

INTERVIEW TO THE CANNES LIONS 2013 JURY PRESIDENTS FOR BRAND NEWS - Mary Lewis

1) How do you explain the importance of user experience to the marketers, your clients? How to translate this approach typical of digital and certainly in design, to 'traditional' media?

In design we have always been brand experience architects. We are at the heart of 'the moment of truth', the point at which the consumer fully immerses themselves in the brand. Our challenge is to create value by building a richer experience.

What is exciting about the revolution going on in marketing is the blurring of boundaries and richer palette of tools. Now, the moment of truth, the opportunity to experience the brand, is not just at the point of consumption or purchase but can be at any number of interactions.

It's no longer enough to think about 'telling and selling' in traditional media - a simple monologue to passive consumers. The opportunity is to create a hybrid between communications and the service experience. There's value in this. We know that the brain processes feelings created by an experience, quicker and deeper than information.

2) According to your personal experience, what do people want today from advertising and from advertising professionals?

In an increasingly complex world clients need communication professionals to be part psychiatrist, magician, bank manager.

We are an ideas industry but it's important not to forget that thinking creates the value currency of our business.

Ideas need to be rigorously relevant. They can tick the magician's box – wonderful, new, and engaging, but too few come from accurate diagnosis of brand issue or have a clear link to business objectives.

3) INNOVATION LIONS is the latest novelty of Cannes Lions and it will be a chance to see ideas that go beyond traditional advertising. Can you tell me some example of game changing ideas? What marketers - from the small-medium-enterprise to multinational companies - should learn from?

In terms of game changing ideas it's worth looking at the Lifebuoy 'Help a child reach 5' advertising by Lowe Lintas + Partners. Or the work done at The New Royal London hospital by Vital Arts, architects Cottrell and Vermeulen and designer Morag Myerscough (vitalarts.org.uk/commissionsgbarts-and-london-childrens-hospital).

They are brilliant examples of our industry's ability to create change. They're inspiring, humbling and important. We can all learn from them.

4) Creatives say that the big idea is indifferent to technology and media. But is it true also that now creativity is part of the evolution of digital media and often creative ideas start from the possibilities that tech offer. What do you think about this exchange between creativity and technologies and of its next evolution?

Creatives are inspired by other industries and technology, as well as life!

But our purpose as brand designers is - to create strong emotional connections with brands.

Technology is not an idea. It can serve and magnify an idea, making it more powerful, but it cannot replace the thinking.

5) One of the workshops in the programme of Cannes Lions is 'Saving Greece', focused on searching brilliant ideas to renovate Greece's brand beyond the crisis. Now we are asking you - one of the most influent ad-man in the world - one idea for Italy's brand, to relaunch the country for international investors, tourists and the citizens themselves.

Hands up I'm not an Ad-man! But as a designer, I would make Milan the capital. . . moving the country's centre of gravity north.

Internationally a country is defined by its capital – it sets the pace and tone of the country

and establishes its image – think what brand London has done to define and shape the UK's reputation internationally.

Rome is one of my all-time favourite cities and its defining imagery is based on rich history.

It's the city of love and lifestyle, not enterprise and dynamism –great mood music for a short break, maybe less so for international investor confidence.

If those who run Italy are surrounded by this imagery it affects how they are seen and the confidence stakeholders have in them to deliver in a dynamic global environment.

The North of Italy has very different mood music. The global fashion and style conglomerates. The thriving businesses that define luxury - Ferrari, Armani, Bulgari.

So I'd change the background imagery around Italy's decision makers; casting them in a new light.