

"The idea-amplifying town square of creativity, marketing, and media" - Michael Zylstra

 By [Leigh Andrews](#)

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The Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity for 2019 kicks off next week, with winners announced at nightly awards from 17 to 21 June. We caught up with this year's SA contingent of judges for a preview of what to expect. Next up, Michael Zylstra.



Michael Zylstra, chief strategy officer at Dentsu Aegis Network (DAN) SSA and media juror for Cannes Lions 2019.

Michael Zylstra, chief strategy officer at [Dentsu Aegis Network Sub-Saharan Africa \(DAN SSA\)](#), is serving on this year's Cannes Lions Media jury.



7 SA creatives selected to judge Cannes Lions 2019

9 May 2019



Zylstra is no stranger to judging work from the continent, having this year alone served as jury president for both the pan-African [Cristal Awards](#) festival and the Lagos Advertising & Ideas Festival ([LAIF](#)) awards show.

This also marks Zylstra's first year judging the world's best creative work for Cannes Lions.

Here, Zylstra shares what he's most looking forward to from this year's Festival of Creativity, sharing a few of his Cannes Lions-related highlights over the years and what SA judges bring to the global creative mix...

■ ***Have you judged international award shows like Cannes before? What does that add to your judging ability?***

I recently had the honour of being the jury president of both the pan-African Cristal awards festival and Nigeria's LAIF awards show.

Hopefully, this allows me to bring a different perspective to Cannes – one focused on the challenges that our continent faces when competing on a global stage.

■ ***Definitely. Share a few of your favourite Cannes Lions-related moments over the years – either from attending personally, or agency winning work-related.***

This will be my first year judging, but I have obviously admired the work, thinking and ideas from afar. Winning doesn't hurt, either!

■ ***What do this year's 7 SA creatives bring to the global Cannes Lions judging mix?***

As a country, we continually punch above our weight.

I think this year's judges represent the South African advertising community's ability to create work that is truly South African, but with a level of craft comparable to anywhere else.

■ ***Fantastic. Give us a glimpse of the specific criteria you'll be looking for in judging this year's entries.***

Fresh and original work, against the backdrop of increasingly homogenised global marketing.



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Michael Zylstra, Dentsu 26 Mar 2019



I'll also be looking for great insights and the use of data in surprising ways.

■ ***With other international award shows [D&AD](#) and the [One Show](#) having wrapped up for the year, any predictions of creative trends that are likely to stand out at Cannes Lions 2019?***

I think Nike is going to win loads of awards this year!



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■ ***What are you most looking forward to from the Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity 2019?***

Cannes is a massive **amplifier** of ideas. The good ones, and the bad ones. The ones worth spending time considering and the fads.



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It's the town square of creativity, marketing, and media and a great place to learn, find inspiration and network... and it

doesn't hurt that it's set in the South of France!

While main judging only takes place in Cannes next week, watch for the SA judges' specific predictions of the work that will win, later this week!

The Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity runs from 17 to 21 June 2019, with Cinemark – now known as Ster-Kinekor Sales – the local representatives of Cannes Lions for SA. Roving reporter Ann Nurock will be sharing the latest news as it happens, live on the ground in Cannes, so visit our [Cannes Lions special section](#) for the latest updates!

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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