

Q&A w/ Jacquin Botha: Stay curious. Stay hungry. Stay winning!

By  [Juanita Pienaar](#)

19 Feb 2019

Hailing from the dusty streets of Riverview, Worcester in the Western Cape, Jacquin Botha is a man who wears many hats (literally and figuratively), including that of creative director, art director, designer and well-known fashion/commercial photographer.



Jacquin Botha, creative director, art director, designer and well-known fashion/commercial photographer.

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A post shared by [Jacquin Botha](#) (@jacquinb) on Feb 18, 2016 at 5:55pm PST

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Botha has worked for top agencies together with well-known brands and has even bagged some of SA's most sought-after awards. Here, he tells us about his journey thus far, the state of the advertising industry, what makes award-winning work and what's next...

■ **Share the condensed version of your journey thus far and how you got started.**

I started my studies at the then Cape Technikon (now CPU) doing the bridging course where I studied four design disciplines (graphic, interior, fashion and industrial design). This is where my love for fashion design and photography started.

I was then scouted by one of SA's most awarded creative directors, Ross Chowles from the Jupiter Drawing Room in Cape Town to join The Ripple Effect (an in-house ad incubator programme). There, I got to shoot my first TV commercial with the now famous Anton Visser. From there I moved to Joburg to work for numerous agencies: JWT (Absa+Ford), Y&R (PnP), TBWA (Standard Bank/Nissan/Tiger Brands), The Jupiter Drawing Room (Absa) and Ireland Davenport (Standard Bank).



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■ **Elaborate on a few of your most interesting projects.**

Notably, my most iconic work was done on Ford where I've won Loeries/Pendorings and BestAdsonTV awards. My biggest achievement so far has been playing a pivotal role in taking Standard Bank from [the most hated bank spot](#) with a campaign that has now become iconic, What's Your Next?.



#NewCampaign: Standard Bank's *next*

Jessica Tennant 27 Jul 2017



This to me was my biggest 'award' since it meant so much more than a piece of metal - it spoke to actual results and

targets being shattered. I spearheaded my first TV game show *Your Next Million*, followed by *My Fearless Next*, a business/entrepreneurial TV show.

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[#Reflection. In awe. Such a wonderful thing. This is a motivational post. Meant to inspire the ones doubting themselves and their abilities. It's for all the ones with low self-esteem and little faith in the future. No matter your background, you are destined to be great. Be amazing. Be #awesome. Thank you for all the support in my journey thus far. I'm humbled and #grateful for all this God-given talent. Make the most of your time. To God all the #honour for all of this. #creativeDirector #YourNextMillion #setlife #banking #southafrica #artdirector #set #design #graphicdesign #menswear #mensfashion #hatgame #hat](#)

A post shared by [Jacquin Botha](#) (@jacquimb) on Mar 22, 2018 at 11:22pm PDT

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I was one of the masterminds behind Cassper Nyovest's Fill Up FNB stadium which caused a social media storm because FNB wasn't interested to sponsor him and we saw it as a perfect opportunity to hi-jack the show.

Prior to this campaign, I worked on a youth campaign for Standard Bank, #Today, with some of the county's most influential trendsetters like Moonchild Sanelly, Dear Ribane, I See A Different You, The Sartists, to name a few; shot by the insanely talented Kyle Lewis who is known for his work on Nike, BMW and a string of South Africa's most creative music videos for Nasty C and Riky Rick.



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Egg Films 19 Apr 2018



■ **Comment on the state of the advertising industry in SA.**

The SA ad industry has been 'transforming' ever since I started my career. It's been a slow process with the majority of agencies still being governed by global holding firms.

It's only within the last couple of years where black-owned agencies started taking its rightful place within the industry. It's sad that the industry is still so untransformed, so much so that you still get juries of major award shows - lily white, with a few black faces to window dress the dire situation.

Talented 'people of colour' are still being marginalised, disrespected and mistreated with little to no support from HR departments who are too afraid to speak out in fear of losing their jobs.

“ Still, too many fossils in the industry calling the shots - that's why we end up with black people dancing in ads - a sad state of affairs indeed. ”

■ **Who are some of your role models - people you look up to and people who inspire you?**
I would always be grateful to Ross Chowles who gave me a chance. Then there's Rob McLennan, arguably one of the best ECDs I've had the privilege of working with. Ahmed Tilly, Neo Mashigo and Tseliso Rangaka are probably the guys that inspire me the most; no surprise to see them on most-admired lists annually.



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Leigh Andrews 27 Feb 2018



■ **What do you think makes award-winning work?**

For me, it starts with the most intrinsic aspect of it all: the idea; the simpler the better. If you can't explain the idea in a single sentence you probably need to rethink. Advertising is solving problems in a creative way. If the core of the idea speaks to a human truth, you're halfway there because it's easier to sell people something they can relate to.

Once you have the idea, then it boils down to the packaging of the idea (no, not the plastic wrapping), how the idea gets sold to the client in such a manner that they literally can't wait to go to market asap. Then there's the crafting of the idea, the look and feel of the campaign, tone, logo, collateral, media, etc. – where does it live? TV, online? Is it a stunt/activation/outdoor or 360 idea? All this backed by behavioural economics and research, even anthropology plays a major role.



The art of anthropology and B2B communication

Claire Denham-Dyson 24 Nov 2017



All these things get considered during this phase because in today's terms, speed is everything. Digital and (promoted) social media play a major role in bringing the idea to life – of course, if the idea tackles a social cause, it's shared organically (which is what we are all after – organic, unpaid media that goes viral).

■ **Any advice you'd like to give to newbies hoping to crack into the industry?**

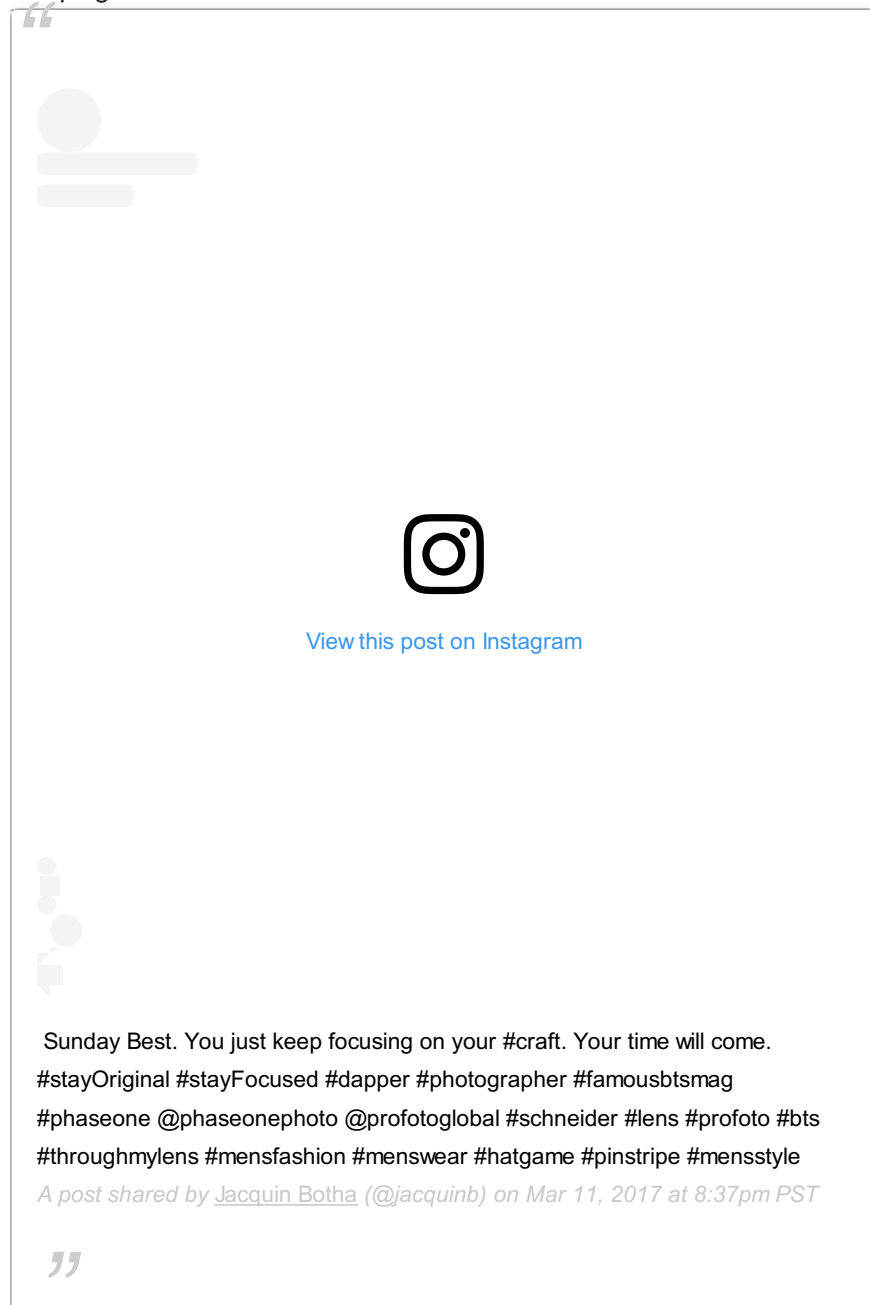
Don't get into advertising... Unless you absolutely love the thrill of coming up with ideas that can ultimately change someone's life or elevate your client's brand. Nothing beats that feeling to look back at your campaign and say: 'I did that'.

To take an idea from incubation to realisation is an absolute thrill. It's not easy to sell and not all ideas get bought. I've got a ton of ideas that got bombed and never saw the light of day but that is all part of the industry. Ego won't get you far.

Network. Stay humble and let your work do the talking. Do work that makes you proud.

“ *Don't do work with the outset of winning awards. Do work that your client will thank you for, compelling work that's going to help them reach their targets.* ”

If you so happen to win an award in the process. Bonus. Never stop working on your portfolio, you're as good as your last campaign.



Teamwork: Know that you're a cog in the system, one of the moving parts that make the machine work.

“ *Stay on top of your game, get to know the business behind advertising, expand your knowledge outside of advertising and lastly, if someone gives you an opportunity, take it and make the most of it.* ”

Stay curious. Stay hungry. Stay winning and don't forget to praise God for your talent.

■ **Anything new and exciting in the pipeline?**

At the moment I'm working on a business campaign for one of SA's biggest cellular brands. A new exciting concentrate product and an app innovation idea for an investment bank. Sorry, I can't say more than this at this moment in time.

Follow Botha on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). You can also follow a page dedicated to his fashion photography on [Facebook](#).

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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