

Q&A: Lars Bastholm

Founder of The Platypus Factory, Copenhagen

10 answers to 10 questions that let us peer into the mind of one of the world's leading creative directors.



The Danes aren't very good at blowing their own trumpets. They are modest to the point of aloofness, according to the internet. There's something in that, especially when you read Lars's bio (at caples.org/judges). It doesn't tell you he was a digital pioneer back in the early 2000s when he was a co-founder of Framfab. Doesn't tell you about the three Grands Prix and the Golds at Cannes. Or that he was the Chief Creative Digital Officer for Ogilvy North America. Doesn't tell you he was the Global Chief Creative Officer for The Zoo, Google's creative thinktank. Nope. It just says he likes singing and eating, though not necessarily at the same time.

You're a top creative director. Do you have a side-hustle? What do you do as a counterbalance to the pressures of your workplace?

I am working on a futuristic musical about robots with two friends. It allows me to exercise my writing muscles in a completely different way than my day-to-day. Sadly, not many clients are in the market for song lyrics.

If you hadn't ended up in advertising, what would you be doing instead?

For years, I thought I was going to be a film reviewer or write about films in some way shape or form. Then I stumbled into advertising and found that I was pretty good at it. Now I only review films on Facebook.

In your career, what one piece of personal work are you most proud of?

Some of the work that we did for Nike in the early days of the internet was completely ground-breaking in every way. Nothing like it had ever been done before. But the one I still can't believe we actually got

to make was a full-length rap video set in the Star Wars universe featuring two young nerf herders who wanted to become jedis.



Framfab innovative web work for Nike, 2003

What work has your agency/team produced you're particularly proud of?

We are working on a project right now for a small furniture company that I think will be really nice. I can never look at finished work and not just see the flaws and the compromises. It usually takes me years to be proud of something. I need to forget about the process first.

What recent work have you seen from another agency (or agencies) that you would really like to see entered into The Caples? And why?

I really like the Backup Ukraine project from Virtue. It uses technology in a clever way to help alleviate an acute problem. Just to mention something completely different, I also genuinely admired Apple's recent accessibility film. It is a tonal triumph.

Are awards important?

Coming from a small advertising market (Denmark), I would never have been able to have the international career that I've had without winning some awards that made me visible beyond the borders. So, yes. I think they're important for personal visibility. And as a communal yardstick for what we, as an industry, currently consider to be great work.

What does it mean to you to be a juror of The Caples Awards in 2023?

Hopefully that I get to see a lot of amazing work that would have otherwise passed me by. I also look forward to discussing the work with the rest of the jury. I always learn something new from hearing different perspectives.

The Caples is free to enter. Is this brave. Or very, very stupid?

Can't it be both? Joking aside, it's horrifically expensive to submit work to most of the award shows, which potentially keeps good work from surfacing. On the flip side, it puts a lot of pressure on the jury, if you get 10,000+ submissions. Thankfully, we all have plenty of time on our hands ;-)

If you could have five creative luminaries sitting around your kitchen table, having a drink and a chat, who would they be? What do you think you'd talk about?

Douglas Adams, Stephen King, Oscar Wilde, Stanley Kubrick and Walt Disney. I've no idea where the conversation would go, but I can only imagine that it'd be illuminating. And fun. And possibly smelly, given that most of them are dead.



Stephen King, still alive.

Impossible question. But what is your one all-time favourite piece of advertising, the idea you most wish you'd done yourself?

I have a soft spot for silliness. Nike's Angry Chicken ad never ceases to bring a smile to my face. It's the kind of thing that shouldn't exist,



yet somehow was shot and released. Nike has never done anything remotely like it since.

Year: 2003. Client: Nike. Agency: Wieden+Kennedy USA. Title: "Angry Chicken". Copywriter: Mike Byrne. Art Director: Danielle Flagg. Watch the ad [HERE](#).