Profiles in Black Creativity: Nina Austin Gives Valentine’s Day a Reality Check



To celebrate Black History Month, Adweek is partnering with agency owner Derek Walker on a series that puts a spotlight on the creative work, perspectives and successes of Black industry professionals.

Derek Walker
Derek Walker is the founder of agency Brown & Browner in Columbia, S.C.

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Publicis Reinforces US Leadership, Names US COO



In a move it is positioning as a further investment in its country model, Publicis added members to its U.S. leadership team and appointed a chief operational officer for the region.

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Profiles in Black Creativity: Kevin Miles Draws Attention to Child Labor



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PepsiCo Beverages CMO Greg Lyons On Balancing Home, Heart and Happiness to the

End Zone



It’s not every day you get to interview the CMO of PepsiCo Beverages… and his daughter! When Greg Lyons invited me into his home, via zoom of course, I not only got to spend quality time with Greg talking through career and life defining moments, but I got to meet his lovely daughter, Molly, his two Bernese Mountain Dogs, and a cameo appearance (wave from the window) from his son.

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Known for Past Brand Repositioning, IBM Brings in

Carla Piñeyro Sublett as CMO



IBM has named software marketing veteran Carla Piñeyro Sublett as senior vice president and chief marketing officer.

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Profiles in Black Creativity: Gwen Kelly and the Pullman Porters Campaign





For the past two years, in celebration of Black History Month, agency owner Derek Walker has highlighted some of the industry's most prominent and emerging Black talent. This year, Adweek is partnering with Walker on this inspiring and important project.

Derek Walker
Derek Walker is the founder of agency Brown & Browner in Columbia, S.C.

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The Richards Group Lays Off Roughly 15% of Staff



The Richards Group went through a round of layoffs at the end of last year, which the agency said affected about 15% of staff. According to its LinkedIn, the Dallas-based shop employs more than 700 people, meaning roughly 100 people have been let go.

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Exclusive: Cannes Lions Says It Will Move Forward With an In-Person Festival in 2021



January is usually when industry executives would be booking their summer flights to the French Riviera. But as Covid-19 continues to surge this month, most of us get nervous at the idea of even hopping in an Uber or taking a trip to the grocery store.

While major gatherings such as CES, Sundance and SXSW are going virtual this year, Cannes Lions organizers remain optimistic that advertising's largest event will—after being canceled last year—return to being held in person in 2021. A Cannes spokesperson told Adweek the festival is still scheduled for June 21 to 25.

The Ascential-owned festival declined to provide further information on how organizers are envisioning a physical event, and organizers haven't announced whether they're considering a hybrid edition or a second Lions Live, which served as a free, virtual alternative to the canceled festival in 2020.

The festival's stance comes to light at a time when the realistic timeline of in-person events returning is largely dependent on the speed of the Covid-19 vaccination rollout. So agencies and brands tell Adweek they're taking a wait-and-see approach on whether to attend the festival, as countries including the United Kingdom are in their strictest lockdowns

yet and the United States reached a record number of daily Covid-19 deaths this month.

Even if it becomes safer to travel to and attend in-person events by June, marketers and creatives say they will probably fall on the side of caution.

Thinking five months ahead

Mike Nevins, CMO at Smart, a France-based ad-tech company, said “the entire industry is pulling for the Cannes Lions to fully return in 2021,” though he expects organizers and prospective attendees will be extra cautious with their final decisions.

“While it will be great if the event can unfold in its customary June timeframe, I expect all companies—including Cannes Lions—will carefully weigh the risk versus reward of physical attendance at a very social event with a massive audience, especially given the uncertainty regarding the pace of Covid-19 vaccination in pursuit of herd immunity,” Nevins said.

> *I don’t really think we’ll live in a world where a lot of people will be traveling and it will be safe to get together with loads of other people.*
>
> *—Hermeti Balarin, ecd, Mother London,*

Hermeti Balarin, executive creative director at agency Mother London, said even if organizers host an in-person festival, he doesn’t see the agency participating in a normal Cannes trip.

“That’s our best guess in terms of how we would approach,” he said. “I don’t really think we’ll live in a world where a lot of people will be traveling and it will be safe to get together with loads of other people.”

Christine Capone, president at brand experience agency MKG

operating in New York and L.A., noted it’s too early to make a decision on whether the agency will attend an in-person festival, but trusts organizers will “make an informed choice based on the success of vaccine availability and implementation at the global level.”

If the festival is able to occur in-person, Capone said she would expect organizers to require daily Covid-19 testing for all guests and a formal escalation policy if the festival learned of any positive tests. However, MKG employees would also have to follow their own guidelines.

“We will, of course, do our own risk assessment regardless of their decision as well as consult our global partners like Facebook and Google,” Capone added. “We have a Covid-19 safety policy in place at the agency. It is a living document that is updated based on the state of the world. We will expect all attendees from MKG to abide by that policy for this experience should we attend as they would any other experience.”

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Ian Zelaya
ian.zelaya@adweek.com Ian Zelaya is an Adweek reporter covering how brands engage with consumers in the modern world, ranging from experiential marketing and social media to email marketing and customer experience.

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Nicky Bell to Lead Facebook Creative Shop



Agency veteran Nicky Bell is joining Facebook as vice president of Facebook Creative Shop, the social network's in-house creative strategy team.

Bell was most recently senior vp of global client partnerships at R/GA, serving in that role from August 2019 through July 2020 after joining the agency in August 2016 as senior vp and managing director.

At Facebook Creative Shop, which was formed in 2011, she will lead a global team of creative strategists across 39 offices, tasked with helping advertisers of all sizes and agencies develop their brand visions and hone their storytelling efforts across Facebook, Instagram, Messenger From Facebook, Oculus and WhatsApp.

Bell will be based in Los Angeles, where she will report directly to Carolyn Everson, vp of the global business group, and work closely with chief creative officer and vp of global business marketing Mark D'Arcy.

“Nicky Bell is a brand builder who has spent her career pushing the boundaries of digital innovation,” Everson said in a statement. “The pandemic has forced every business—no matter the size—to reinvent how they reach customers in an online marketplace that is more crowded and competitive than ever. It requires decisive, creative and unconventional thinking, and that’s what Nicky has always offered her clients.”

Bell stepped into a newly created role at R/GA to cultivate collaboration across the agency’s efforts in consulting, digital products/services/experiences, marketing and its accelerator program.

She led the transformation of its Los Angeles office from a pure campaign offering to an R/GA Connected Brands practice by integrating visual, verbal, experience and behavioral brand design with connections strategy, media planning and business consulting.

Prior to R/GA, Bell spent more than six years as CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi New Zealand, leading a turnaround by implementing a new leadership style with a focus on inspiring and empowering staff and reestablishing C-suite-level partnerships with the agency’s clients.

Before that, she was with Ogilvy & Mather for nearly 20 years, starting out as an account director/manager at its Sydney office before moving to New York and becoming senior partner and worldwide managing director.

“I’ve spent my career advocating for creativity and technology as key drivers of meaningful business growth,” Bell said in a statement. “I look forward to working with this talented team to help businesses of all sizes around the world tell their stories, connect with people and use our platforms to grow.”

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Exclusive: GoFundMe’s New CMO Musa Tariq on the Donation Platform’s Global Growth Plans



Veteran brand steward Musa Tariq is joining GoFundMe today as chief marketing officer. He takes on the role as the company seeks to build on the growth it experienced during the upheavals of 2020 and solidify its identity as a direct line of financial assistance to all manner of causes.

It’s not what Tariq calls a “traditional” career move, but not many of his recent decisions have fit a traditional mold. When he left his position of chief brand officer at Ford in 2018 after just over a year, he took six months to travel, intern, mentor and try new things before landing as head of marketing for Airbnb Experiences.

Last summer, he left that position too—one that had become

largely impossible to execute during the Covid-19 pandemic as Airbnb experiences rely on in-person gatherings.

But he brings much more than that to GoFundMe. He's a buzzy marketer who has experience working with some of the world's top brands, including Nike, Burberry and Apple, and has recently served as an advisor for brands like Masterclass, Time Magazine and home gym startup Tonal. In 2017, while he was at Ford, he was named to Forbes' list of most influential CMOs.

Adweek caught up with Musa Tariq over the weekend to discuss what fueled this latest career decision, what he expects to accomplish with GoFundMe and how he's thinking about the future during continued uncertainty.

The following has been edited for clarity and brevity.

Adweek: At Brandweek in 2019, you spoke about how you identified your "North Star"—the ultimate goal that guides how you make career decisions. What about the CMO role at GoFundMe fits within your broader career goals?

Musa Tariq: I've always believed that during times of uncertainty it's important to revert back to your values. Like many people in the madness that was 2020, I really started to think about what was important to me and I knew that whatever I was going to do next, I wanted to help others. My north star of rethinking education remains the same, but I consider this an important detour that aligns deeply with my values. The work GoFundMe has been doing in the world is both remarkable and incredibly important—the impact they're making on people's lives during this unprecedented time is crucial. To join them in my opinion wasn't really a traditional career decision, but more a duty I couldn't turn down.

When you left Ford, you said that it was because you didn't feel like the culture there was a good fit. Why did you decide to move on from Airbnb? What have you been up to since you

left?

I joined Airbnb to help grow a new business ("Airbnb Experiences") that I was very passionate about—I absolutely loved the product. During my time there the business was growing rapidly, we were building a world class team and we'd done work I was incredibly proud of. Like many companies, we had to quickly pivot when Covid hit. I realized what I'd come in to do was no longer feasible in the changing travel landscape so it was time to find a new opportunity.

Since leaving in July, I've been fortunate to spend lots of time with my 2-year-old, Zane, I've been advising some really interesting and exciting companies (Time Magazine, Tonal, Aero, and Holt Renfrew in Canada) and mentoring as much as possible—which is where I find the most joy. I've also been eating a lot of ice cream.

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