

Yenani Madikwa is Cannes FCBSocialEye for 2018

 By Jessica Tennant

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FCB Global selected Johannesburg-based Yenani Madikwa, copywriter at FCB Africa, as the second annual Cannes FCBSocialEYE. The prize is an all-expenses-paid trip to attend Cannes 2018 and entails rubbing shoulders with high-profile creatives from all over the world. "I'll be building relationships with people that I don't usually have access to and learning things from worlds that I didn't even imagine existed," says Madikwa.

I interviewed her to find out her reaction to winning the competition, what she's most looking forward to and how we can keep an eye on her this week...

■ ***Where were you when you found out you'd be this year's Cannes FCBSocialEye, and what was your reaction to the news?***

I had just woken up. The guys at FCB New York announced it so the time difference was quite substantial. I called my parents who said something to the effect of, "of course you won" and I guess now you know where my huge ego comes from.



[@yenani_m](#) on Instagram

■ ***What does being selected FCB Global's second annual Cannes FCBSocialEye mean to you?***

It proved that cool work thrives when it's just allowed to happen without boundaries. All I really had was a videographer who was keen to see where things would go, an idea and the effort it demanded.

■ ***How are you feeling about the trip and what's expected of you?***

Mostly nervous. There's a lot of ground that needs to be covered. Producing creative and engaging content in real time is something I've always enjoyed doing on my personal Instagram page because the only boundaries that exist are my own. Being the FCBSocialEye puts a lot of responsibility on me to not say the wrong thing. I'm also really excited about all the new things I'm yet to learn. This experience can only make me a better creative.



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■ ***And expectations on your side? What are you most looking forward to from Cannes Lions 2018?***

I'm really looking forward to the talks and workshops. A lot of Hollywood creatives that I admire will be speaking this year, and I might even interview a few of them... I think that's pretty cool.



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■ **How does one enter/audition for the competition, and what does it take to win?**

FCB employees from all over the world had to submit something that showed the judges you were the right fit for the job.

I think I won because my entry showcased my reporting and researching skills in an entertaining, aesthetically pleasing and social media-friendly way. Being pretty and charming didn't hurt either. Hahaha.

Though it was encouraged, Cornell and I didn't have a chance to chat. I think I wanted to go into it without influence so that I could make it my own. FCB is a very supportive agency so there will always be someone to call on if I do get stuck.

■ **Has last year's winner, Cornell Rocha, shared some advice with you? Any learnings from last year?**

■ **What do you love most about your job, copywriting and social media in general?**

I love putting intangible ideas into specific words. That's basically copywriting, isn't it? We just latch onto an idea and follow our intuition to all the horrific, mundane and beautiful places it takes us.

Also, I get to work with the most talented people in the country. There is never a day where I leave the agency without learning something valuable. And social media? That's my favourite place in the world. Everything that matters about 'the culture' is immortalised there.

■ **What do you think of the initiative in the context of Youth Month?**

FCBSocialEye is important for so many reasons. People wait their entire careers before they get the opportunity to go to Cannes Lions. It's an empowering exercise.

When your agency invests that much in its junior talent, it's a sign that things are moving in the right direction. Like any industry, there will always be barriers and challenges for young people in an ageist society. FCB has put its trust in a young person in a way that truly matters.

■ **Last words before you set off on your Cannes adventure?**

There is no better time to be young, black and excellent.

We can definitely learn from agencies like FCB in this regard. See what Suhana Gordhan, creative director at FCB Africa says about this (shining a light on the young people in the industry) [here](#). And do make sure to follow Madikwa on the following platforms:

- Instagram: [@fcbsozialeye](#) and [@fcbglobal](#) is where her #CannesLions2018 content will live; [@creativityincolor](#) is where her content focused on global creatives of colour will live; and [@yenani_m](#) is her personal page and where all the bloopers, teasers and cheekier content will be.
- Twitter: [@FCBglobal](#) is where you'll get access to on-the-minute updates on all things Cannes Lions.



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