

The Open Window on student creativity



By Leigh Andrews

23 Mar 2018

Some of the academic team and most recent student award-winners from The Open Window let us in on their most recent successes based on their experimental stylistic exploration of creative briefs, which they treat as the real deal.



Open Window's Loeries 2017 winners, L to R Zinhle Zulu, Matthew Tager, Nicole Laxton and Samantha Kogel.

Students from the Open Window certainly made their mark at Loeries 2017, bringing home four craft golds and two craft certificates across the student print and design craft categories of illustration, photography and typography.

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@Regranned from @zhi_zulu - Gold craft Loerie award. #HolyHustle #loeries #owihonours
 @matthew_tager aka ma fam @openwindowinstitute thank you @jcrawshay @maaike00
 @ninatorrasaurus, my inspirations. Much appreciated. To a year of hustling in a holy manner. -
 #regrann

A post shared by [Open Window Institute \(@openwindowinstitute\)](#) on Jan 19, 2018 at 8:56pm PST

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more specifically, they flew back home to their irene campus with the following flock:

The Open Window's Loeries 2017 wins			
Craft Gold	The Open Window	Student - Print & Design Crafts - Illustration	It's enough to run away from zine
Craft Gold	The Open Window	Student - Print & Design Crafts - Illustration	Fiction-The endangered species zine
Craft Gold	The Open Window	Student - Print & Design Crafts - Illustration	Holy Hustle zine
Craft Gold	The Open Window	Student - Print & Design Crafts - Photography	Remember Sarajevo book
Craft Certificate	The Open Window	Student - Print & Design Crafts - Illustration	2am should not be feared zine
Craft Certificate	The Open Window	Student - Print & Design Crafts - Typography	Fiction-The endangered species zine

“



Congratulations @nicolelaxtonphotography . . Artist book_Remember Sarajevo in one hand and my Gold Loerie Award in another, this work has a special place in my heart, can't wait to create even more beautiful work like this . . #nicolelaxtonphotography @loerieawards #loeriesawards #goldloerie #creative #artist #photographer #designer #creativdirection #passion #love #sarajevo #bosniaherzegovina #fashion #fashionjournalism #fashionjournalofsarajevo - #regrann

A post shared by Open Window Institute (@openwindowinstitute) on Dec 5, 2017 at 7:29am PST

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As a result of their award success, The Open window is also the second-ranked educational institution in the Loeries Ranking 2017, up from seventh spot the year previously.

Loeries and more flying in through the Open Window

They've also kept their Loeries-thinking strong in 2018, having just hosted the 'gallery format' Loeries Travelling Exhibition from 12 to 16 March.

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Featuring @steelio_24 - when you use your phone during class break to film a little montage for the @loerieawards Loeries Travelling Exhibition that @openwindowinstitute is hosting from the 12th - 16th of March. . . . Come explore with the visual culture on display!

A post shared by Open Window Institute (@openwindowinstitute) on Mar 15, 2018 at 2:17am PDT

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The Loeries Travelling Exhibition is hosted by The Open Window School of Visual Communication in Irene, Pretoria, from 12th to 16th March, the Loeries Travelling Exhibition is a gallery format exhibition that showcases the latest Grand Prix, Gold and Silver winners. . . #loeries #loeriestravellingexhibition #openwindow #free #exhibition

A post shared by [Open Window Institute](#) (@openwindowinstitute) on Mar 12, 2018 at 1:06am PDT

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As further proof of that award-winning mandate, they're exceedingly proud of their past students. For example, Open Window alumna Bianca Potgieter, now part of the Connect Joe Public team, just took home her first IAB Bookmarks pixel for Best Digital Youngster and Tarryn Van Schalkwyk was part of the team to win a gold Assegai Award for the 'South Africa's Ultimate Journey' campaign.

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Congrats to alumna @bianca.potgieter WOW! Still can't believe it! My first pixel for Best Digital Youngster💎💎💎💎💎💎💎💎💎 #bookmarks2018 . . . #blessed #connectjoepublic #joepublic #awards #excited #yay #youngcreatives #happy #advertisinglife #agencylife #blackpixel

A post shared by [Open Window Institute](#) (@openwindowinstitute) on Mar 2, 2018 at 2:28am PST

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The Open Window further celebrates its students' success in the film arts, visual communication and interaction arts through its own Pangolin Awards.

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We are so excited about the Pangolin Awards happening today that we 3D printed this adorable little

Pangolin mascot. The Visual Communication and Interaction Arts Awards will start at 15:00 while the Film Arts Awards will commence from 18:00. . . #pangolinawards #openwindowinstitute #achievers #filmarts #visualcommunication #interactionarts

A post shared by [Open Window Institute](#) (@openwindowinstitute) on Nov 30, 2017 at 11:56pm PST

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Congratulations to all our Pangolin Award winners, you made us incredibly proud. . . #pangolinawards #filmarts #visualcommunication #interactionarts #achievers

A post shared by [Open Window Institute](#) (@openwindowinstitute) on Dec 4, 2017 at 12:12am PST

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I caught up with Maaike Bakker, who is head of school (practical) for the Open Window school of visual communication; as well as subject manager and lecturer in illustration, along with Carmen Koetje, subject manager and lecturer in communication design; as well as students Zinhle Zulu, winner of the craft illustration student gold Loerie for *Holy Hustle*; and Matthew Tager, winner of the craft illustration and typography student gold Loeries for *Fiction, the endangered species*, to find out how they plan to extend their winning streak this year and who they admire most in the industry...

■ **What do you attribute 2017's successes to?**

Bakker: We attribute our students' success to their immense commitment to their field of study. The students who performed well in the 2017 Loeries student category approached projects in a professional manner. Lots of research was conducted leading up to the execution and experimentation was implemented throughout.

Koetje: The successes can be attributed to the students' commitment and hard work. Additionally, they have the opportunity

to interact with multiple encouraging lecturers, who push them beyond what they thought was possible as well as industry professionals to expand their skill set and approach to their work.



Zulu: I genuinely attribute my success to years of hard work and training at the Open Window Institute. If it was not for the guidance received from my lecturers throughout my studies, I would not have gotten to the point that I am at in my creative journey. Furthermore, the inspiration of the city I live in, the people within it as well as my own thirst to 'hustle' helped me to create work that I'm proud of.

Tager: I would attribute my success in 2017 to my self-determination and willingness to greater my skills and learn from both my peers and mentors. The year 2017 afforded me the opportunity to explore both my personal life and design career, both critically and expressively, in order to do the best and excel at every opportunity that presented itself to me.

■ **What plans are already underway to better your ranking in 2018?**

Bakker: The aim for 2018 is to maintain a sense of enthusiasm within our students. Students will be encouraged to treat project briefs as if they are real industry briefs that require thorough conceptualisation and planning. Students will also be further encouraged to focus on the final crafting or finishes of their projects, in order to excel. Hopefully, this will influence our ranking for 2018.

Koetje: Our main focus is on providing students with content and projects that are relevant and innovative, with a strong conceptual overtone and a lot of creative freedom, not on creating briefs to fit into award- or competition criteria. This has

brought about some amazing results that stretch beyond the scope of awards and competitions.

■ *How does the 2017 Loeries flock differ from your haul the previous year?*

Bakker: The conceptual focus and stylistic exploration proved to be more diverse. Students approached projects in a more experimental manner and took more risks with projects.

Koetje: The 2017 flock is still, as always, a talented and committed bunch. Students, however, do push more boundaries, both visually and conceptually, every year.

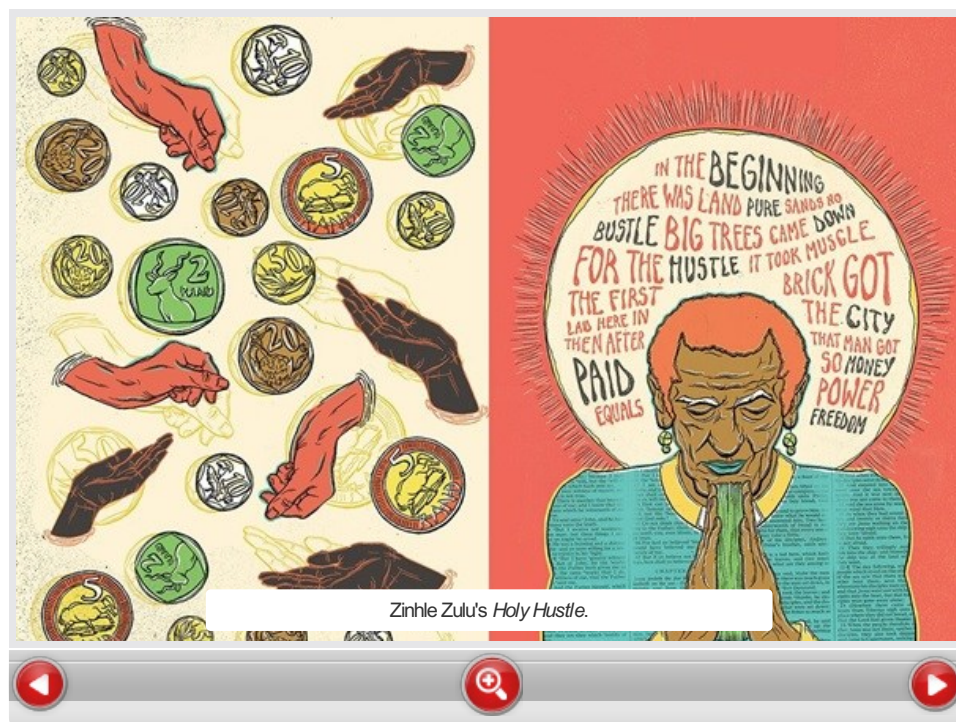
■ *Tell us who you personally admire in the industry.*

Bakker: It's difficult to limit my admiration of a representative in the industry to one specific person. Locally, there is such a great diversity of phenomenal talent in all creative sectors. I think rather than identifying specific individuals, it's also worth specifically highlighting the entrepreneurial spirit of creatives operating within the industry.

Many have managed to establish their own niche for them to operate in. Cape Town-based Studio Muti is, however, one that stands out as they consistently manage to create high-level work. In terms of up-and-coming talent, I enjoy the work of Adam Black.

Koetje: [Garth Walker](#) is certainly an inspiration due to his approach and the risks he takes, but mostly for his typography. Then, I admire any designers, newcomers or established mentors that design for social impact and change.

Zulu: After being at the Open Window Institute for a total of four years and completing my honours degree in visual communication, I have mustered the confidence to start my own company called Zuluvisual, through which I do freelance illustration and design for various clients.



I am really enjoying it. Navigating the growing creative industry in this country can be tough, however, there are creatives that inspire me, like Karabo Poppy Moletsane. Her work ethic and initiative is what I admire about her, aside from her always-amazing illustrations. She really is paving the way for young illustrators like myself.



Karabo Moletsane and Cotton On team up to take designs global

13 Apr 2016





Turning retail space into art space: Elevating the SA narrative at store level

Leigh Andrews 20 Jun 2017



Sindiso Nyoni is also one of my great inspirations. His illustration style and the many platforms that he has managed to get his work onto makes for an eye-opening experience of where my own work could be someday... soon.

Tager: I admire Elani Botha as a mentor for my design career – her willingness to share ideas, lend a helping hand and expanding on concepts through great conversation has inspired me to provide the same influence to others, where and when I can.

As an up-and-coming artist, I am in awe of the work that my peer, Zinhle Zulu, produces both conceptually and aesthetically. Her subject matter and application in her work translates clearly in a flawless manner tackling local ideas, something very important for both the current epoch of South African society and creative industry.

That's for sure. Lots to look forward to creatively from 2018! Click through to our [Loeries' special section](#) for more, [here](#) for more on Open Window, and be sure to follow them on the following social media channels: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#)

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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