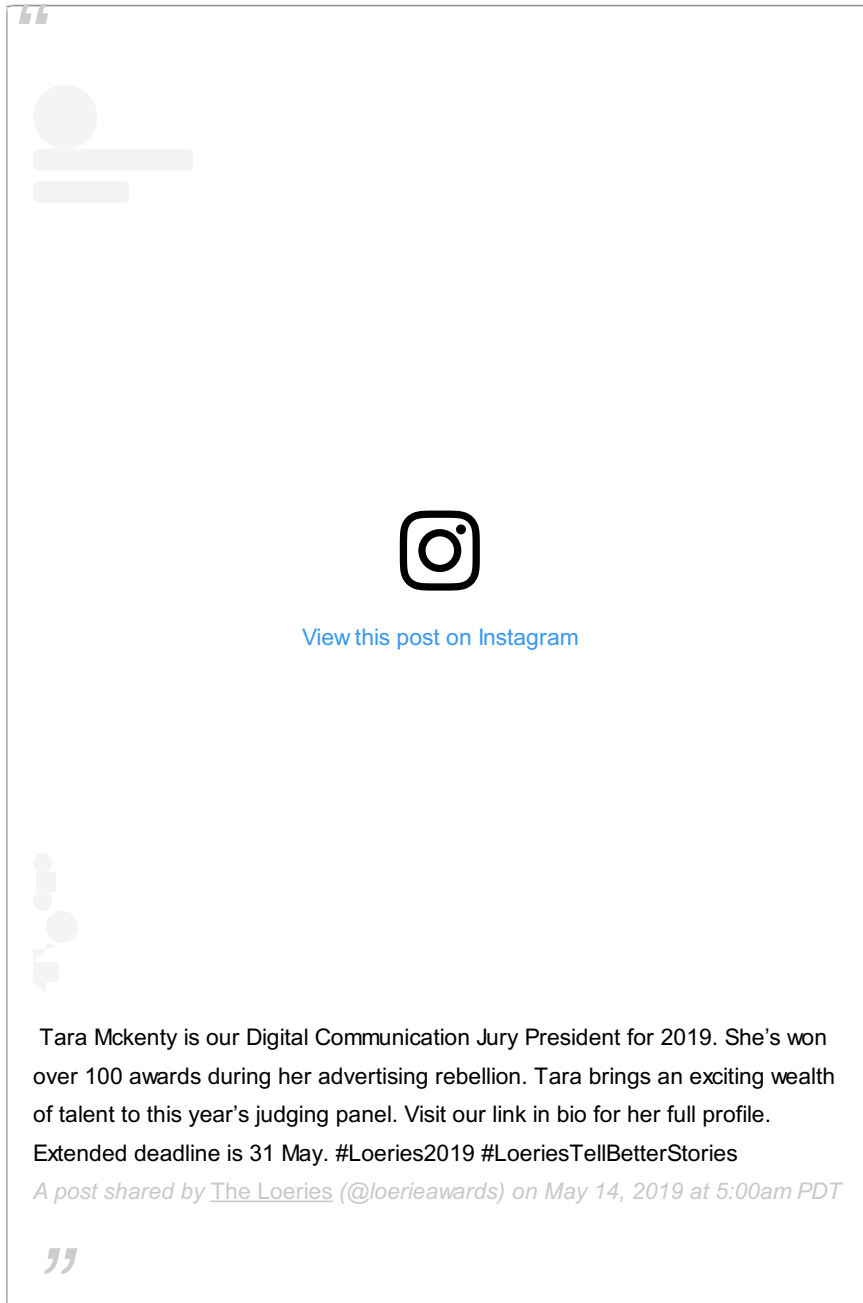


# "The responsibility to use creativity and craft for social good" - Tara McKenty

By [Leigh Andrews](#)

17 May 2019

I chatted to the international jury presidents ahead of the upcoming Loeries Creative Week. Next in the series is this year's Google digital communication jury president Tara McKenty, creative director for Google APAC.



she would either grow up to be the Prime Minister of New Zealand, or the devil itself. After casting a career in politics aside, and realising red wasn't her colour, McKenty's stepped into the wonderful world of advertising, starting at Whybin\TBWA Auckland.

From there, McKenty made her way into the international spotlight for her 'advertising rebellion', best seen through her disregard for discipline and convention. For example, she worked with her creative partner at the time to float shares in their creative future and successfully crowdfunded themselves to Cannes.

She also created *Penny the Pirate*, a children's book that tested eyesight while at Saatchi & Saatchi Sydney, which was named as the most effective marketing campaign in the world by Warc 100 in 2016.

Now at Google APAC, she's tasked with coming up with creative uses of Google's products and platforms for the Asia Pacific's largest clients, such as creating real-time marketing platforms that reunite lost dogs with their owners for Pedigree, building immersive story time platforms for Disney and cofounding the diversity initiative RARE, supported by D&AD.

All proof that McKenty continues to challenge and disrupt the status quo with her passion for using advertising as a medium for social good, which has resulted in over a hundred international advertising awards.

Who better to serve as the Loeries 2019 Google digital communication jury president? I chatted to her about her judging expectations, what we can expect from her DStv Seminar of Creativity talk and more...

■ ***It's always an honour to be asked to judge international work, especially now as an international jury president for the Loeries. What does this mean to you, personally?***

Yes, it is always an honour. I've had the privilege to judge a few international shows now, such as D&AD, Spikes, and Cannes Lions, and of course to be asked to be a jury president is extra special.



#Loeries2019: "Discover how different cultures are reflected through their creativity and ideas" - Katja Thielen

Leigh Andrews 10 May 2019



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Personally, I'm particularly honoured to be a part of the Loeries as I've always felt an affinity with work from this region.

Culturally, I think New Zealand and South Africa share similar communication styles and a 'nothing is impossible' attitude towards creating the work.

■ ***Have you been to South Africa before? What are you most looking forward to from Loeries Creative Week 2019?***  
I've never been before, but my grandmother was from South Africa, and I have South African cousins who my father calls and heckles whenever the All Blacks beat the Springboks in a test match!



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Leigh Andrews 26 Apr 2019



So it will be my first time in South Africa and I am most looking forward to seeing the work and meeting the great creative talent in the region.

■ ***And vice versa! The jury presidents also speak at the DStv Seminar of Creativity, a highlight for many attendees. What will your presentation focus on?***

For my presentation, I will be discussing the advantages of inclusion, and discuss the power that differences of perspective can have on our ability to innovate, and produce original ideas, and connect more meaningfully with the vast cross-section of society that makes up our audiences.



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■ ***Fantastic. What's the biggest trend in advertising that you expect to see from this year's entries?***

Machine learning provides a new set of tools for people to solve problems with, as creative practitioners we solve problems for brands and consumers, so I'm expecting to see a lot of work that is powered by machine learning.

■ ***Interesting. With so much advertising 'noise' out there, it takes a lot to stand out from the crowd. What will you be looking for in this year's entries?***

I love work that provides true utility for the user and consumer, a lot of my own work has been utilitarian. Ideas that provide utility, or enhance consumers' lives in a truly meaningful way are always a favourite of mine.



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■ ***Lastly, share your views on how the calibre of our work compares internationally. Describe that 'African and Middle Eastern creative essence'.***

Actually, two of my favourite campaigns of all time come from these two regions!

Ogilvy & Mather Dubai created a print campaign in 2013 called 'Autocomplete truth' for UN Women, which I absolutely adore. The campaign used the Google search interface to highlight different societal attitudes toward women from different countries. Simple, powerful, and confronting.

The second piece of work actually made me move countries to work for the South African ECD who worked on it – Damon Stapleton, former ECD of TBWA\Hunt\Lascaris – for [The Zimbabwean](#) Trillion Dollar campaign.

I've always believed that as creatives, we have a responsibility to use creativity and our craft for social good.



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This was the first campaign I saw when I was a younger creative, that piece of work became my guiding star of what great work looked like.

*That's the power of a great idea. If you get cracking, you can still submit your great ideas as entries for Loeries 2019, provided they've already flighted, as the extended deadline is 31 May. If you can't wait for Loeries Creative Week Durban, taking place from 22 to 24 August 2019, keep an eye on the Loeries' [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) feeds and stay tuned for my interviews with more of the international jury presidents and all the latest updates in our [Loeries' special section](#). You can also follow McKenty on [Instagram](#).*

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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