

# Creating the stars of the future

By  [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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Despite the chill of the Johannesburg night the Vega School Johannesburg campus was abuzz with excitement on Wednesday.

Anticipation was in the air as heavyweight creatives Ahmed Tilly, ECD, Black River FC, Pete Case, founder & CEO Gloo and Neo Mashigo, ECD, Ogilvy Johannesburg to name a few) milled around in between groups of hopeful students.

The 12th Portfolio Night took place last night, Wednesday, 21 May with 24 cities across the globe participating. Johannesburg and Cape Town were among them. This was the second time Johannesburg had participated. It was the first time for Cape Town.

## Johannesburg



Pierre Odendaal, Chief Creative Officer, McCann Johannesburg, was at the Cape Town evening. "Everyone was working together in Cape Town and afterwards all talking about how to take this further. Graham Lang, Y&R for example has expressed a desire to get more involved. Students here were offered internships. Students were enthusiastic and said they had learnt a lot.

Two Cape Town students were offered full-time positions this morning as well as two students from Johannesburg.

## Raw energy

The raw energy you could feel in Johannesburg spoke volumes about the nature of the event which Odendaal describes as a grassroots event. "As an industry we have the Loeries and a number of other events that either award us or cater for us to showcase innovation and our industry. However nothing exists on a grassroots level to encourage talent and then to see that talent grow and mature."

Portfolio Night caters for this he says. "There exists a gap between studying and working and this event is a way to help young people understand what they need to do to move into the work space and then have successful careers."

The evening gives the young people the unique opportunity to sit across from highly respected and successful creatives in the industry and get feedback on their work he explains. "For the creatives, they get to meet with young people and see what they are doing and to spot talent at an early stage."

At the Johannesburg event, McCann MD Johannesburg, Karabo Denalane reiterated this saying that the night was about finding talent firstly. "It is about making a shift and opening the doors to the next generation of creatives. Secondly it is about making a meaningful contribution to our industry." He urged the students to take up the opportunity offered by Portfolio Night.

## 'We care'

About 120 students attended in Johannesburg and 50 in Cape Town with 56 judges and a total of 170 to 180 interviews taking place in one evening. "It is the biggest get-to-together for creatives globally," says Odendaal. "Last year South Africa broke the record for the number of creatives at the night; this year we had nearly double that number."

Odendaal says a lot of hard work from people in the industry goes into making the evening successful. "I believe this shows

that as an industry locally we care and that we care about producing great work here. Internationally it shows that as a country we want to be involved and that we care about education."

The top five students were chosen from each city last night and their portfolios will be sent to the creatives who interviewed the students and they will then vote for their top student. The top student from Cape Town and from Johannesburg will be announced on Wednesday. This student will join students from across the globe in New York for a week long challenge which entails working on a real creative brief.

## ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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