

# SA's other finger-crossed finalists

 By Leigh Andrews

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The nominations are in, and the winning pencil colours will be revealed soon! Another selection of SA's One Show nominees let us know which of the work they think will do best as well as their views on the current calibre of advertising, globally...

[Last year](#), South African One Show finalists made sure our creativity featured on the global score card, resulting in 10 [pencil wins](#).

We caught up with a few more of this year's finalists to find out what being shortlisted for a One Show pencil means to them as well as where South Africa's work outshines the rest, and the specific challenges it faces when compared to other nations.



Stobbs, Weber, Alves and Ross.

Today's panel includes: Stuart Stobbs, ECD at 1886, a member of the FCB Africa group of agencies (1886's work on the Cell C Igugu campaign is bringing home pencils for radio: consumer advertising as well as craft: music/sound); Adam Weber, ECD at Joe Public (their work on the Nedbank Ideas for change ATM is bringing home a pencil design in the corporate social responsibility: environmental/immersive design category); Rui Alves, ECD at TBWA\Hunt\Lascaris (their work on the Flight Centre Student Flights campaign is bringing home pencils for radio: consumer advertising for the 'Travel before it's not fun anymore' spot, as well as craft: music/sound for the 'beach fest' and 'beer party' spots. They're also bringing home pencils for Tiger Brands 'sexy times' in the consumer: radio advertising category); and Matt Ross, group ECD at King James Group (their work on Sanlam 'One Rand Family' is bringing home a pencil in the corporate social responsibility: 'online films and video' category).

## 1. SA has another strong showing at this year's One Show awards. How did you find out your agency had been shortlisted in so many categories?

**Stobbs:** A very excited copywriter sent me 37 WhatsApps, four phone calls, three emails and then dashed into my office.

**Weber:** We saw our name on one of the shortlists, then the team got a phone call. Such good news for them. It was a bit of a last-minute brief and they really pulled one out the bag.

**Alves:** We knew when the results would be released. During a meeting, text messages from eager creatives started to filter through about the work that had shortlisted.

**Ross:** Via smoke signals. We fed the juniors carrots to bump their eyesight up. Before that, we thought we'd won a Grand Prix, but it was our head of repro lighting a bong!

## **2. What's your view on the current calibre of advertising globally? Are we seeing more 'advertising for good' that resonates with consumers or is brand promotional work simply becoming better quality?**

**Stobbs:** As usual, there is some utterly mind-blowing stuff where agencies (with their clients) have really pushed and created some magic, but there is also (as usual) a slew of crap. Turn on any TV anywhere in the world and you'll see it. I think in certain categories, if it's done well, advertising for good does resonate excellently with consumers, but often people just want to see what's in it for themselves.

**Weber:** Looking at the work in an award show always makes you feel that global advertising is of a very high calibre. But we all know it's just a fraction of what's actually out there. Generally, advertising needs more work that resonates and more work that is simply better. If agencies are capable of global standard work, why aren't they being allowed to do it every day?

**Alves:** The bias towards advertising for good is a continuing trend and might even be growing. Some of the most powerful work is done by non-profit organisations, because they need maximum impact with limited means. The idea is still what gets maximum impact and mileage out of limited production and media budgets. Brands also recognise that by getting behind a cause that is relevant to them they can gain significant affinity from their audience. In a world gone mad and growing steadily madder, brands can provide choices that give consumers a choice and control to correct some imbalances in the world. Big ideas cost the same as weak ideas. The downward turn in the economy continues to prove that the value of ideas is not affected by the world's staggering economy. Long may it last!

**Ross:** It's easier to get a headline with work, it's harder to make an impact. I think calibre has slightly dropped overall. There are just so many channel options today. Brands aren't doing more advertising. It's the same amount of people spread across more channels. The 'advertising for good' term has only really gathered momentum over the last few years as corporate social responsibility has come into the mainstream. Before, brands would do it as part of their below the line CSR or CSI activity, or simply to allow their agency some proactive rope. Frankly, they didn't really give a sh!t. The likelihood is that the majority of them still don't. But social media has disrupted this in two ways: Firstly, it's given people a soapbox to brand bash when they feel a brand has acted or is acting irresponsibly. Secondly, these 'good ads' don't require the media expenditure they would've required to push them into the mainstream before Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, etc. Social does it for them. Brand does something nice > People like > People share > Brand gets breadth without spending nearly what it would've had to. The brands are happy as these softer, do-good ads cost the same to produce. They work from a brand-building point of view. But, is there a chance that any brand is replacing their hard-selling, product shifting ads for 'goodvertising'? Not in your Emily Ratajkowski-est dreams. So, where a small global shift in social responsibility and

social media have given 'advertising for good' a place, it's many years yet before we'll see it as the mainstream brand communication... If ever.

### **3. While SA did well in One Show categories like radio, design and film, none of our work was selected in categories like [social media, mobile UX and interactive](#). Your view on this – the reasons our work isn't featured there, as well as specific SA challenges in these categories.**

**Stobbs:** I think traditionally South Africa has been very strong in radio, design and film, so it's not too surprising that's where we have featured. In the digital space, I think we still have a way to go. The 'first world' had a jump on us with the technology, so we started late and our broadband speeds s-t-i-l-l don't rival theirs. So we don't really experience what is available elsewhere or the technologies that work so well in, say, the States. Having said that, with fibre rolling out and LTE bringing good data speeds, I think we will start to explore new territory and hopefully start to feature in the digital categories.

**Weber:** I'm guessing here, but maybe the budgets and the briefs just aren't there to produce work to compete globally?

**Alves:** As a country we have some work to do here. This is an opportunity for us, especially in a market where mobile phones are so prevalent.

**Ross:** There are many reasons we don't punch hard enough. When I moved back from abroad almost six years ago, I arrived with the desire to rectify exactly that – getting SA the digital respect it deserves. Now, where that desire is stronger than ever, I appreciate our unique hurdles in getting there.

They are thus: Digital is not a mainstream channel in South Africa. Mobile is huge. But no-one GLOBALLY has nailed how best to market on our most personal of devices outside of utility. Utility (apps predominantly) is expensive to produce and you're competing against a global marketplace (I watch pretty much only SA-produced ads on my TV; I don't use pretty much only SA apps on my phone, though). Desktop is small and focused on a high LSM. Social is the one immediate option. But again, our social space is mobile-based. It's a great channel for storytelling, but when the large majority of our population tops up their mobile an average of R5 a time, they aren't using that for high-data video consumption. The reality is this, we are a country of two markets (and this is a gross generalisation, but bear with me): the sophisticated, ad-shunning, tech-enabled market and the less sophisticated, ad-accepting, less tech-enabled market. The vastly bigger of these two markets' expendable income is growing. They're buying more stuff. One's not. No prizes for guessing where our country's brands' marketing money is going. Only when the mass moves into the digital space will the marketing rands move into the digital space. We have the talent. We need more opportunities. And our clients can only give us those when it makes business sense to do so.

### **4. Any predictions on which local agencies will be coming home with the top pencils this year?**

**Stobbs:** It's always tough to guess, but we have some excellent work in there. Love the Flight Centre stuff, the Lonely Road Foundation radio is great and, of course, Lucozade might continue its march across the award show stages. Holding thumbs (and other body parts) for everyone!

**Weber:** I expect some pencils in radio for sure. Amazing work. Possibly a pencil for Land Rover Genuine Parts and One Rand Family.

**Alves:** TBWA\Hunt\Lascaris!

**Ross:** TBWA Flight Centre Student Flights is strong. I'm not going to be that guy and say we're in with a shot too... But here I am saying it. What a hypocritical twat.

The excitement's certainly there, and we're only days away from finding out if those predictions come true. If you can't wait

until then, click through to our [One Show awards](#) special section and watch for live coverage of the One Show Creative Week from our roving reporter, [Ann Nurock](#). One Show Creative Week runs from 9 to 13 May 2016.

## ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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