

Brands, pay attention to these new urban tribes

By  Juanita Pienaar

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International trends spotter Marian Salzman joined trend analyst and culture strategist Nicola Cooper and trend spotter Khumo Theko to talk about the evolution of women in pop culture and innovation in 2019 at an event held at Inner City Ideas Cartel in Cape Town earlier this month. Here follows my coverage of Theko's part of the talk.



Khumo Theko, trend spotter at Flux Trends.

If you have missed my coverage on the two other presentations, please click [here](#) for my insights on Salzman's talk and [here](#) for Cooper's.

Theko started her talk by saying that she was glad that she was closing off because what the two previous speakers highlighted was that we are currently moving into a space where we are all interacting on various platforms but also where we are looking at representation, and that taps on diversity. What's happening now is that we are going to move and progress into a space where it's all about inclusivity.



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Recently Flux Trends, the agency where Theko works, released a presentation and trend briefing that highlighted new urban tribes and she said that they titled it 'Consciously Diverse' - essentially awakening businesses to the understanding that just because you have identified a millennial, they don't necessarily fit into a box.

There are various cohorts that are connected, that are socially motivated and globally connected but we all stand for something different. So to close the topic Theko said that she was going to introduce us to just a few of these tribes.

The femtrepreneurs

Since Donald Trump has been in the White House, we've seen global movements that have come forth and one of them is

your neo-feminists. Theko said from this we're also starting to see that there is this rally and conversation around the representation of women but also essentially creating safe spaces where women can come together to support each other.

- The Wing is a good example of this. "As it stands right now it's a co-working space but they also do functions that cater to women and entrepreneurs and different forms of funding."
- From an African perspective, you have an organisation called She Leads Africa. "This movement caters to women on the continent and providing them with different forms of coaching and training to help them to start their own businesses."
- From a South African perspective, we have a fund that specifically caters to funding SMEs lead by women called Angel Fund.

System changes

Another tribe is called system changes. "Ironically, we are in 2019 but we're still in a place where women are not represented. We are still in a space where the LGBTQIA community is not represented and people with disabilities are not represented. Not just in terms of where you work but in terms of politics and that plays a very big role when you're talking to millennials and Generation Z," Theko said.

Then you have campaigns such as the "Not Too Young To Run" campaign in Nigeria and in Africa as well that are pushing younger people to get into politics. You have the 50/50 women campaign in Sweden that is pushing for more women to have a voice in politics. "We're also seeing in America where we have the likes of Ilhan Omar who was a refugee and is now a Muslim woman who is in Congress in America in this day and age," she added.

So now we are starting to see a lot more trailblazers who are going to come into spaces and rattle the cage.

“ It's not necessarily just about rattling the cage but it's about that element of representation. We are living in a digital community and what is happening in one country or on one continent does have an impact on the other and that form of representation is what we strongly need. ”

Woke businesses 2016 moving into 2017 the notion of identity, mainly looked at gender, culture and race. We saw it with the #BlackLivesMatter movement and the #MeToo movement but essentially what we're getting to is brands progressing from brand activism to morality marketing.

"So, as a brand you're taking a stand at what it is that you believe in. Not necessarily waiting for an event to happen, such as the #BlackLivesMatter to say that we support this but putting a fork in the stand and saying, 'This is what we stand for.' We saw that with Nike and we're starting to see that with other brands as well."



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Locally we saw with Black Label where they had the #NotEnough campaign and what they are doing is calling out men to say, "We as a brand that sells alcohol understand that we contribute to men using alcohol and using that as an excuse for domestic violence but we don't condone it and it is not something that we accept."

Whether or not they get backlash from it is neither here or there, but it is essentially communicating to their consumer.



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Femvertising

We're also moving into the concept of "femvertising", which has been around for a while. But now also we're seeing local brands moving into it as well. But it's not necessarily just highlighting social-cultural issues but also tapping on issues that haven't been brought to the forefront.



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Take for example Libresse who sells pads who has started a campaign called #BloodNormal. Through this campaign, they are questioning and challenging advertisers to show that women actually bleed red blood. In most of the advertisements, blood is always represented by a blue liquid but with the concept of femvertising it sheds light on and encourages brands to change stereotypes but also to bring forth more positive messaging with regards to communicating with your female consumer.



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Aside from that, with regards to moving beyond the notion of diversity, we're now moving into a space of inclusive diversity. So it's about not just having smarties in a room saying that we're a diverse company or brand, it's about having diverse people sitting at the table. It's your females, it's about people identifying with various genders or sexuality and it is also counting in people with disabilities.

Gallo/Getty Images has also released a collection of images whereby they highlight people with disabilities in the workplace and you don't necessarily think about it in that light because we can only see trends from our perspective because we're not necessarily in that person's shoes. But there are only 2% of images publically available that show a positive light to people with disabilities.

Dove partners with Getty Images and Girlgaze and launches Project #ShowUs





28 Mar 2019



That is moving beyond the conversation about diversity and considering what it is that the people that are in the room actually do and how much influence they have. Maybe we'll stop seeing brands like H&M and Pepsi getting it wrong.

For sure! Follow Theko on the following social media platforms: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#).

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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