



If you can say one thing about Fernanda "Fefa" Romano, CCO of Naked Communications in São Paulo and New York, it's that she never settles on the here and now. Her career has taken her all over the world, and throughout it all, her eyes have always been open to the industry trends that are coming up just beyond the horizon. This foresight made her an ideal choice to chair the ADC Awards Interactive Jury this past February, as well as co-chairwoman of the Tomorrow Awards Monster Judges this coming September. We had a chance to catch up with "Fefa" at the ADC Gallery in New York, where we chatted about her involvement in both awards shows:

Fernanda Romano

ART DIRECTORS CLUB: Earlier this year, you chaired the Interactive Jury for the ADC 92nd Annual Awards. What was that experience like down in Costa Rica?

FERNANDA ROMANO: First of all, it was a great idea to have the judging in Costa Rica. It's always good to separate yourself from your day-to-day activities. You can't duck away for a quick 30-minute meeting. You're just left with a beautiful atmosphere, one that puts everybody in a friendly mood for the task at hand.

This was also the first jury to fall under the ADC's recommitment to the art and craft of our business. This was a wonderful initiative, and one that really changed the kinds of conversations we were having in the jury room. There was less emphasis on the usual "what was the strategic brief?" kinds of questions, and more emphasis on whether or not an entry had the power to move people in the streets.

ADC: Every awards show jury comes with its own challenges. What were some of the things to overcome when chairing the ADC Awards Interactive jury?

FERNANDA: Everybody had very different things to say, and we really wanted everybody to speak and share their opinions, but we only had a limited amount of time.

Even though it was very tempting to get everybody to contribute, sometimes I had to say, 'No guys, let's make a decision and move on.' It would've



been great if we had another day or two to really be able to experience each other's knowledge and culture, and learn from each other.

That said, the time we did have was well-used. We didn't really have any violent disagreements. We had intelligent conversations and it was wonderful. Some awards show juries can be really draining, but this was, perhaps, the most pleasant I've ever worked with. Of course having an outstanding body of work to look at, plus cold beers in a tropical paradise certainly help!

ADC: Shifting gears, you're also the co-chair of the Monster Judges for the Tomorrow Awards. You've sat on the Monster Jury twice before. How have you seen the Awards evolve, and what do you have in store for this year, now that you're in charge?

FERNANDA: I think the conversation changes with whoever is the Monster Judge chair. The first year I was in-

involved, Rei Inamoto was the chair, and he brought a lot of his AKQA thinking to the table. Last time Robert Wong was the chair, and when you have someone like him with a design and technological background, you end up having different kinds of conversations than you would on a typical awards show jury.

This year, with (Foursquare Co-founder) Naveen Selvadurai and myself as co-chairs, and an even more diverse group of Monster Judges, I expect things to be very different in the room. The world is changing very quickly, and with the people behind those changes on the jury, the conversations will be very interesting indeed!

ADC: It sounds like you are ready to embrace an awards show with less emphasis on what advertising agencies are creating.

FERNANDA: Oh, I love it, I love it, I love it! We need to have other points of reference, and I think it's very limiting when the ad world only looks to the ad world for inspiration.

We also need to start building and designing things if we want our industry to stay alive. When we start thinking like builders and designers, we're putting the user at the center of everything. Rather than creating messages or products or services that people don't necessarily want to hear or buy or subscribe to, we are looking at people and seeing how they are evolving and where they are going, and then trying to find needs and service those needs.