

Only two Gold Eagles go to King James, DDB SA

 By [Gwen Watkins](#)

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There were only two Gold Eagles awarded this year in the Eagle Print Awards, sponsored by Independent Newspapers and the Inc: one went to King James (Cape Town) and the other to DDB South Africa. Continuing the Cape flush, a sweep of Bronze Eagles winged their way to Jupiter Drawing Room (Cape Town) at the award evening held earlier this week at the refurbished Alexander Theatre in Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

Winners

- DDB South Africa - Gold Eagle for Campaign (Energizer Batteries); Silver Eagle for Product (Energizer Batteries)
- King James (Cape Town) - Gold Eagle for Best Tactical Use of Medium for the Cape Argus;
- Jupiter Drawing Room (Cape Town) - four Bronze Eagles - two for Best Tactical Use of Medium (Design Indaba 11 and Sanlam Topaz); one for Corporate advertising (only award in this category for Sanlam Private Investments) and one for Campaign (for Sanlam Private Investments)
- Joe Public South Africa - Silver Eagle for Product (Mahindra); Bronze Eagle for Campaign (Mahindra)
- Ogilvy Johannesburg - Silver Eagle for Campaign (Tabasco); Bronze Eagle for Campaign (Greenpeace)
- Saatchi & Saatchi (Johannesburg) - Bronze Eagle for Product (Oil of Olay)
- King James (Johannesburg) - Bronze Eagle for Campaign (Cape Union Mart)
- Volcano Advertising - Bronze Eagle for Campaign (Dewfresh Long Life Milk)
- No awards in Public Service & Charities or Student Categories

There only two Gold Eagles were awarded in what was seen as a stringent judging session by internationally renowned creatives, Erik Vervroegen and Tony Davidson. They noted that the standard, though technically very good, failed to ignite their enthusiasm. The use of visual jokes was not strong enough to engage consumers in a dialogue with the product in the print medium, and so messages were lost amidst a sea of similar adverts.

They added that South African agencies were admired internationally for their skill and craft and that these criticisms were being levelled globally at print advertising. They congratulated all the winners and encouraged them to come back again next year with more determination, creativity and even a spark of guerrilla edginess to ensure that a Black Eagle was awarded - it was not awarded this year.

Breakfast with originality

Another highlight of the Eagle Print Awards was the Breakfast Seminar, at which the judges give South African audiences in Cape Town and Johannesburg a taste of international trends and a glimpse of the future.

Vervroegen opened by shocking his audience with his admission that his agency had failed to repeat its 15 Golden Lion wins at Cannes 2007, only garnering two at Cannes 2008. They had to ask, "What went so wrong, when we thought we had it so right?" In retrospect, they concluded that the work had been slick, unimaginative and predictable.

So Vervroegen put together fantastic ideas in art, design work, graffiti, comics, slogans and even old work from the 70s and the creative team compared that with the work they had produced. This was used to create and present new ideas to their clients.

The breakfast audience was then treated to this amazing slideshow of edgy art, disturbing images and pre-computer pictures that told the story - sometimes shockingly, sometimes amusingly, but more ironically rather than quick, slick humour.

Davidson emphasised the need to surround oneself with creativity through an alliance between unlikely people - street artists, designers and even architects - if it could bring about a riveting collaboration of talent. When he started in the industry, Paul Arden would ask every creative person, "Where's your library?" and so he learnt to collect ideas, tear out vivid images, take photos of memorable doodles and scribbles, even typefaces and fashion designs.

Slideshow

His slideshow illustrated this with designs from the '50s and '60s, modern art, wild architecture, magazine layouts and use of words and typefaces to create spaces and focal points. Davidson particularly highlighted Alexey Brodovitch because he was perhaps the single most powerful influence on the development of practicing artists, designers and photographers of his time, and he left an incomparable legacy of living talent. Alexey's famous lines were 'break the rules' and 'astonish me' and this is what Davidson felt was needed in today's advertising.

They concluded by urging everyone to rethink the standard print advertising that sought to capture attention with obvious jokes and quick one-liners and remember that print has to compete against advertising that can offer sound, movement and interaction - the beauty of a still life painting against the movies.

Got SUCH A TOUGH VEHICLE,
 It may be surprising to hear
IT WAS OFTEN *put through its paces!*

Official vehicle of the Indian Air Force



Ogilvy Johannesburg - Silver
Eagle for Campaign (Tabasco)

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King James (Cape Town) -
Gold Eagle for Best Tactical
Use of Medium for the Cape
Argus;

[click to enlarge](#)



DDB South Africa - Gold Eagle
for Campaign (Energizer
Batteries)

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ABOUT GWEN WATKINS

Gwen Watkins is a freelance writer, editor, subeditor and author. Almost 40 years of experience across industrial and commercial writing, as a reporter and PR consultant, has given her expert grounding in brand communication and native advertising. A Master NLP Practitioner, she uses these skills within the creation of copywriting, annual reports, brochures and website copy.

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