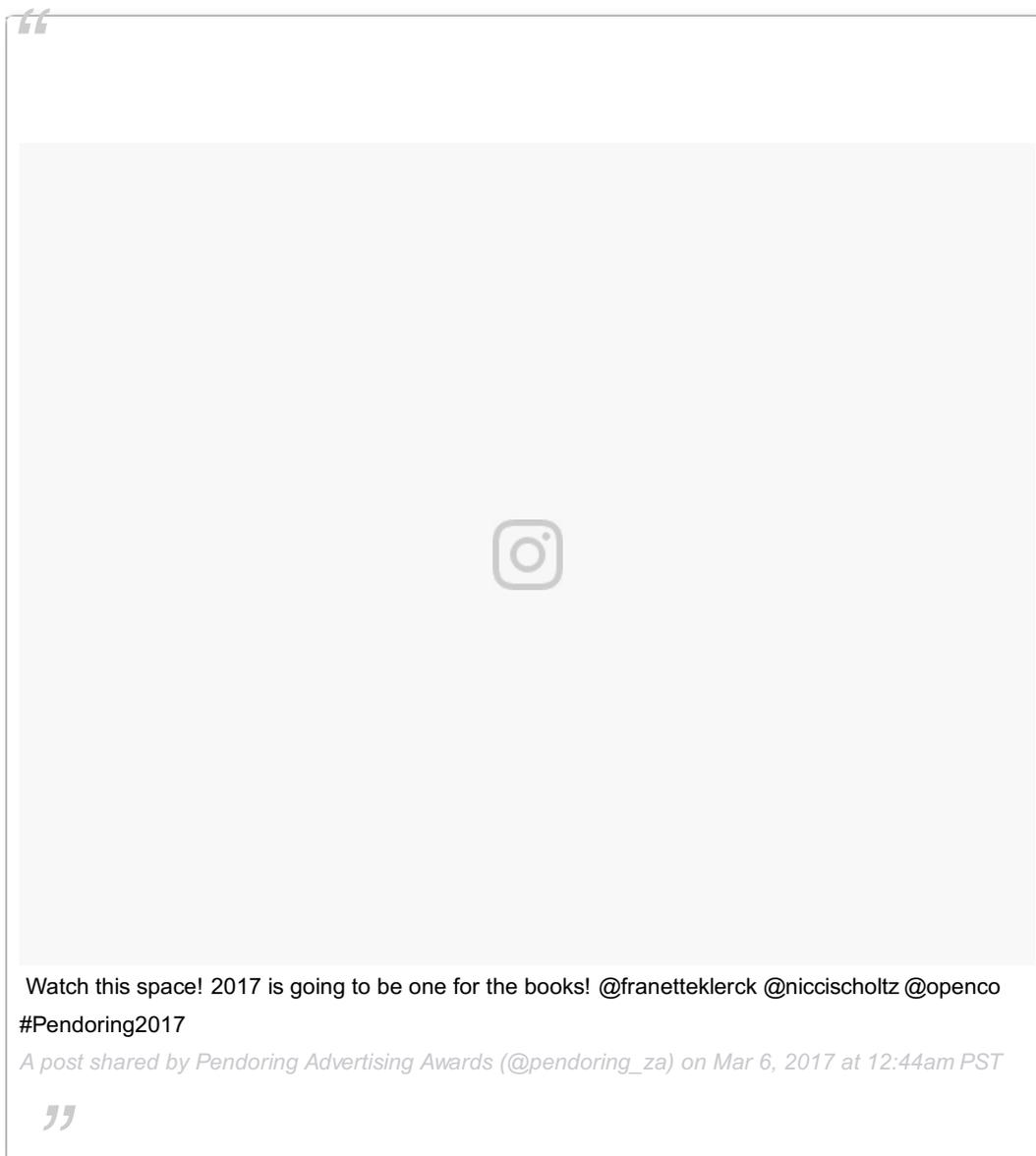
By Leigh Andrews

26 Oct 2017

The 2017 Pendoring Awards are just around the corner - taking place this Friday, 27 October 2017 at Vodaworld, they're now celebrating their 23rd year of putting indigenous SA advertising at the forefront. Carl Willoughby, ECD at OpenCo, lets us in on the essence of this year's Pendoring campaign.

Our mother tongues weren't meant to be exported, just like some of our advertising shouldn't be exported. But what makes advertising truly South African? The local insights? The richness of our mother tongues? Or the fact that no one else gets it? But if they don't get it, it probably stands a good chance.

These are insights from this year's Pendoring campaign announcing it was open for entries, where agency OpenCo made the bold move and checked whether global creative heavyweights understand truly local South African work.



Watch this space! 2017 is going to be one for the books! @franetteklerck @niccischoltz @openco #Pendoring2017

*A post shared by Pendoring Advertising Awards (@pendoring\_za) on Mar 6, 2017 at 12:44am PST*

This included the likes of Erik Vervroegen, head of art for TBWA New York; Tom Paine, creative director at Y&R New Zealand behind the acclaimed McWhopper campaign; and Joao Coutinho, Y&R's North American group creative director. Vervroegen responded: "What are you guys on about?"

Paine commented: "I don't know what just happened," and "If I got given that on a jury, we'd all look at each other with quizzical looks on our faces... but, being a Kiwi, I kind of empathise, no one really understands what I'm saying, either!"

Coutinho added: "It sounds like Chinese. It's very South African. There are tonnes of festivals that want to be international, and you guys are proud of being a local festival. I think that's really cool."

So while they may not get what's being said, they definitely get that the work is authentically South African and resonates

with us. Proof that truly local only works here. That's why Pendorring is known as the only truly South African advertising awards. While the winning entries may confuse those who don't have more than English as a mother tongue, but that's what makes it the truly South African advertising awards.

View Pendorring's manifesto video (in English below) for a sense of that SA pride the awards pay tribute to and that the judging panel held dear while going through the entries this year:

OpenCo's ECD, Willoughby, is this year himself one of the esteemed judges. Klerck confirmed that the fully representative judging panel was well equipped to assess and adjudicate work across the full spectrum of South Africa's indigenous languages, excluding English.



### 2017 Pendorring judges seasoned experts

Pendorring 21 Jul 2017



On his favourite aspect of the campaign, Willoughby lists the content pieces they put together using Vervroegen and Coutinho, embedded above, as well as the '#UntranslatableMzansi', where a Google Translate box was embedded on the Pendorring site to translate an Afrikaans word to English.

The image shows a screenshot of a Google Translate interface. The top text reads "They don't get it. Will Google Translate?". Below this, there is a text input box with "Afrikaans" selected in the language dropdown and "English" in the target language dropdown. The input box contains the Afrikaans word "lekker", and the output box shows the English translation "nice". At the bottom of the screenshot, there are social media icons for Twitter and Facebook.

Sometimes it's not only our work that is misunderstood, but also our mother tongues. Enter a local language word or phrase and see if Google Translate gets it. Invite some of your Facebook friends to try it and you could win two tickets to the gala event in Johannesburg. #UntranslatableMzansi #Pendorring2017

I gave it a bash by typing in 'lekker' in the Afrikaans box, and got 'nice' as the English translation. Not quite, Google!

Here, Willoughby lets us in on how they got those big global names to endorse the campaign, as well as the importance of celebrating creativity across all our local languages, especially as it's so 'local is lekker'...

### 🔸 **Explain OpenCo's relationship with the Pendoring Awards.**

We were invited by Pendoring general manager Franette Klerck to develop the 2017 campaign. It presented a great opportunity as the Pendoring Awards moved on from just being an Afrikaans show. In the last few years, it also felt as though recognition here meant that you've got an understanding of what work resonates locally.

### 🔸 **Pride in SA creativity, all the way! How did the 'only locals will get it' idea come about and what made it a winner?**

We had a creative brainstorm session, where we booked the entire studio. Many ideas were thrown around. We identified three that we liked and presented them to the Pendoring team. This idea seemed to have the strongest insight that lent itself to some interesting work.

### 🔸 **That it did. Elaborate on the importance of celebrating creativity across all our local languages.**

If you don't celebrate who you are, then what are you? Creativity for me is about the execution of a strong insight. And those insights can be global or local. What excites me about celebrating creativity in our local languages is that it makes a point about how ideas transcend language boundaries. There is an unfortunate approach to local work that I think is wrong. We should all strive to create world-class local work and celebrate it, because we have the ability to do it.

*“ We shouldn't develop in English and translate. We should develop work in the creative language and ensure its relevance to our target audience. Speaking to someone in their language in a way they understand is the key to being relevant. ”*

So when we don't see that as being important, or something to strive for, then we're perpetuating the current norm. Language is as important an avenue as direct marketing. It speaks to relevancy. If it is celebrated, then it helps make more brands see the values as well as our industry see the overall value of using the right language for the right audience.

### 🔸 **Why were the three international creatives selected and what does their specific endorsement bring to the campaign?**

Erik Vervroegen is world renowned. Adding him as a face to the campaign gives us more credibility and drives the point of "only locals will get it" home. He's part of our network, so it was easier to reach out to him. Tom Paine was one of the most awarded creatives last year because of the [McWhopper](#) campaign. In the industry, everyone knows that campaign so using him helps us profile the Pendoring Awards with our local creative audience.

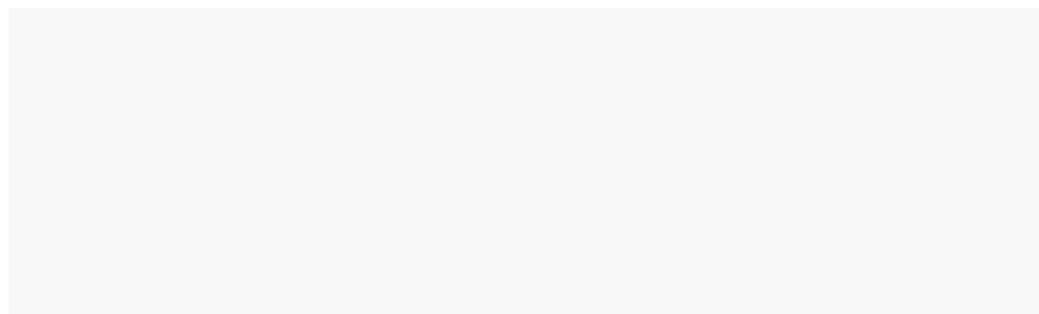
Some of Joao Coutinho's work over the past few years has also been highly awarded. He's a typical international awards judge. It certainly was great reaching out to them and having them agree to participate in this campaign. Not everyone is prepared to have a Skype call with a bunch of strangers and read out copy in a language you have no understanding of!

### 🔸 **What work did you show the international creatives that they just didn't get?**

We shared the Cell C "Igugu" radio campaign, Nando's 'parking guards' campaign from a few years ago, as well as the FJ Cruiser TV ad from FCB.

We didn't want to make a point about language only, but also insights. So in the mix, we had campaigns that were in local languages but also specifically campaigns that used very local insights. Their reactions were great. I think they were quite gentle with us!

“





Some countries have one mother tongue. We have eleven. Celebrate the richness of all our vernacular languages at Pendoring 2017. [pendoring.co.za](http://pendoring.co.za) #pendoring2017

A post shared by Pendoring Advertising Awards (@pendoring\_za) on May 5, 2017 at 10:51pm PDT

”

...ent posts generating a few  
...ho said on think what the  
Pendoring Awards are doing being right, as “most awards festivals want to be international,” but we’re proud of being local.



It's all systems go for Pendoring's glittering gala event

Pendoring 11 Oct 2017



*Daar's hy. We'll be providing live coverage of the awards and will publish the winner list and exclusive comments in full. [Click here](#) for more of what to expect from tomorrow evening's gala event, [here](#) for the full list of finalists, visit the [Pendoring press office](#) and follow them on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) 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.

- #Loeries2020: Behavioural economics as creativity, but not as we know it... - 24 Nov 2020
- #D2020: Ignite your inner activist - representation through illustration - 27 Feb 2020
- #D2020: How Sho Madjozi brought traditional Tsonga *xibelani* into 2020 - 27 Feb 2020
- #D2020: Silver jubilee shines with Department of Audacious Projects launch - 26 Feb 2020
- #BehindtheSelfie with... Qingqile 'WingWing' Mbuluwa, COO at The Whole Idea - 26 Feb 2020

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>