

Y&R's Graham Lang bangs the Golden Drum

 By Leigh Andrews

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Graham Lang, CCO of Y&R South Africa and Africa, shares his highlights of celebrating creative work in an authentic Slovenian castle and his presentation that puts a positive spin on being a creative problem-solver from SA: "The bigger the problem, the more inspired the idea needs to be".



Adding to his constellation of international judging bright moments, Lang was jury president of the international 'Best Piece' jury for the 23rd Golden Drum Awards, which took place in Slovenia late-October. The Best Piece section recognises stand-alone work that appeals to users on concept, effective use of communication channels and professional execution.

Lang shared the following Facebook update about the experience, and further unpacked significant points for our region's creatives below...

1. What did you most enjoy about 2016's Golden Drum Awards?

Lang: Meeting interesting people. Sharing stories and learning about different markets. I love to travel and I love advertising, so going abroad and being in a new city, conversing with new people and looking at ideas was massively inspiring and thrilling for me. Then of course, there is the work. I've been on a few juries in my time and it's always great when you have a good quantity of excellent work to discuss with the jury. You learn so much about how people determine what is good or bad communication through robust discussions about the work.

2. Explain the importance of the Golden Drum Awards and what a win there means.

Lang: The Golden Drum has been going for some time and it celebrates the best work from the region they call "New Europe" – it's basically Central and Eastern Europe, but work from the Scandinavian and Middle Eastern countries also popped up. New countries are looking to become part of the show, which is a good sign of its rising importance. Judging by the calibre of the juries and the conversation in the jury room, it's a very massively prestigious award.

3. Looking at the work in particular then, did the entries for Best Piece meet your [high expectations](#)?

Lang: Absolutely. All the big winners were superbly conceived and expertly crafted. In fact, most of the big winners had already picked up major accolades in other high-profile shows. If anything, film was the weakest category. But content, social and digital ideas were immensely strong.

4. What was the judging process like? Tell us how it differs from other judging experiences in terms of process, time taken and team involved.

Lang: The judging environments were fantastic. The staff and technical support were first class – overall, it was a very slickly run operation. The hotel that we judged in was in the centre of Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, but the festival was held in an old castle on the hill. We spent a morning looking at the exhibition of shortlists up at the castle, which was a great idea. The other factor that made the judging so interesting and enjoyable was the fact that debate and discussion was encouraged. I like the idea of being in a jury that behaves more humanly. The ability to move around and discuss and talk makes the judging less mechanical and secretive.

5. Let's end with the key points of your presentation at the Golden Drum Awards and why creatives need to focus on solving problems.

Lang: The presentation is titled Awesome Problems. In it, I outline some of the big issues we have as a country, and demonstrate how these big problems inspire big ideas. It's a positive spin on how a region like SA is actually an awesome place to be if you are a creative problem-solver, because the bigger the problem, the more inspired the idea needs to be. At Y&R South Africa, we place a lot of importance on being relevant and using creativity for good. It's something we believe in passionately.

As do we. [Click here](#) for the full list of Golden Drum 2016 winners and be sure to follow the [#goldendrum2016](#) hashtag for more as well as [Lang](#) and [Y&R South Africa](#)'s Twitter accounts.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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