

Adidas Originals teams up with young creatives to tell product stories

 By Jessica Tennant

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Adidas Originals kicked off a three-month campaign earlier this month, that engages the youth to tell three key product stories for Campus in June, NMD in July and EQT in August.



Area3.co.za

Area3 CPT17 on Bree Street in Cape Town is a co-creation space where young creatives are publishing these brand stories themselves in real time. “With this campaign, we wanted to explore new ways of opening up our product stories to interpretation of the creative youth today,” explains Ashleigh Melvill, merchandise specialist: style. “The aim is to offer a co-creation platform allowing young creatives to become immersed in our product stories and engage with our brand on a deeper and more meaningful level than before. Consumers today want to be given a voice and engaged with on a more personal level rather than being “talked at” with conventional marketing campaigns.”

Young creatives are invited to book one of two studios complete with equipment and the use of Adidas Originals’ product. The booking slots also include creative support, styling advice and editing software for post-production.

It’s also open on Saturdays and Sundays for shoots and on Friday evenings for talks and workshops on a range of creative disciplines.

I chatted to Melvill and Imraan Christian, photographer and creative director of the space for more info.

Why is it important that brands relook at their marketing strategies, especially when it comes to the youth?

AM: In modern times both consumers and brands are fighting to express their individuality and need more than ever to cut through the clutter in order to find true meaning and expression of their desired message(s). As a brand, if you don’t change and continuously evolve and reinvent your methods of communication, you are not going to discover what your consumer truly wants to communicate back to you; marketing is not a one-way conversation any longer. Consumers are hungry for more meaningful experiences and opportunities to express their individuality – it is creativity that is the key outlet for this expression.

❑ **What opportunity(ies) does such a project present to the consumer and the brand?**

AM: By opening our brand up in this way, we hope to offer the consumer an open source experience of a real-life creative industry environment and inspire and ignite the passion to create with our products over the next three months. Real-time publishing in our studio is a core element to this campaign and coupled with the powerful creative team at the forefront of the project, we believe we are onto something powerful and meaningful. The opportunity for the consumer lies in the exposure to the brand and hopefully the ultimate unleashing of their untapped creative potential and passion for design. For the brand, we want to see what concepts and interpretations come from the next generation creatives out there and ultimately would like to tell our product stories in a more authentic way hopefully instilling a deeper emotional connection with the Adidas brand.



Ashleigh Melvill

❑ **The purpose of the campaign is two-fold, one of engagement and enrichment. Please elaborate.**

AM: Engagement is key to everything we do; a message or story that is not engaged with and shared is not worth telling at all. We have so many Adidas brand and product stories to tell but we need to make sure that consumers are given the platform to immerse themselves and interpret these stories in their own individual ways – this is where the enrichment comes in.

❑ **Briefly explain how it works.**

AM: To use the space to bring your ideas to life, all you need to do is: [e-mail](#) Raees to book your slot and he'll get in touch to confirm a date and time as soon as possible. Once you are checked in, our creative directors, stylist Gabrielle Kannemeyer and photographer Imraan Christian, will assist the young creatives with the conceptualisation of their content ideas, styling and shoot production, while playing a mentorship role over the three-month period.

❑ **How/where did you advertise the event?**

AM: Our brand campaigns are always communicated on our various brand channels: [Instagram](#) or [Twitter](#) (@adidasZA) as well as our exclusive 3stripes club which gives you the [latest inside news](#) on everything happening in the world of Adidas. The Area3 CPT '17 space has been communicated organically and purely by word of mouth, but we also have a [blog](#) which you can follow for further updates and inspiration on what's happening in the space.

❑ **What has the response been to Campus in Area3?**

IC: The response has been overwhelmingly positive. We've had a full house for every event so far, and even more positive, people have been engaging in the space all throughout the weekends forming a small community and sharing knowledge and skills – which is essentially what the project is about.

❑ **What were some of the product stories that came out of it this month?**

IC: I think we've all been blown away by the content produced by the young creators on Campus thus far. If you head over to [Area3.co.za](#) you can see all the published content that has come through. The level of work is clearly at an excellent standard.

❑ **What was your highlight?**

IC: The highlight is the little family that is forming – this is our third week now and the atmosphere is incredibly supportive and nurturing.

❑ **What are you looking forward to most these next couple of months?**

IC: I'm excited to keep this energy snowballing. We are growing from week to week, and the sky is truly the limit right now. We are trying to reimagine and reinvent both the physical space as well as the content we are producing, so I'm

most excited to continue evolving.

■ **Who were some of the creatives who hosted the talks/workshops and who will be speaking next?**

IC: Gabrielle Kannemayer and myself, and Xzavier Zulu kicked off the first talk with our journeys and our intentions and hopes in creating this space with Adidas. Last week Angel-Ho and K-\$ did a talk on their careers and journeys which was incredibly well received and was a momentous event for Cape Town. This week we have Anees Petersen and Lukhanyo Mdingi speaking which is bound to be inspirational.

What are you waiting for, 'impossible is nothing'...



Imraan Christian

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