

Ntshingila inducted into the Creative Hall of Fame



By Ann Nurock

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Nunu Ntshingila, head of Facebook Africa, has just notched up another success on her career belt, with the announcement at the Loerie Awards tonight that she's being inducted into the Creative Hall of Fame...



Nunu Ntshingila

I sat down with Ntshingila earlier in Loeries® Creative Week™ Durban for an interview into this proud achievement not only for her, but also for the state of overall local creative diversity as well as Facebook's first anniversary in Africa.

Nurock: Nunu, at the Loerie Awards on Sunday night, you'll be given an award. Tell me what it is?

Ntshingila: A few years ago, the creatives decided to create a Hall of Fame... And on Sunday, I will be inducted into the Creative Hall of Fame.

Nurock: Congratulations... are you the first woman?

Ntshingila: Yes, the first woman to go into the Hall of Fame. And I think there are two things that are really, really important: Firstly, we talk about creative people that create all the work, but I think it's the first time they are awarding somebody from the business side of the creative world. What is important for me in creative is not only the work that we do, but also the people that create the environment that enables creativity.

Creativity does not happen in a vacuum, so how we run our studios, how we run our business, we need to enable creativity. So I'm glad that the creative world has recognised that.

Nurock: This a milestone for not only the advertising but communication industry as a whole.

Ntshingila: ...It's everything about the company and the environment that enables creativity to thrive. So I think this recognises that, and I think it is interesting that four or five years later on, a woman is being recognised for two reasons: I think we have seen so many women play a vital role in our industry but sometimes we do not see the sustainability. We see women that don't stay and in some instances we see that women come in but they do not make it to the higher echelons.

I think for that reason, it is interesting particularly where I stand, to dedicate it to women – not only to women but to young girls who can make a career out of this.

Creativity today is a great force, not only in terms of changing humanity, but it is a great force in thinking about how we solve today's problems.

Nurock: Exactly, and there has been so much debate around diversity in the industry and this couldn't have come at a more opportune time, where you are such a role model for young women in the industry and the greater business world.

Ntshingila: Completely. I think diversity in all its forms continues to be very, very important. And that discussion continues to happen and it needs to continue.

We need to continue to talk about it and we need to make sure that we not only have young girls come into the industry, but young women grow and continue to thrive in our industry.

Nurock: How has the transition been, moving from chairperson of one of the biggest and most successful agencies in South Africa to becoming head of Facebook Africa?

Ntshingila: It has been phenomenal in two ways. First, there is a part of it that feels like a continuation of what I have done. I love brands, I grew up in branding. The platform allows brands to continue to do that. So we talk about technology enabling creativity. I am working with a platform that enables creativity.

Creativity today not only comes from certain areas but creativity comes from everywhere because of the kind of technology that we have today. It is almost that technology has democratised creativity.

So that part of my job today feels like another step in what I have done up to now. But there is a part of my job that is so new. It is amazing to be in a company today that is striving to change mobile. And to be sitting and experiencing how our industry, how the world, is becoming mobile first.

We say that the industry is not becoming mobile; it **has** become mobile. So to sit in a company that is driving, that is quite humbling and perhaps, having a ringside seat in a very, very fast-changing environment, it is both a privilege and an amazing thing to be part of.

Nurock: Facebook has a big presence here at the Loeries this year. In fact, I think it's the first time Facebook has been at the Loeries, and I have no doubt it is because of your initiative, heading up Facebook Africa. Why do you think it is so important that Facebook is at the Loeries?

Ntshingila: We are so, so excited to partner with Loeries this year. It is our first year doing so. As you know we have just celebrated our first year in the country – in July. It is the first anniversary in Africa. The reason why we thought it was important is, we believe, firstly, that we need to develop young and diverse creative people, who are going to come into an industry that has fundamentally changed and is changing. So we were absolutely delighted to be able to sponsor the student award.

We want the students that are going to come into the creative world to be building work for a mobile future; that are going to be building work for a platform like Facebook. We wanted to interact with them early on. So we are delighted to be sponsoring the student award.

Just two days ago we had a workshop in KwaMashu, where we took young kids who were in high school and they built their first campaign made on mobile. They started right from concept right down to... We called it "made on mobile."

That's the world that they are going to come into when they start to work. It is fundamentally different from ours.

We are excited about developing talent. We are excited in making sure the talent is diverse. We are also very excited to be partnering with them in order to give them tools that will enable them to thrive in a fast-changing environment.

Nurock: That is absolutely wonderful. Congratulations on this very well-deserved award, and the difference that you and Facebook are making to our country and our continent.

Ntshingila: Thank you.

Ann is a Partner at Relationship Audits and Management, a global consultancy that measures and optimizes client /agency relationships. Her proprietary Radar tool is used by 30 corporates globally and as a result she interacts with over 80 agencies of all disciplines. Ann spent 25 years plus in the advertising industry as CEO of Grey Advertising South Africa, and head of the Africa region followed by President and CEO of Grey Canada. Contact details: ann.nurock@relationshipaudits.com | Twitter @Annnurock

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