

Q&A: Meera Sharath Chandra

Founder, CEO and CCO of Tigress Tigress, London & Mumbai

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



Meera has judged The Caples twice before. If she likes us, we love her! She is a giver rather than a taker. Beyond giving her time and careful consideration to judging our awards, she also gives time and wisdom to mentoring young people wanting to get started in advertising. Equally generously, she has made her book 'The Me Era', an analysis of marketing in an age when consumers are brands and brands have become consumers, freely available to download as an e-book from her website [HERE](#).

1. 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 have represented my state at the first-class level in cricket. There isn't a series I don't watch. It's an all-consuming passion and an amazing stress-buster.

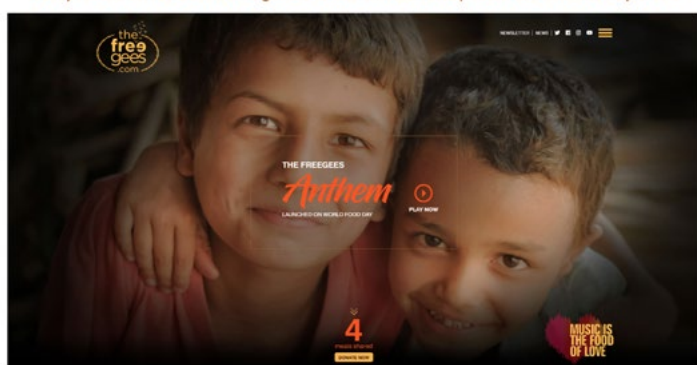
2. If you hadn't ended up in advertising, what would you be doing instead?

I honestly can't answer that. I did my copy test and got my first job offer even before I got out of college, so I was in the best industry from Day One. But now that you got me thinking, I may have been writing lyrics for a band!

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

"Music is the food of love" - a first-of-its-kind project that worked in close partnership with the UN World Food Programme. When refugees in Berlin came ashore with nothing but dreams, they were not even able to manage a meal or two to survive. We found that there were some amazing singers among them – and so we created a way for people to contribute with good reason. Buy a song = share 2 meals. A site that uploaded songs by talented refugees – and for every download the WFP provided 2 meals.

A fully functional secure streaming website was created to help listen to music and buy online



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

I believe we are currently on our best and most fulfilling projects! We're getting involved many steps ahead of consumer conversations and experiences. We've gotten deeper into creating never-before revenue streams by identifying unexplored category niches for clients. Some of these are being trademarked and patented. We've also just started working on – and are super excited about – a couple of nifty start-ups requiring total behavioural change and shift in the way consumers view the categories.

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

Given their recent form and totally stunning work, I'd love to see a lot of entries from Ali Rez's Impact BBDO. There's always a time and a place in an agency when magic gets created. Clearly, they are living in it right now.

6. Are awards important?

I believe they are important on so many levels. They glue an agency team together with a common goal. They add sheen to an agency's credentials and image. They raise the bar on creativity because it means getting better than the best in the world. They are the best form of organic PR and advocacy. A heady win is a source of inspiration and keeps both the agency and client teams bullish for the whole year.

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

I get a sneak peek at the best work in the world. The open and inviting entry system levels the playing field – so more work can be entered and more work gets a fair shot at recognition. I get exposed to ideas I would have not known about at all. This makes judging totally fulfilling.

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

Very smart. There are, to be honest, many aspects to an entry that go beyond the actual piece of work itself. A good case study video (\$\$\$), entering in more than one category (\$\$\$ again), planning the year's calendar across several award shows (more \$\$\$). Many great creative ideas may not enjoy that kind of financial muscle. The Caples is about sharp work. Not fat wallets.

9. 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?

Marcello Serpa, Rory Sutherland, David Droga, Bill Bernbach, Pat Fallon/Tom McElligott. We'd talk about the consumer-brand dynamic and how media-plural creative triggers can make for highly immersive and experiential communication.



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

I have so many favourites, so many that I kicked myself for not thinking of, so many that inspire me every day, so many that I have instantly awarded a gold or grand prix. Please don't make me pick just one!