

Q&A: Geoffrey Hantson

Chief Creative Officer, Happiness, an FCB Alliance, in Brussels and Saigon
Judge at The Caples Awards 2022



Geoffrey is one of the most creative people in advertising. That's not just our opinion. It's what *Business Insider* called him before moving him in 2013 to the No. 1 spot, the world's most creative person.

Some spectacular work as evidence. Remember 'Push to Add Drama'? A zillion views on YouTube. And what about Carling 'Bikers'? At least 40 million views.

We caught up with Geoffrey to find out a bit more about the man and his work.

Q: These are strange and unusual times. How has the pandemic been for you personally?

G: Please don't misunderstand me or take this as disrespect of any kind because obviously I think that Covid is truly disastrous for anybody who lost a loved one. But I must admit that there's a part of this pandemic that I really like: it puts us, humans, back with our feet on the ground. We so much tend to think of ourselves as the most intelligent and the most dominant species here on earth. However, it only takes a tiny spoon of virus to wipe us all out. Mix the contagiousness of Covid with the deadliness of Ebola and it's all over. Within the timeline of the universe, humans are a recent and possibly temporary thing. We should all be much more humble.

Q: Do you have a side-hustle? What do you do outside your job as a counterbalance to the stresses and strains of your job?

G: Long time ago my side-hustle used to be poetry. It was my dream to become a poet and live a poetic life. However, I soon discovered that my talent wasn't bigger than a blade of grass. So, to compensate - and to get rid of my frustrations I guess - I specialised in martial arts. Well, not too much the 'arts' part of it I must admit. I'm a heavy 'Krav Maga' practitioner. Google it, you'll see. It's tough, it's aggressive, it's defence and attack at the same time, you get hit a lot and it teaches you to be resilient, to develop the ability to bounce back and to push your boundaries, in the best possible way. Believe me, Krav Maga, more creatives should do that. For obvious reasons.



Q: In your career, which one piece of work are you most proud of? And why?

G: I know it's strange, but I don't feel any sense of pride by looking in the rear-view mirror. Proudness always strikes me when I'm with my feet in the mud. While striving and struggling and digging and going around in circles in yet another attempt to pull off yet another idea that might potentially be remarkable. This said, if your question would be if there is one piece of work that in retrospect proved to be a kind of turning point in my career, then I would say that it's probably 'Push to Add Drama' for TNT.



In this small town in Flanders, a girl pushes a button and thus sets off 90 seconds of mayhem. See the video [HERE](#).

Q: If you weren't in advertising, what would you be doing now?

G: As a child my dream was to cut people open with a little knife. Apparently I kept saying that... so I guess that if I wasn't in advertising I would be a surgeon. Or a psychopath.

Q: Are awards important?

G: Of course they are. As long as you give them the right kind of importance. I mean, first it's important to understand that they are part of the journey but never the destination. And secondly, I believe they are important for our clients because they attract talent. Which is 100% to their advantage.

Q: What does it mean to be a juror of The Caples Awards 2022?

G: Love the vibe of the Caples. Love to chat about work and ideas with people who share the same passion. Love the non-ego and non-politics and non-pure-profit feel of the Caples jury room.

Q: What sort of work are you hoping to see?

G: Mostly hope to see great stuff beyond the usual suspects.

Q: I know, I know. Impossible question but - what is your one all-time favourite piece of advertising, the one idea you both admire and envy and wish that you'd done yourself?

G: Impossible indeed, but hey, let me put that differently: I can say Honda "Grrr" from 2004 is one of my favourite pieces but, actually, it means so much more to me. It blew me out of my chair, for sure. But more importantly, it had a line that kind of changed the way I thought about life: 'Hate something, change something'. Since then, I live by it.