

The Irish Audio Awards 2024—25



01

SMOCK ALLEY MARCH 2025

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Radiocentre Ireland’s Irish Audio Awards is about showcasing the unique strength and power of audio. Today, we stand at the intersection of creativity and technology, where the power of audio is absolutely critical. In a world oversaturated with visual content, audio emerges as a dynamic and intimate medium that captivates audiences in ways that visuals alone cannot. Audio commands attention in a deeply personal way, building strong emotional connections with listeners. Unlike visual media, which presents an image outright, audio invites listeners to create their own mental imagery. A well-crafted ad with the right combination of voice, music, and sound effects can transport listeners, making them feel, experience, and most importantly, act.

The Irish Audio Awards is a commitment from Radiocentre Ireland to recognise and reward great work. The awards evening is one of celebration, celebrating the creativity of the Irish advertising sector, celebrating the amazing talent that works within it and celebrating the unique power of audio. It is also an awards event like no other, immersing attendees in an audio experience. On the night, people heard from Dr Lollie Mancey, anthropologist and futurist in innovation, predict that there will be a higher price point for human developed creativity and a lower price point for AI driven work. Emma Sharkey, CSO Droga5 talks about the attention economy, and that advertising is about entertainment and earning your right into a consumer’s world. And Mark Shanley, ECD, adam&eveDDB, explains that people pay a lot of money to avoid advertising, and the industry needs to recognise this and create content that really cuts through.

The awards event had a huge amount of rich content, and you can read and listen to that content throughout this booklet. We were delighted to see such a huge attendance at the awards evening and the huge number of award entries again this year. Many congratulations to all the very worthy winners, who showcased brilliantly how to leverage the power of sound.

Ciarán Cunningham
CEO Radiocentre Ireland

Panellists

Dr. Lollie Mancey

Andrew Tindall

Emma Sharkey

Shane O’Brien

Maatin Adewunmi

Rahmon Agbaje

Denis Kilty

Mark Shanley

Caroline Riis

THE SCIENCE OF BEING



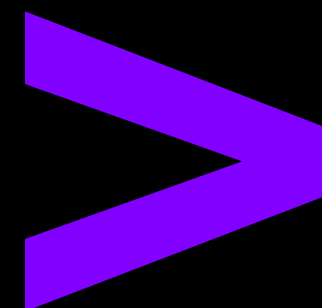
In a lively conversation, radio host Anton Savage and guest Dr. Lollie Mancey explore the rise of AI and its growing influence on the creative landscape. They delve into the evolving relationship between humans and technology, and unpack its expanding role in advertising, from predicting consumer preferences to offering real-time personalisation. Looking to the future, Lollie highlights the enduring importance of human creativity in an increasingly automated world.

“I actually think that we have AI because it’s teaching us more about being human. It’s really showing us a mirror of who we are—that is all of Gen AI at the moment, good and bad, negative and positive. How is it showing the mirror? Because everything we’re putting in, everything that’s on the internet, is being fed back to us. So is going to be predictive, right? But do we always know what we want? This is what we think people want, and this is what we think the outcome should be. I think the best advertising and the best marketing is the stuff that catches us unawares, the things that are different, the things that buck the trends, the things that don’t make sense to us, and the things that appeal to us on a sort of a deeper level psychologically.

I think that there will be a higher price point for human developed creativity and a lower price point potentially, or a lower value worth for AI driven.”

Dr. Lollie Mancey
AI ethicist, Anthropologist, and Futurist

[Listen Now](#)





The minute that we outsource to AI for our imagination— we're done for.

Dr. Lollie Mancey
AI ethicist, Anthropologist, and Futurist
Panellist—2025

CREATING EFFECT



CREATING EFFECT

Anton Savage leads a discussion about how measurement impacts creative advertising. Andrew explains System1's use of emotional data to predict ad performance, while Emma argues that creativity should go beyond formulas, stressing the value of novelty. Shane highlights the importance of understanding the rules while also knowing when to break them, and the panel finally tackles the decline of humour and jingles in ads (despite their proven effectiveness. Follow the arrow to listen now.

"I think there's theory behind creativity in all forms of art. What makes the perfect painting? What makes the perfect sentence? How do you write the perfect story arc? And then something special happens when the creative gets involved. I understand the theory, but what do I do with the theory, and do I subvert it? Do I bend it? Do I surprise the audience?"

If you approach it with an idea that there's a science or a formula, you can end up in a place where you are just acting like the generative, creative machines, just slotting pieces together. That's a race to a bottom of an industry I don't want to be part of. I think it's more interesting to know what all the different pieces are that you could play with, and then imagine the edges. Where can you take that? How can you actually extend the canvas rather than continue to paint the same way that we've all done?

We're living through an age of literalism. There is an expectation now that people don't have time for anything, so let's just feed it to them in the most direct way. But ultimately, we actually live in an attention economy, and it is about entertainment and earning your right into my world."

Emma Sharkey
Chief Strategy Officer at Droga5 Dublin

"I suppose the theory is you need to know the rules before you can break them. Looking at what a company like System1 does, if you understand the rules, you can start to tweak them. You can put the little ripple in that'll actually make it different, make it interesting, and make it really stand out.

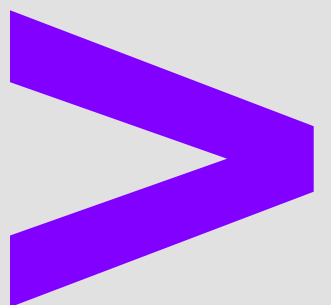
The problem with humour is it's subjective. If you dissect it, it kills it. When you're presenting something to a client, you need to perform it, you need to give them a sense of what it's going to be like, the timing, and how it works. The problem with selling humour is that it has to go through so many levels to get made, and then it has a lot of corners knocked off as you go up through those levels. It's a hard thing to have a comedy ad that you've written down as a script be intact by the end of it."

Shane O'Brien
Copywriter, Creative Director & Screenwriter

"Make jingles great again. It's such an infectious idea, a jingle, it taps into emotion, it's branded. And the key thing is, it works. You keep refreshing the same memories in the mind of a consumer. Look at the most famous brands in the UK this year; they've released the top 10 for the year, seven of them have a jingle. So it is incredibly potent at building a brand. So yeah, I'm all for jingles."

Andrew Tindall
SVP of Global Partnership at System1

Listen Now



Novelty and surprise are what humans respond to.

Emma Sharkey
Chief Strategy Officer at Droga5 Dublin
Panellist—2025



HEART AND BEATS

HEART
AND
BEATS



Anton Savage dives into a compelling discussion about music, the value and challenges of music in commercial creativity and the behavioural science behind their practice. They analyse the benefits of AI as a tool to boost music's impact, as well as addressing concerns about AI replacing human composers. Follow the arrow below to hear the full conversation.

“A big part of music is how it affects your emotions and how it leads people to buy things. Music can be quite subjective at times, so we want to look at how we can bring more objectivity in the way that music is used. How we can leverage behavioural science and human testing tools which actually measure how effective music is.

It's important to try and make music higher up in the creative process. Because the stats show that music is five times more effective than visual assets. It's more powerful than what you see—with TikTok, Facebook, everything is sound first, so music is always gonna be a person's first experience. So if you have great music, that's what gets them hooked, and then it makes the rest of the creative easier”

Maatin Adewunmi
Co Founder of Loud Parade

“I think it's quite surprising how last minute music decisions are made in the briefing process or in the creative process. I think the best brands actually embed music into everything they do.

AI with music is super complex. Yes, it's exciting, and AI democratises it, and perhaps allows a lot of younger artists who can't afford that studio quality equipment to get into the game, but at the same time, there are so many risks in terms of the legal liabilities. The way we use AI at Loud Parade is more on the behavioural side.”

Rahmon Agbaje
Co Founder of Loud Parade

“Other than copyright being the issue with AI—that stuff did not make itself. It came from somewhere, it's been scraped from the internet. I think the real conversation should be the moral and cultural argument. Are we going to support the arts and not just music, but in general? Because if Gen AI music starts replacing music created by musicians and artists, there might be a short term benefit of getting something quickly, but it's the snake eating its own tail. Think about the teenagers who are learning instruments—if you can just generate a guitar line, why would they learn guitar? Suddenly, you have this barren, wasteland of people who have no incentive to learn.”

Denis Kilty
Music Composer/Sound Designer at denis.

Listen Now



Feel it in your soul. You know, music is magic, remember that.

Rahmon Agbaje
Co Founder of Loud Parade
Panellist—2025



STANDING OVER IT

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Listen in at the link below, as creative heavyweights Mark Shanley and Caroline Riis reflect on the process behind selecting winners for a prestigious audio advertising award. Moderated by Anton Savage, the conversation explores cultural differences in creativity, the unique power and accessibility of radio, and the high standards of the judging process. With only one award per category, the judges champion bold, innovative, and creative, that goes beyond just a well-written script. .

“At the core of it all, great creativity is great creativity. Creativity at its core is kind of pure—if it’s good, it’s good everywhere.

Audio isn’t the one that you jump to when you get a brief, it’s kind of the one that you might have to lean on because the buttons are there, or you know that your target audience listens, but it’s not necessarily the one thing that creatives go to because they think maybe it’s second tier. But when it comes down to it, it’s so pure, so naked and raw. A great audio ad is massively powerful. There’s so much to win and so little to lose with audio advertising. The stakes are so low and the chances of glory are so high.

For the Irish Audio Awards, there is only one winner per category. That doesn’t happen in Cannes, you get silver and bronze, so it was really hard picking the winners.”

Caroline Riis
Senior Creative at TRY, Oslo

“We all pay a lot of money to avoid advertising in our lives, and I think we as an industry have to be really honest about that. When we ask people to buy our ads, and we try and sell ideas, they’re trying to ignore it. They’re literally paying to ignore it in most contexts. So, we have to cut through that. That’s why it’s a fun job, because we have to make the ads people actually want to hear, want to watch, and want to read.

I thought there was some extraordinary work. Here we can only give out one award per category. People will come here, be shortlisted, and not win. In other shows, they could have also won.”

Mark Shanley
ECD at Adam&EveDDB

Listen Now





The talent in Irish creative departments far exceeds the amount of awarded work.

Mark Shanley
ECD at Adam&EveDDB
Jury Chair and Panellist—2025



Judges

Mark Shanley

Denis Kilty

Caroline Riis

Steve Babaeko

JUDGES 2025

Jury Chair Mark Shanley

ECD, Adam&EveDDB

Mark often finds his middle-of-the-road dad rock interrupted by bad advertising. So he's excited to listen to some good advertising when he judges the Irish Audio Awards. Mark is Executive Creative Director at adam&eveDDB in London. He has made lots of ads and won lots of awards for brands like Nike, Pot Noodle, The V&A Museum, John Lewis, Amazon, McDonald's, TK Maxx and many, many more.

Craft Juror Denis Kilty

Music Composer/Sound Designer, denis.

Denis Kilty (denis.) is a multi-award-winning Music Composer and Sound Designer from Dublin. Beginning his career in 2015 with his first commercial, he quickly gained a name for his signature rich, emotive sound, driven by the idea that great audio is at the heart of great storytelling.

denis. has since composed music and sound design for over 250 award-winning campaigns heard by millions around the globe. His clients include Apple, Rolex, Nike, Under Armour, Guinness and WhatsApp.

International Juror Steve Babaeko

CEO / CCO at X3M Ideas

Steve's X3M Group has offices in South-Central Africa, via Lusaka and Johannesburg, Congo Brazzaville, Kenya, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom, where he recently opened independent offices for X3M Ideas. Before starting X3M Group, which has now grown to include X3M Music, Media 100 and Zero Degrees Productions, Steve was the creative director at 141 Worldwide. Steve began his advertising career at Mc&A Saatchi & Saatchi and later moved to Prima Garnet Ogilvy. For more than 23 years, he has been helping to create some of the most iconic marketing works on the continent including; "Proudly Nigerian" for British American Tobacco; "Now You're Talking" for Etisalat; "You Need A New Bank" campaign for Diamond Bank, and so many others.

Steve has been a member of the jury at Cannes Lions, New York Advertising Festival, the Loeries, African Cristal Awards, D&AD Awards, Pitcher Awards Festival and AD Stars, Global Juror - ANDY Awards. He has also been a speaker at the Cannes Lions Festival, Nigeria & West Africa's First Cannes Lions Award winner and also one of Adweek's Top 100 Creatives in the world, 2019. He was conferred with the "Visiting Fellow" honours at the Henley Business School, University of Reading. He is the current President of The International Advertising Association (I.A.A), Nigeria Chapter and Immediate Past President of the Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria (AAAN).

International Juror Caroline Riis

Senior Creative at TRY Oslo

Caroline's creative journey commenced at Wieden + Kennedy, where five years of crafting campaigns for Nike, Arla, and Finlandia in London and New York laid her foundation. Relocating to Norway after a seven-year London stint, she ascended to Partner and Creative at TRY, Norway's premier agency. Collaborating with diverse brands from IKEA to DNB and the Red Cross, her work resonates with authentic insights, aiming to influence positive behavioural change. Beyond viral videos, Caroline measures success by tangible societal impact, like empowering women to outnumber men as new fund customers. Recognised as one of Norway's most decorated female creatives, her accolades include consecutive lion wins in 2022, 2023 and 2024 for her transformative work with IKEA.

Q&A — MARK SHANLEY

A photograph of a man, Mark Shanley, sitting at a desk in what appears to be a radio studio. He is wearing a dark jacket and is positioned in profile, facing left. There are several professional microphones on stands in front of him. On the desk, there is a small bottle of water and some papers. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some studio equipment.

Q—How did the Irish audio standards compare or stand up against international standards?

A—For me, surprisingly well. There was work here that I would enter into international wards.

Q—What stood out for you about the work you reviewed and awarded?

A—The craft. Both in production and in writing. Some of the categories were extremely difficult to choose just one winner in.

Q—Are there gaps in the output from Irish creative agencies when it comes to audio? If so, what are they?

A—I don't think there are necessarily any big gaps, but I do think it's a bit of a blind spot when it comes to award winning work. Radio is such a ubiquitous medium in the lives of Irish people that I think we, as creative professionals, sometimes forget just how powerful and how moving audio can be as a medium.

Q—With a culture of storytelling in Ireland, is there an opportunity for Ireland to make a real impact on the global stage when it comes to audio, being recognised at global awards, for example? What needs to be done to achieve this?

A—I don't think our history of storytelling is what's going to get us there; that's the past. What will get us there is our current crop of extraordinary talent. The talent in Irish creative departments far exceeds the amount of awarded audio work coming out of them. I think once we recognise the opportunity that exists in the audio categories in shows like Cannes, it will be ripe for exploiting by Irish agencies.



Q&A — DENIS KILTY

Q—How did the Irish audio standards compare or stand up against international standards?

A—The work produced in Ireland has evolved over the last few years, and some really great work is being created. We have all the technical capacity in Ireland to create timeless work, and creative teams are pushing for more ambitious ideas - the dial is beginning to move; we are seeing increasingly interesting work.

In time, Irish work will easily compete with international work. However, the biggest thing holding back Irish creativity across the board is fear and trust. Behind most decisions, there is always a fear of getting it wrong and dissatisfying the client, but this completely obstructs crafting the best work further down the chain and often results in work that ‘could’ have been great.

Yet, the most unconventional ideas and executions resonate with people, so we need to demand more of that from ourselves if we want a seat at the big table. We need to commit to the most daring ideas.

Q—What stood out for you about the work you reviewed and awarded?

A—Some of the creative ideas were very simple but conveyed a concise message. This shows how the strength of the initial idea is essential and how important it is to interrogate that idea as much as possible. It’s not always about overcooking something on a technical level but rather understanding the power of a simple message.

It was also clear which projects had collaborated early on with their audio partner. As specialists, we inherently have nuanced wisdom about sound that other people don’t have, and that resource was clearly leaned on certain projects—you can hear it in the quality of the work.

Q—Are there gaps in the output from Irish creative agencies when it comes to audio? If so, what are they?

A—Framing it as a ‘gap’ is the wrong way to look at it. We have the technical capability to produce Oscar-winning films here; skill is not the problem. For me, the issue lies in the stage at which sound is considered in the process. It is serially an afterthought and counterproductive when considering how much weight audio contributes to a film or radio spot. Sound is between 50% and 100% of the entire experience!

This completely misunderstands the role and potential of music and sound design. It should be happening from the beginning and considered from the first storyboards. The best thing agencies and creatives can do is talk to their sound team at the start. They will learn so much from a simple conversation that can drastically improve the calibre of the project. We need to say goodbye to the idea of fixing it in the post and embrace audio creativity in parallel.

Q—With a culture of storytelling in Ireland, is there an opportunity for Ireland to make a real impact on the global stage when it comes to audio, being recognised at global awards, for example? What needs to be done to achieve this?

A—We have to release ourselves from the largely self-imposed shackles of fear - the idea that not screwing it up is enough of a successful outcome. We need to be more ambitious and confident and believe harder in what we are creating. I dislike the old saying, ‘We are a nation of storytellers,’ because it feels like a title I didn’t earn. Collectively, storytelling might be in our blood, but the confidence to execute ideas well is squarely on the shoulders of those creating now, today. It has to be earned. Time to commit to the most daring ideas!



A photograph of a man in a dark suit standing at a podium on a stage, speaking into a microphone. He is facing an audience seated in tiered rows. The stage is lit with warm, orange-red light. In the foreground, a large, white, circular object, possibly a camera or a light, is partially visible. The background shows a dark stage with some equipment and a blue exit sign.

At the core of it all, great creativity is great creativity.

Caroline Riis
Senior Creative at Try Oslo
Juror and Panellist—2025



WINNERS 2025

Consumer Speed Bump

By Bloom, for Citroen—Trevor Hunt, Marketing Manager (Client); Michael Walsh, Creative Director; Niamh Clohosey, Copywriter; Tobiasz Lawniczak, Director; David Quinn, Account Director; Noel Storey, Sound Engineer.

Audio for Change Unborn Babies of Gaza

By The Public House or GOAL—Paddy O'Mahoney, Creative Director; Danny Cullen, Art Director; Colin Hart, Creative Director; Natalie Hopkins, Account Director; Mariana Nevado, Account Director; Will Farrell, Blast Audio Sound Engineer.

Speculative Voices

By Publicis Dublin for DRCC—Peter Dobbyn, Creative Director; Ronan Nulty, Executive Creative Director; Isabel Harvey, Copywriter; Ivona Poljak, Art Director; Rachel Murray, Senior Producer; Cassie Treacy, Senior Account Manager; Sinead Dennis, Business Director.

Sound Design Pay Attention to Your Pee

By RAYGUN/Boys and Girls or Marie Keating Foundation—Steven Maher, Sound Design and Mix; Niamh Ryan, Copywriter; Micheal Whelan, Copywriter; Alex Cullen, Producer.

Copywriting Craft Once I Was That Child

By Javelin, for ISPC—Des Kavanagh, Copywriter; Deirdre McNamara, Marketing Manager (Client); Aoife Hofler, Account Director; Clayton Homer, Art Director; Kevin Breannach, Sound Engineer CEO Avondale Studios; Saoirse Ronan, Voiceover; Sofia Kavanagh, Voiceover; Eamon Fitzpatrick, Bauer Media Sales Director; Killian Laher, Sales Bauer Media.

Casting Gen Tea

By Showrunner for Lipton Teas and Infusions—Sam Moorhead, Creative Director; Mikey Fleming, Creative Director; John Close, Copywriter; Hazel Byrne, Agency Producer; Jane Gray, Account Director; Laura Hallinan and Fiona Collins, Marketing Managers (Client); Banjoman, Production Company; SG Casting, Casting Agency; PHD Media, Media Agency.

Innovation Samaritans 26 Minutes

By Droga5 Dublin/HeadStuff Podcasts for Samaritans Ireland—Al Pollock, Copywriter; Jessie Newman, Art Director; Colm Halpin, Creative Content; Ray Swan, Creative Director; Stephen Rogers, Creative Director; Torlogh O'Boyle, Creative Director; Shane Kelly, Associate Strategy Director; Georgia Murphy, Strategist; Hilary Barry, Producer (HeadStuff Podcasts); Claudia Grandez, Campaign Manager (HeadStuff Podcasts).

Broadcaster The Last Broadcast

By RTÉ for Radio One—John Kilkenny, Creative Director; Conor Noone, Promo Producer; Darragh Tracey, Producer; Mark Richards (Mutiny), Sound Engineer; Art Skehan (Mutiny), Sound Engineer.

AWARDED ENTRIES 2025



Listen Now

Consumer >

Audio for Change >

Sound Design >

Copywriting Craft >

Casting >

Innovation >

Broadcaster >

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The winning audio ads from the Irish Audio Awards 2024—25 are available to listen at the links above. Click on the category, and hear what award winning creative audio advertising sounds like.

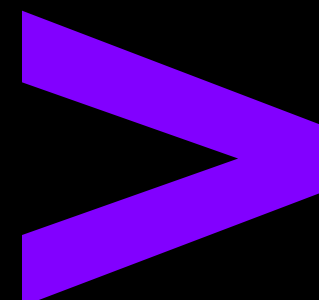
GRAND PRIX 2025

The Last Broadcast

RTÉ —
Radio One

John Kilkenny, Creative Director
Conor Noone, Promo Producer
Darragh Tracey, Producer
Mark Richards (Mutiny), Sound Engineer
Art Skehan (Mutiny), Sound Engineer

Listen Now



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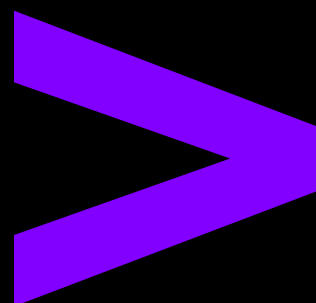


LISTEN BACK ONLINE NOW

The Irish Audio Awards is an event like no other. Listen now to the full live recording from our event on Thursday March 21st, 2025, in Smock Alley's historic theatre.

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Listen Now



Brought To You By

Radiocentre Ireland, a body established by RTÉ and Independent Broadcasters of Ireland to promote audio as a marketing medium and showcase the unbeatable reach and unique relationship enjoyed by Irish radio broadcasters and its millions of listeners. Radiocentre Ireland funds unique research and runs many initiatives and events throughout the year, including The Irish Audio Awards, Sounding Out, regular webinars and more.

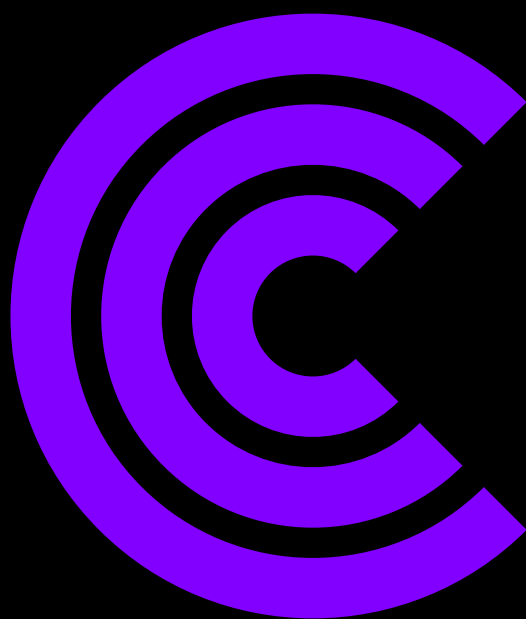
Special Thanks To

Radio Host, Anton Savage
Design & Production, Distinctive Repetition
Radio Producer, Dee Reddy
Musical Director, Sean MacErlaine
Recordist, Matt Thompson
Sound Engineer, Simon Cullen

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