

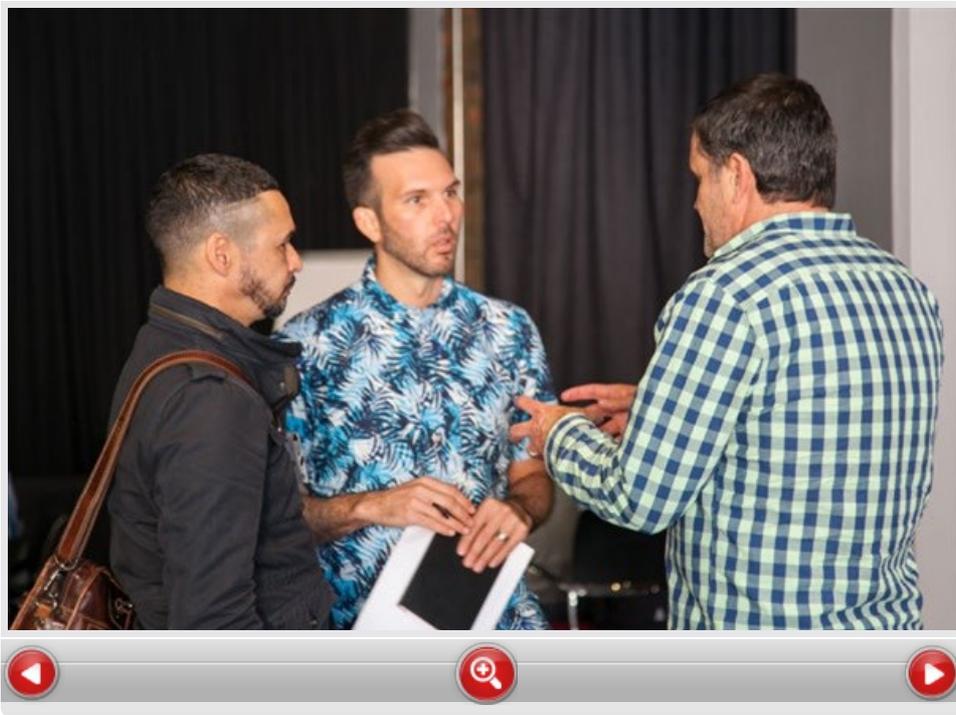
Deepening SA's diversity drive

 By Leigh Andrews

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Diversity's a touchy subject for some, but in our industry we frequently hear it put as bluntly as this: "There just isn't enough black creative talent". Here's how the One Show is slowly but surely turning this situation on its head, and proving the talent is out there, if given a chance.

It's hardly a surprise that only a tiny percentage of the top-level creatives in South Africa have skin that's of a darker hue. Two decades after democracy shook things up and you wouldn't really know it if you walked into the bulk of South Africa's creative studios and agencies today. Luckily the One Show – with South African International Board of Directors representative Ross Chowles, known to most as executive creative director of [The Jupiter Drawing Room Cape Town](#) – is leading the local diversity drive in the next iteration of its diversity boot camp series. His self-imposed mandate is to help raise creative standards through education programmes with an emphasis on black creative talent.



A selection of images from last year's One Show diversity boot camp in Cape Town © One Show.

That clear-cut, no-nonsense focus is why last year's inaugural boot camp, held in Cape Town, was a resounding success. So much so that this year's rendition will also be held in Johannesburg, in order to target even more undiscovered talent. That's more than mere lip service. The creative diversity boot camps offer more than just a week's snapshot of agency life. They also give the attendees – chosen based on the merit of design scamps they enter – the opportunity to be snapped up for recruitment by the boot camp's sponsors.

Real brief, real deadlines, real results

Part of the One Show's boot camps' success model is that they've been held in China and the US since their inception. And it's just that 'cross-country exchange programme' mentorship aspect that makes the boot camps so effective. "It's been a wonderful experience – not just for me, but also for the kids who want to enter the world of advertising," sums up Jimmy Smith, who serves as chairman, CEO and CCO of Amusement Park Entertainment and was one of the 2015 One Show Diversity Bootcamp's international lecturers/mentors in South Africa. The attendees got insights from big names in the local

industry as well as hands-on guidance and tips that bring with them an air of global freshness. The best part though is that they [worked on a real brief](#) provided by a real client, complete with the rush of working to a presentation deadline and letting the work speak for itself.

That's because the ultimate goal is to get the local advertising industry to hire more black students and place more black talent. It's unfortunately the specific problem of a skewed and un-diverse talent pool due to South Africa's history, explains Xolisa Dyeshana, creative director at Joe Public agency.

Kevin Swanepoel, CEO of the One Club for Art & Copy, adds that the diversity boot camp drive ties into their mission to bring about this type of change for good in the industry.

Keep an eye out for coverage of the 2016 One Show South Africa boot camps, set to take place in Cape Town from 4 to 8 July with Woolworths as sponsor and then with 80 attendees in Johannesburg, from 11 to 15 July – sponsor still to be confirmed. There'll also be professional development workshops, like a comedy writer's workshop and a variation of Chowles' [brainstorming workshop](#) during One Show 2016 Creative Week in New York. [Click here](#) to view video highlights from last year's One Show Diversity Boot Camp in Cape Town and [click here](#) for a reminder of my overview.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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