

# Q&A: Prerna Mehra

Head of Design and Creative Director, MullenLowe MENA



Prerna is getting used to winning awards. In 2019 she was cited as the “Most Influential Youth Marketing Professional” in India. And she has been picking up major awards around the world since then, including Gold at The Caples Awards 2021 for “The World’s Tallest Donation Box”.

It comes as no surprise that someone with such an eye for detail also designs jewellery.

Prerna is not uninteresting, as you’ll learn below:

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

**P:** Personally, it has brought in a lot of change in my life. Both a change of country and a change in mindset. There is a part of me that tells me the world may be ending, so do all that you want to. Then there is this side that says, it’s time to pause and soak in the moments. I still haven’t decided which side I’m going to go with.

These times are work in progress and so are we! So am I!

**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?**

**P:** I love travelling. All these years my travel endeavours have helped balance my work and personal life. But last year, with all the restrictions on travel and the ever-changing rules, I found a few things that have been helping me stay sane. Yoga, meditation, cooking and long walks. With long walks I mean really loooong walks into the middle of the night. They are the best! Along with that I have started to write again, things that are not work.

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

**P:** There are many and for different reasons. But, like they say, “*You are only as good as your last piece of work.*” So, I think exactly for that reason I would pick ‘Chocapologies – on behalf of the internet’. This campaign has taken a lot of my time, craft, efforts and brain cells. It is a campaign about the most trending topic – Trolling and cyberbullying in the cruellest playground in the world: the internet! Where trolls bully perfect strangers freely, without consequences or remorse. And the victims are left to suffer... to an extent that they develop long term psychological disorders or, in more extreme cases, commit suicide. Well, this is the dark side of social media.



We have handcrafted not one but three uniquely-designed 'chocapologies' to raise awareness of the effects of Body shaming, Hate Messaging, and Cyber Bullying. These are gorgeous sugar-coated apologies because we believe that the internet will be a better place if we all were to #SugarcoatIt. We have sent these chocapologies to celebrities, influencers and to victims of trolling. They have shared the same on their social media channels to raise awareness and asking people to #SugarcoatIt. We have currently reached over 106 million (and counting) people and are hoping to get more eyeballs in the coming few days.

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

**P:** Farming in the hills! For sure. Affirmative. 100%.

**Q: Are awards important?**

**P:** VERY!

I will put a parallel here. While growing up, each time a child does something good they are appreciated and at times when they do something exceptionally good they are celebrated or rewarded with toys or things that they like, so that they keep up the good work. Similarly, a creative is that child who needs some motivation to keep up the good work.

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

**P:** Having won The Caples last year, it is all the more special to be judging it in 2022. Caples has always had a unique mix of jurors. They have always handpicked the judges and needless to say they are the best in the industry.

This year too they have the best line-up and some are the ones who I look up to so judging alongside them I am absolutely elated and honoured at the same time.

Apart from that, The Caples with its small panel of judges, is a lot more intimate and I expect to have enriching debates and discussions about the creative work.

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

**P:** Exceptional work! Work that is creative and effective at the same time. Work that has inspired a change. That has touched lives and that has solved problems in the most unexpected ways! Work that has transcended borders, spoken universal language and emotions. Work that has made us stop and think. Work that is going to surprise and blow our minds off! Work that will make me feel – I wish I had done it! High hopes? Hoping to be proved wrong!

**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?**

**P:** Many many many! But here are two. Bodyform "#wombstories" is one piece of work that I admire and envy. I resent the people who did it because I wish that I had done it. It is high on craft, art and thinking. I mean, someone please give me what they were on when they thought of this. The way different forms of art mix into creating a powerful story, it makes you feel the pain, the burn, the flush! It is an outstanding piece of work or should I say art!

The second is Trash Island because it's a twisted way to fixing a grave problem. It's not just a campaign, its a satire. Its brilliant.

