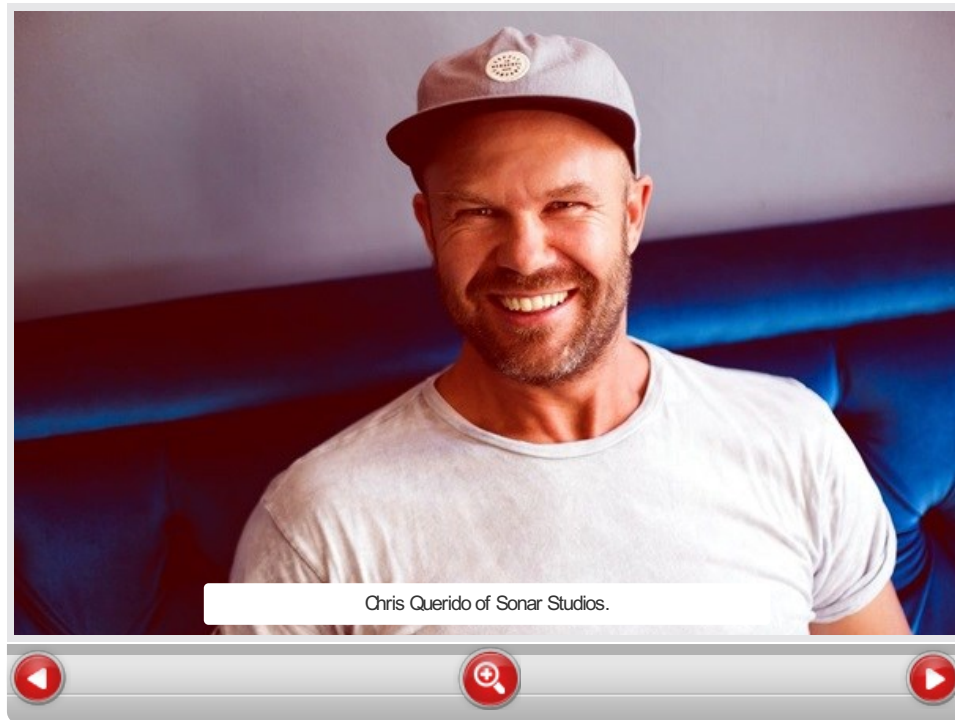


"Award-winning work comes from creative compatibility and collaboration" - Sonar Studios

 By Leigh Andrews

16 Mar 2018

Sonar Studios owner, composer, sound designer and creative director Chris Querido let us in on his successes on the local and global award track over the past year.



The year may just be a few months old but it's off to a very good start for Sonar Studios, with 'Reign of Ian', the integrated campaign they're working on for Ster-Kinekor with FoxP2 already recognised with TV, video and cinema bronze in Creative Circle's monthly awards for December 2017 as well as with a special mention in IDidTht's January SA Film Reel Monthly Craft Awards - all before the main advertising award tracks of the year take off.

And that's just the latest in a string of accolades for Sonar Studios. In the past year alone, creative sound work by Sonar Studios has picked up an Ornico Ad of the Week, a Vimeo Staff Pick, D&AD Pencil, bronze Cannes Lions and Loeries TV, film and video category gold.

But Querido explains that their true success story unravels back to when he effectively started Sonar a decade ago when he first moved to Cape Town in 2008. At that stage, he was operating as a freelancer and still travelling to London each year for the iTunes Festivals – he'd often be there for three months of the year.

At the same time, Querido was doing composing work for commercials, building up a library music catalogue and also doing sound design and final mix work for various clients and audio post studios in Cape Town. January 2015 was finally the right time to 'formalise' Sonar, so they moved into their audio post facility at Graceland, 29 Sir Lowry Road in Woodstock.



Sonar Studios.

Querido says it's been an amazing ride so far and they're going from strength to strength, feeling privileged to do the work they do and thankful to all the clients who have trusted them with their creations.

The business of making music that moves people

Impressive, but the story doesn't end there. Querido shares that he's also constantly working on passion projects, which he hopes will succeed in their own right. For example, he's just launched ZYO, an electronic music artist on a mission to spread the ideals of unity and positivity, through the universal language of music.

Querido describes 'We Are One', the first single released worldwide by ZYO a few days ago and getting its first play on SA radio this week, as "a celebration of the beauty that connects us all." While it strongly features vocals by Mpumi Sizani, Querido's own voice also makes a cameo appearance on the song.

He's clearly got music running through his veins but isn't one to sound his own trumpet. On the calibre of SA's behind-the-scenes ad production, Querido says, "We have top-notch agency creatives, film directors, editors, VFX (visual effects), video post professionals, and everything in-between. I'm always super impressed at the calibre of work that gets done in our country and often with a very limited budget. The South African creative community is right up there with the world's best."

As proof of this, Querido explains that collaboration is crucial. A key part of Sonar's creative process is to listen to their clients and to try and really understand what the vision is for a particular piece of work.

“ After all, we're hired to help execute a creative idea and we come in towards the end of a long process for the agency and creatives who conceptualised the idea. We almost want to step out of the way of the vision and do our bit to augment and enhance it. ”

So, for the work that's Western Cape Government commercial "Everybody Knows," they handled sound design and the final mix, while also working closely in studio with creative director Gareth Cohen and then-ECD Graham Lang.



Graham Lang on leaving the SA creative industry in good hands

Leigh Andrews 6 Oct 2017



“ We crafted and experimented for hours until we found the sweet spot and the guys were happy. Ultimately, our clients need to be proud of the finished product because it's their creation and idea – so we do all we can to get it there. ”

That strategy is clearly paying off. I caught up with Querido himself to find out how Sonar Studios plan to extend their winning streak this year and who they admire most in the industry...

■ What do you attribute 2017's successes to?

2016 and 2017 were great years creatively speaking, and this ultimately led to awards recognition.

Just take 2017: It started nicely with the news that the Opel "Mokka Moments" TV commercial was recognised as the Ornico Ad of the Week. We composed the music for the commercial, and it immediately appeared to resonate with the public.

We were flooded with messages on YouTube from people asking where they could download the song, which is always a very good sign.

This was followed by news that Ari Kruger's short film *Jakkals 13* was selected as a Vimeo Staff Pick! We composed the film's score and also handled sound design and final mix.



#BehindtheSelfie with... Ari Kruger

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The good news continued when we learned that the Master Lock "Something to Hide" radio commercial campaign, which we worked on for FoxP2, had won a D&AD Pencil. We composed the original music for the three radio ads.

This was followed by news that the Western Cape Government spot “Everybody Knows” was recognised at Cannes Lions with a bronze award. The commercial then went on to win gold in TV and film at the Loeries.

These successes can be attributed to creative compatibility with our clients, mixed with a desire to always be proud of the work that we produce. To expand on this, I have always found that working with clients who have the same drive, vision and ambition to do great work is the key to unlocking the magic. If everyone involved has a singular vision, then the chances of creating memorable work is exponentially higher.

■ ***As a result of that Loeries gold win, you were also ranked as fourth-best TV, film and video recording studio the 2017 Loeries Ranking table. What plans are already underway to better your ranking in the coming year?***

We don’t chase awards or rankings, to be honest. It’s never been a focus of ours. Our aim is to do great work and we’re constantly looking to improve and deliver better music and sound design for our clients. It is awesome when work is recognised though – it’s good for PR.

■ ***How does the 2017 Loeries flock differ from your haul the previous year?***

We’ve been involved in gold- and bronze-Loerie award-winning work in the past, but the difference in 2017 is that we scooped the big ones in the TV, film and video category.

■ ***Tell us who you personally admire in the industry.***

Before I got into advertising, I worked with some amazing artists during my time in London. I am fortunate enough to have worked with Paul McCartney, Amy Winehouse, Snow Patrol, Oasis, Kanye West, Mumford & Sons and Bloc Party, to name a few. Working in close proximity to artists of this calibre and seeing their humbleness and their approach to their work, served as both the biggest inspiration and learning experience of my career.

Lots to learn from Querido in turn, and to look forward to creatively from 2018! [Click through](#) to our Loeries' special section for more, and be sure to follow Querido on [Twitter](#). You can also follow Sonar Studios on their [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Vimeo](#) and [YouTube](#) channels.

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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