AKQA Promotes 3 ECDs to Global Chief Creative Officers

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Three of AKQA’s executive creative directors have become global chief creative officers at the WPP agency: Diego Machado, Hugo Veiga and Peter Lund.

Rei Inamoto was the last person to serve as global chief creative officer at AKQA, which employs more than 2,000 people across the globe. He left in 2015 to start his own agency, IxCO.

Lund was part of the team that founded AKQA’s Paris office in 2012, while Machado and Veiga started AKQA’s office in São Paulo a few years later. In their new roles, which they transitioned into late last year, they oversee creative output for the design agency’s 29 studios around the world. They have taken their previous responsibilities into their new roles, meaning their prior positions will not be replaced.

“It’s exciting to see a new generation empowered and recognized for their relentless creativity, vision and leadership,” said Ajaz Ahmed, CEO of AKQA. “We could not be more proud of our chief creative officers and the incredible journey we share to imagine a better future.”

Before joining AKQA, all three held creative positions at Ogilvy. At Ogilvy, Machado and Veiga worked on Dove’s viral “Real Beauty Sketches” campaign. At AKQA São Paulo, the two have worked on campaigns for clients including Nike and the

Association for Assistance of Disabled Children.

Last year, Machado and Veiga led a campaign for Nike Air Max that involved partnering with a graffiti collective to spray-paint the brand's new models around the city. The stunt won a Grand Prix in media at Cannes last year. In 2018, they helped create a short animated film for the Association for Assistance of Disabled Children.

Earlier this year, Lund led a project designed to commemorate the German Presidency of the Council of the European Union. In partnership with artist Olafur Eliasson, the agency created an interactive campaign that lets kids superimpose their faces on various environmental scenes.

Since co-founding AKQA São Paulo, Veiga said he and Machado have tapped into the larger network and connected with other offices on client work. For instance, he said the São Paulo office worked with AKQA London on Don't Look Away, an interactive music video created for Usher's 2015 song Chains about racial profiling and violence in the U.S.

Veiga said it's this penchant for collaboration with different people and offices that makes them a good fit for the global chief creative officer role.

"For us, it's something that we have been doing already," Veiga said. "We really want it to happen more, because we believe in the power of diversity of talent that we have around the world."

Machado said much of the trio's jobs involve working together to connect various people, briefs and clients to ensure the right offices and creatives are working with one another to produce the best work.

"It's all about finding people and putting them together for the best opportunities," he explained.

Lund echoed his sentiment, explaining that they all “have a fundamental belief that when we are fulfilled in our jobs and challenged to the height of our capabilities, we produce our very best work.”

“That’s the work that our clients come to us for,” he said. “So as long as we nurture and protect our people, the business will always be in a good place.”

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