



# GUEST BLOG: How the Irish are making their mark at Cannes Lions this week

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*By Anne Arnold, Event Coordinator with IAPI*

**This week, at Cannes Lions there are no borders. There is an indelible air of optimism and enthusiasm amongst the world's greatest creative minds.**

Each year at Cannes, there is a common theme running through the festival of creativity. This year, that theme is bravery. Bravery of advertisers to create inspired work, bravery of brands to take action and speak out on important issues and bravery of agencies to collaborate and diversify their workforce.

Before inviting Rev. Jesse Jackson to the stage Richard Edelman summed up the current global sentiment quite aptly – fear is overwhelming hope. In my lifetime, I have never before witnessed such levels of political unrest, mass migration and an overwhelming resurgence of xenophobia.

The can-do attitude and resilience in the face of adversity is most evident in the Young Lions competition for creatives aged 30 and under. Each of the seven categories are given a brief from an international charity and the creative duos then have 24 hours to create an award winning campaign.

This year IAPI is fielding the largest cohort of Irish Young Lions in the festival's 64-year history.

One of the greatest issues facing the advertising industry is the tempestuous relationship between clients and agencies. There is a desire from both sides to create award-winning work and yet the award winning work often never makes it beyond the pitch.

Rothco and AIB are a shining example of a flourishing creative relationship. When the lowest rated brand of all time, with an Edelman trust score of just 6%, approached Rothco as a new client – they had nothing to lose.

They had the bravery to trust the creative direction of their agency and afford them the freedom to create award winning campaigns, and in doing so highlighted [The Toughest](https://rothco.ie/casestudy/aib-toughest) (<https://rothco.ie/casestudy/aib-toughest>) GAA competition in existence.





Anne Arnold

Another Irish feature at Cannes Lions this year was Jameson discussing their massive investment in [Bow Street](https://www.jamesonwhiskey.com/ie/visit-us/jameson-distillery-bow-st) – their new brand HQ in Dublin. Jameson were on stage with Heineken & Ford.

It was an inspired discussion between three established brands on the experience they were providing to customers in their respective brand homes.

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The MC, Christian Lachel, ECD and VP of BRC Imagination Arts assisted Jameson in their quest to create a memorable customer experience. Each of the brands on stage shared their insights and learnings from shared but different journeys.

It was clear that collaboration and bravery of the brands, by way of exposing themselves to external advice, had helped to shape the uber successful experiential marketing they each now offer.

Today's consumers resist being marketed to, but want to engage with their favourite brands in meaningful ways. They crave authentic experiences that shape their identity and create lasting memories. VR makes experiences like this possible.

It also enables a person to fully immerse themselves in a situation – there's a sense of experience, you're not watching, you're feeling. For this reason, VR is a powerful tool for charitable organisations. One such organisation that utilised VR was the Clinton Foundation with their Emmy nominated immersive 3D film, [East Africa](https://www.clintonfoundation.org/press-releases/virtual-reality-film-inside-impact-east-africa-nominated-2016-daytime-emmy-award).

By using VR, brands are inviting people into another world, another way of life and allowing them to experience it first-hand. People can connect emotionally and empathise with people in a world far removed from theirs.

In a similar way, podcasts allow us to intimately peak into another person's life. It's a "machine for empathy and we need it now more than ever", according to Ira Glass, one of the creators of 'Serial' and 'S-Town', the two most popular podcasts ever made.

The power of good story telling is evident in all of Glass' work and demonstrates that a good story will not only move people but also can shed light on pressing issues and ultimately effect change.

## CULTURALLY DIVERSE

This idea is at the core of Cannes – creativity for good leading to social change. When we open ourselves to other walks of life and experience new things, we enrich our lives and learn something in the process.

When we collaborate and invite inputs from a diverse range of voices we produce better results. A perfect example of this is the [Superkilen Park](https://www.dezeen.com/2012/10/24/superkilen-park-by-big-topotek1-and-superflex/) (<https://www.dezeen.com/2012/10/24/superkilen-park-by-big-topotek1-and-superflex/>) in Copenhagen designed by [Bjarke Ingels](http://www.floornature.com/bjarke-ingels-big-7064/). (<http://www.floornature.com/bjarke-ingels-big-7064/>) Its location, the Nørrebro neighbourhood, is one of the most culturally diverse regions of Denmark with over 60 nationalities making it their home.

Before Ingels and his firm drafted plans for the park, they consulted local residents and studied their cultures. The result – a beautiful kaleidoscope of diverse cultural touchpoints, all housed in the same space.

This unity and collaboration is what we need more of. The honourable Rev. Jesse Jackson said it best when he told the packed auditorium in the Lumière Theatre that the advertising world has not only the ability to think and create but, more importantly, think *globally*. He asked that they unite the world and make it a better place.

