

"An English campaign you can only understand in the vernac"

By Leigh Andrews

25 Oct 2019

The 2019 Pendorring Awards are just around the corner, taking place on 31 October, celebrating their 24th year of putting indigenous SA advertising at the forefront. Here, the Joe Public United creative team - last year's overall Umpetha winner, translates the meaning behind their work on this year's Pendorring campaign.



Joe Public's Xolisa Dyeshana, Tshepo Mgorosi and Tshepo Tumahole, responsible for this year's Pendorring campaign.

"Don't hit-hit me." "Someone held me a bull." "Pinch the cat in the dark."

These somewhat confusing phrases make a little more sense when you realise they form part of this year's Pendorring Awards campaign, with the tagline: **"As dit nie in Engels werk nie, werk dit vir ons."**

This sentiment makes even more sense when you consider the awards were originally created in 1995 to promote and stimulate the use of Afrikaans in advertising, and since then have gone through a number of changes to celebrate all indigenous languages.



#Pendorring2017: Praat met... Joe Public United

Leigh Andrews 22 Nov 2017

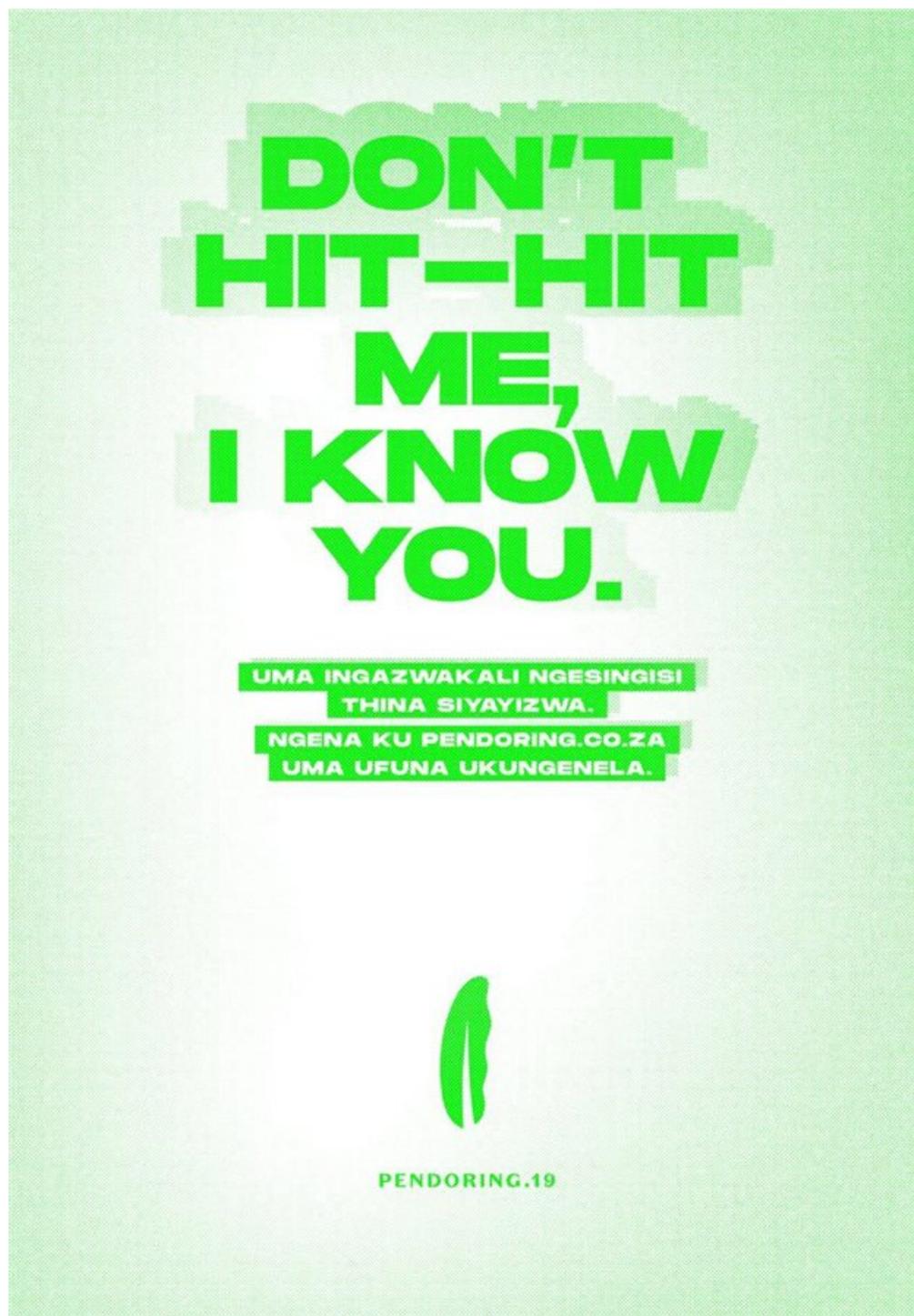


For example, the move to include and reward the best indigenous language advertising without any separation has been lauded as a ground-breaking, meaningful acknowledgement of local creative work that hasn't been 'copy-pasted' from elsewhere.

Here, Joe Public United chief creative officer Xolisa Dyeshana, as well as art director and copywriter team responsible for the campaign, Tshepo Mgorosi and Tshepo Tumahole, let us in on the essence of this year's Pendorring campaign...

■ ***The Pendorrings are special as they celebrate advertising and communication in indigenous languages. Why is this so NB, especially here in SA?***

It's really important that we celebrate advertising in indigenous languages because South Africa is a unique country, with many indigenous languages, many of which are under threat of being used less and less often, as preference is given to English.

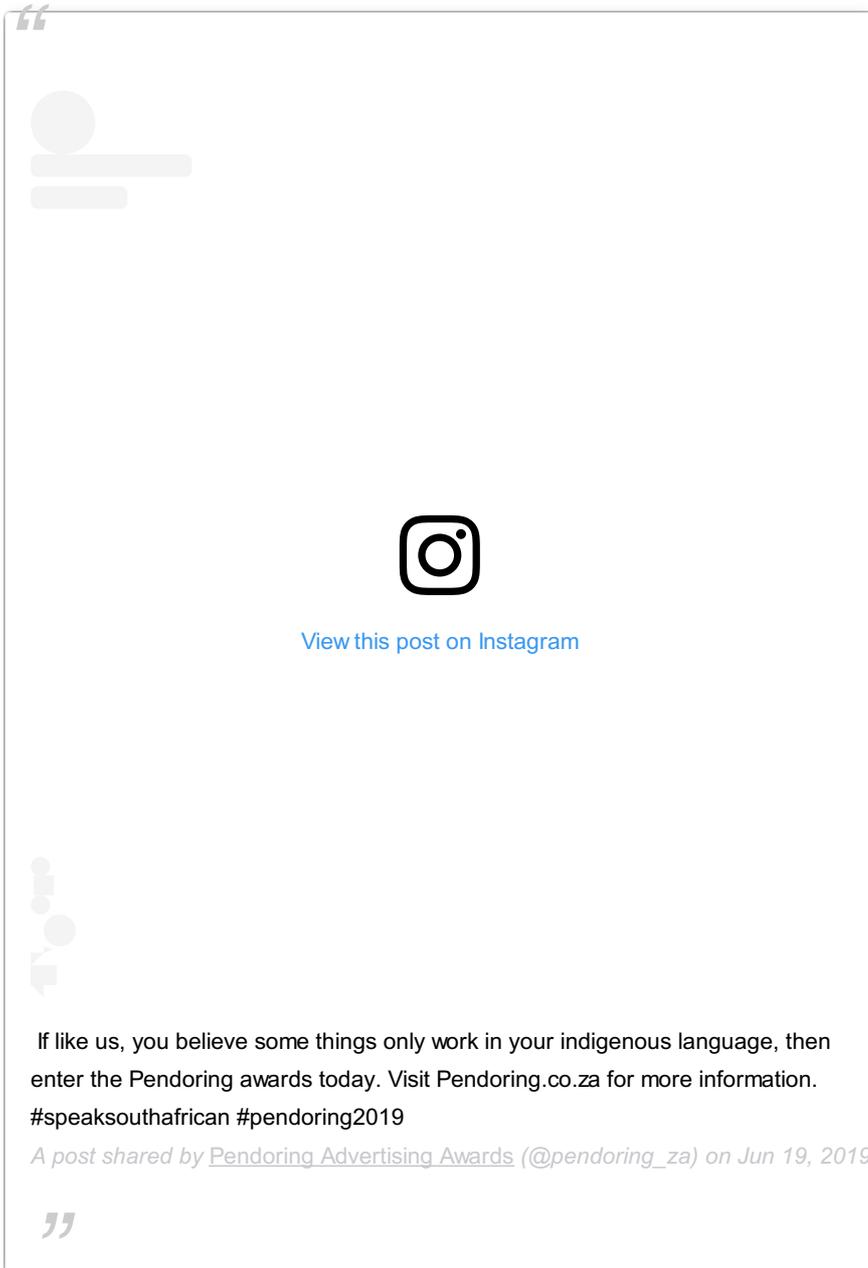


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We know that to really, truly communicate with people, and to resonate with them, you have to be able to speak to them in their own language. Advertising can play a very big role, in terms of preserving our languages and celebrating them.

That is what makes the Pendorring Awards special in our industry.

■ ***"Think, create and share in your indigenous language" ties in with Madiba's sentiment that when you speak to someone in their mother-tongue, you really do speak to their hearts. How can we encourage more of this in our creative spaces?***



The challenge is a huge one. It goes far beyond just advertising agencies.

We need to get clients on board, we need to get companies on board, we need to get media owners on board.

There is a tendency, often within our country, where the vernacular or the indigenous version of any ad is usually derived from the English. This is a great tragedy for our communications space.

There is a huge opportunity to connect with people more, if ads are conceptualised and executed with different language

groups in mind, so we're not just thinking of one type of consumer and then duplicating it for the rest of the languages.

■ **Joe Public is responsible for this year's Pendorings creative campaign - I love what I've seen so far on Insta! Explain the brief and how you came up with the end result. Was it a clear winner from the start or were there creative twists and turns along the way?**

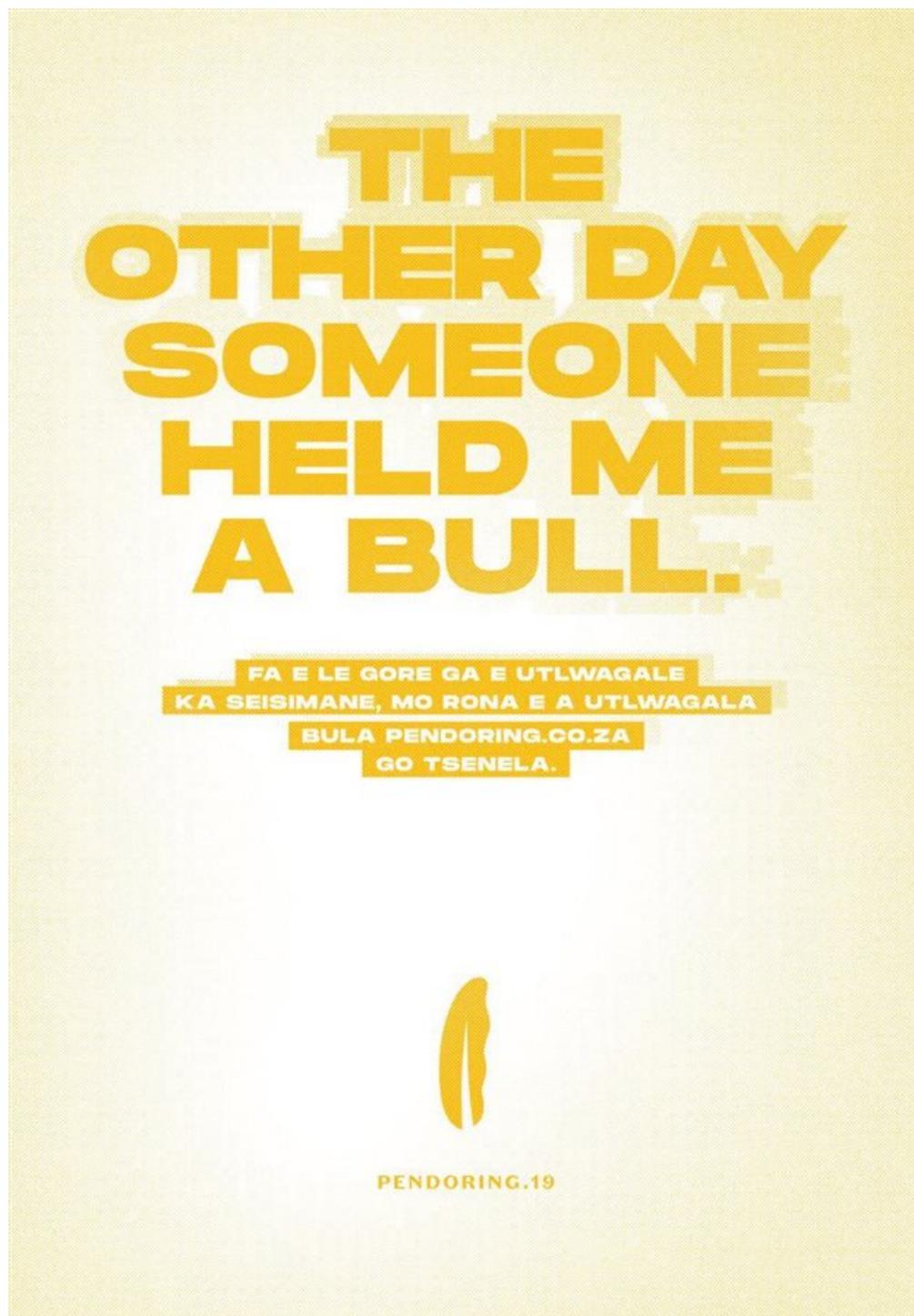


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When we got the brief, it was very exciting, for us it was a challenge to take the vernacular from just translating things to actually making sure that we come up with an idea in the vernacular, because usually when we do this type of work, we take the English and translate it.



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It was fun for us to actually show that in vernacular languages, you have things like riddles and figures of speech that you can play around with and create work that will be memorable, work that will be targeted at the particular audience you want to talk to.

So we took it from that sentiment and that's how we came up with the Pendorring 2019 campaign, where we used things people usually speak about, but only people who speak vernac would actually 'get'.

The fun part in it was actually creating the first 'vernacular language' campaign done in English.



When you grow taal you can grow taller

Joe Public 5 Nov 2018



They also went for a simple approach in making the consumer understand the visual language through illustrations to help the consumer 'get' the campaign easier, but it didn't work as they were giving the idea quite easily to the consumer.

So they considered approaching it from a language point of view, where they wrote the lines in English, with the sub-headlines in the vernacular language the people speak, so that they would get the idea quite easily.

Dyeshana adds that they were meant to do a vernacular campaign. What the team came up with instead was something they felt was unique, as it ended up being an English campaign that can only be understood in the vernacular. He feels this is a unique space to be.

He also expanded on what the second Tshepo Mogorosi, the art director, explained that they went through quite a few iterations in terms of the look of the campaign.



#LoeriesRanking with... Joe Public

Leigh Andrews 1 Dec 2017



There was the consideration of doing the line as well as an illustration that pertains to the saying, but they found that the sayings were powerful on their own. Hence the decision was made to rather make it a powerful copy-run campaign, using some of the most common phrases used in different vernaculars, showing how none of them makes sense in English though they make sense in the vernacular.

This exemplifies the tag line, "if it only works in the indigenous language, it works for us."

■ **Joe Public tends to do really well at the Pendorings, last year also taking home the Umpetha Award for the best advertisement in an indigenous language excluding Afrikaans. At the time you commented that "Creativity is about stretching your mind to make magic." How do you get clients to go along with that 'beyond the norm' way of thinking, in truly touching consumers with magic?**

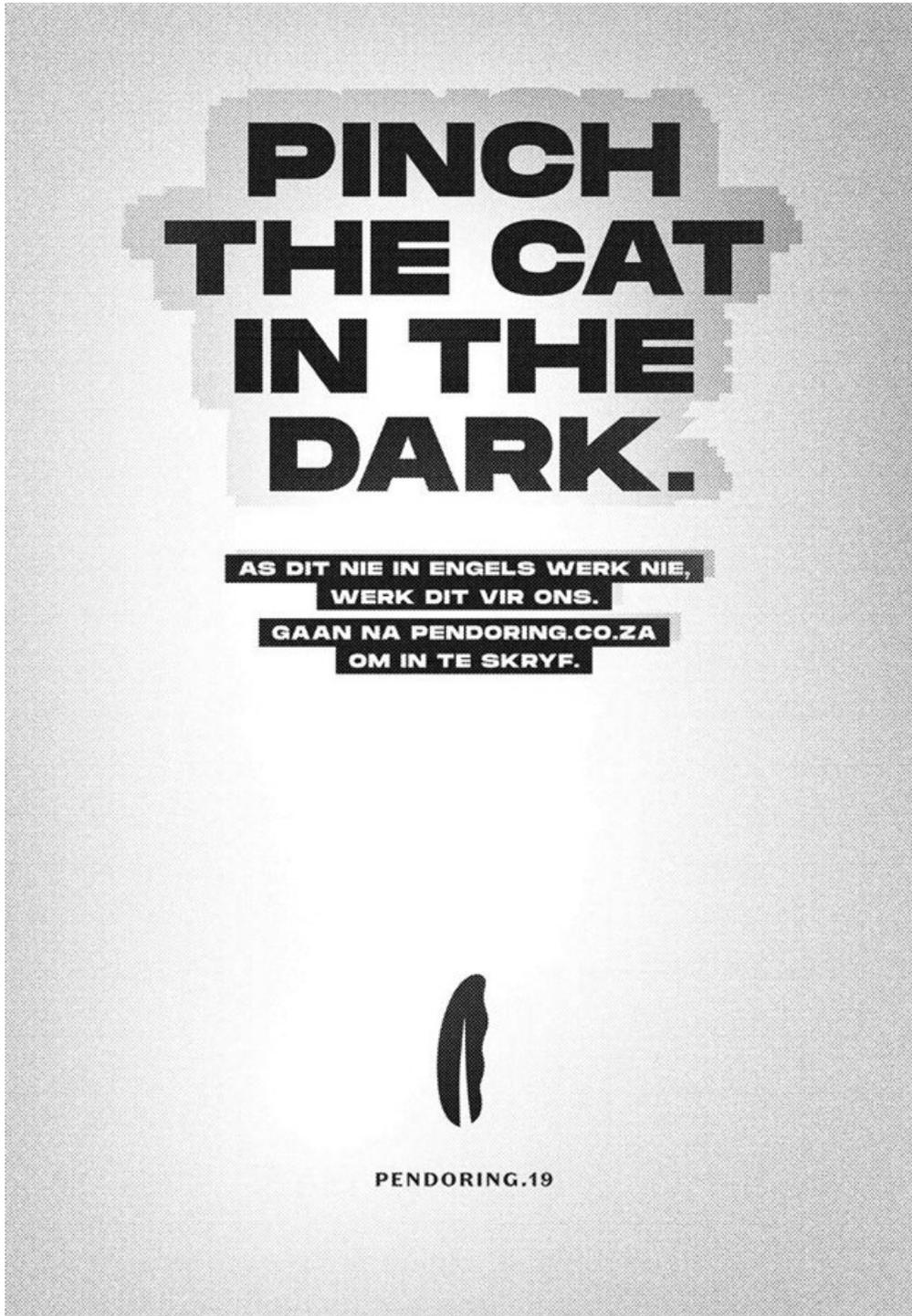
We believe in growth. Growth of our people, the growth of our clients, the growth of our country. What we try and get our clients to see is that safe thinking is not what brings growth. Therefore stretching your mind and doing things in a unique way that resonates with your market is what is necessary..

#LoeriesBrandRankings: The fire and spice of Joe Public's Chicken Licken work





We believe that more indigenous advertising is needed in South Africa. We find that when we do that kind of work, we resonate more with our customers, we find that our work has a more unique, local and resonant flavour; we find that it connects more, we find that it stands out more, in the sea of sameness that we see in the industry.



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It's important to encourage bravery and work with brave clients in order for their brands to truly connect with South African audiences

■ *Pendoring now also reveals its Rankings, totally independent from any other local creative ranking. How important are these rankings to the agencies, production companies and schools that take part?*

It's always good to be able to have a birds-eye view of awards shows, and which agencies did how well.



#Pendoring2018: Lucky number 13

Danette Breitenbach 2 Nov 2018



Hopefully, something like this will encourage agencies to want to move up in those rankings, and to do more resonant and bespoke South African work.

Thumbs (and tongues) crossed! We'll be providing live coverage of the awards and will publish the winner list and exclusive comments in full. Click here for the full list of finalists, visit the [Pendoring press office](#) and follow them on Twitter and Facebook for the latest updates. Click through to the [Pendoring special section](#) for more, and be sure to follow both the [Pendornings](#) and Joe Public United on Instagram for their 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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