

SERENA CONNELLY

CREATIVE DIRECTOR / COPYWRITER

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CREATIVE DIRECTION | IMMERSIVE STORYTELLING | VR / AR / XR

EXPERIENTIAL | MEGA PITCHES | BRAND NARRATIVES | SOCIAL CAMPAIGNS

Hello, I'm a hands-on Creative Leader, with a diverse background rooted in strategic branding and conceptual advertising. I thrive on the challenge of creating content in new mediums. I've been the Creative Lead for award-winning immersive mixed reality projects, re-branding and launch campaigns, interactive tools and apps, social media content, and branded experiences.

I'm known for:

- Adding social purpose and positivity to the work and process of crafting brand platforms for manifestos, product launches, ad campaigns, and brand acts
- Leveraging trends, culture, and news for high-engagement social that earns media attention
- Guiding interdisciplinary teams through strategy, ideation, pitching, design, and production to deliver award-winning products
- Balancing creative expression, pragmatic design, production processes, and business needs
- Leading with empathy and positivity in a flexible, strategic, and organized mindset
- Producing creative projects with high aesthetic quality, polish, and elevated design

AWARDS, PATENTS, & PUBLICATIONS

[Inventor: 2 US Patents](#) | Cannes International Festival of Creativity Lions | Gold Clio Awards | One Show Pencils | Art Directors Club Cubes | Webby Awards | Shorty Awards | Ad Age Award | Jay Chiat Award | Academy of Extended Reality Award VR for Social Good | Inaugural Anthem Awards Gold | The One Show Direct Marketing Jury 2022 | Academy of International Extended Reality AIXR Jury 2022–Present

EXPERIENCE

Freelance Creative Director, Ginormous

Jan 2024 - Present

I specialize in new business acquisition, branding, ad campaigns, content creation, screenwriting, and experiential events.

Clients include: This is Oberland, Constellation Energy, Accenture Song, Odina Designs, BrandPie, EY (Ernst & Young), StrawberryFrog, Optavia

Executive Creative Director Lippe Taylor

Mar 2023 – Oct 2023

Utilizing a strong understanding of social media platforms, user behavior, strategy, culture, and trends to developing campaigns ranging from scrappy shoestring in-house budgets to well-funded multi-channel campaigns (paid, organic, social, e-commerce, experiences, and events).

- Leading, inspiring, managing and mentoring 25-35 full-time and freelance Writers, Designers, Art Directors, Motion Designers, Makers, and Creators.
- Maintaining an understanding of clients, current and upcoming project status', individual skill sets, and project types, collaborating with Finance, Recruiting, Production, and Project Management, to provide clear recommendations for staffing and allocations of the creative department.
- Leading the Creative response to multiple RFPs with key stakeholders.
- Supporting a visually impaired creative to enable them to continue working with accommodations.
- Expanding the idea of a branded lakeside party creating the first-ever "Lake Over" program to empower locals to take over their beaches and clean lake water naturally.

Executive Creative Director Accenture Song

Aug 2019 – Mar 2023 (3 years 8 months)

Immersive Content, XR, and Metaverse Experiences

- Leading the creation of Virtual and XR experiences for overcoming racial inequality. Utilizing real-time 3D technology, AR/VR, special sound design, and other linear content production.

Save the Children US / Pitched and Won AOR

- Launched the "Power to the Children" campaign, filled with positivity and color, to inspire a new generation to champion children and elevate their voices.

AVenueS (Accenture Virtual Experience Solutions) / Third Version

- Co-creating with SMEs two immersive, mixed reality learning experiences to be utilized with a live, seminar exploring personal and implicit racial bias among child welfare social workers. As the Creative Lead, I helped guide the team in building authentic, dynamic characters and conflicts with captivating backstories. I also lead the creative development of a complex, multiple-choice, branched narrative, VR script, storyboards, and other materials to inform the direction and production of both a live-action and a 360° video content shoot. Post-production included collaborating with a Unity dev crew on polishing the final experience in the VR headset.

Institute for Veterans and Military Families & Goodwill Industries / VR Interview Tools

- Dual role of ECD and green screen video shoot Director involved scoping, scriptwriting, planning, directing, and overseeing the shooting, capturing, and editing of multiple actors to create a VR tool to help Veterans and their spouses to practice interviewing for civilian jobs. The foundation built by this project was utilized to quickly create a similar experience for Goodwill Industries, which helped formerly incarcerated people prepare for their next chapter.

Freelance Creative Director / Brand Consultant / Copywriter GINORMOUS

Nov 2012 – Aug 2019 (6 years 10 months)

Conceptualize ideas, establish strategic platforms, and introduce, as well as lead, effective advertising campaigns across all marketing channels. Communicate brand stories through a variety of platforms, such as live, digital, traditional, mobile, broadcast, and experiential. Create new brand strategies while directing brands toward actionable, culturally relevant, audience-focused messaging and content.

Rebrand international and reputable Fortune 500 company, resulting in press and industry recognition.

Selected Achievements:

- Won a key \$75 million pitch for America's Biopharmaceutical Companies.
- Acquired two intellectual property patents while maintaining originality/novelty of the concepts.
- Recently honored with Gold Clio Award.
- Appreciated by other senior executives for thinking out of the box.

Clients: New Balance, Target, Google, Chase, Estee Lauder, Johnson & Johnson, Wired, Realtor.com, Memorial Sloan Kettering, Verizon, Electrolux, Electrolux EMEA, AEG Europe, Dove, Hasbro Global, Sally Hansen, Amazon Fashion, and Chateau Montelena.

Agencies: Mother, VMLY&R, Johannes Leonardo, Pereira & O'Dell, Saatchi & Saatchi, SS&K, McCann, Edelman, DDB, OKRP, Sapient, AKQA, Grey, Ogilvy, Imaginary Forces, Havas, Publicis, Code and Theory

VP, Group Creative Director, Momentum Worldwide

Jul 2017 – Jan 2018 (7 months)

Served as a creative lead on American Express experiential marketing initiatives while spearheading a cross-functional creative team of 12 direct reports, to deliver innovative technological solutions, large-scale experiences, and advertising campaigns for American Express. Enhanced brand awareness and strengthened brand reputation by actively promoting AMEX via traditional, experiential, OOH, digital, and social media. Marketed AMEX across B2C and B2B lines while modernizing the brand tone of voice. Liaised with internal teams to ensure the best transformation of ideas into reality within the allocated time and budgetary resources. Supported and backed ideas coming from every agency discipline at IAT meetings and recognized the best solutions irrespective of place of origination. Directed and guided new business pitches with senior management and external IPG agency partners. Attended both the senior leadership team and inter-agency partner IAP meetings to deliver strategic insights and press-worthy ideas before relaunching the brand. Promoted tech-forward and consumer insight-driven culture by leading teams to incorporate innovation and smart technologies into client solution development.

Selected Achievements:

- Developed and maintained strong relations with more than 15 clients across marketing disciplines from Sponsorship to Legal Affairs.
- Received 4 Clio Awards for American Express "Air Tennis" at the US Open and achieving increased throughput from 9K to 20K+ within one year
- Clio Sports | Gold | Design | Event / Exhibit Design
- Clio Sports | Silver | Innovation | Product Innovation
- Clio Sports | Bronze | Digital / Mobile | Virtual / Augmented Reality
- Clio Sports | Bronze | Events / Experiential
- Clio Sports | Shortlist | Branded Entertainment & Content | Events / Experiential
- Clio Sports | Shortlist | Branded Entertainment & Content | Games
- Clio Sports | Shortlist | Digital / Mobile | Games

Group Creative Director, RAPP

May 2014 – Jun 2015 (1 year 2 months)

Managed company's most high-profile client, Humana as the point of contact for all creative endeavors.

- Co-led the Creative Department of 50+ individuals, including full-time and freelance Art Directors, Writers, Motion Designers, and Graphic Designers.
- Generated a new integrated brand platform and brand story, distinguishing it from competitors.
- Shot more than 100 hours of footage and 10K+ photos for the campaign, proving brand actions.
- Conducted off-site idea generation events for the brand's social causes generating fresh ideas.
- Collaborated with senior leadership to devise effective strategies for tackling operational issues, fulfilling staffing requirements, and ensuring organizational success.

Creative Director, Grey Group

Jun 2013 – Jan 2014 (8 months)

Co-lead on Hasbro Global Girls Toys

- Produced a global campaign for the launch of Equestria Girls Dolls which sold over \$35 million dolls in the first quarter.
- Overseeing the work of 2-6 teams of creatives (4-12 people) across multiple Hasbro Toys
- Creating copious TV spots and integrated campaigns

Group Creative Director, LBi US

Apr 2012 – Nov 2012 (8 months)

Directing digital and social campaigns, in addition to website creation and maintenance for 11+ Johnson & Johnson brands including Neutrogena, Listerine, Visine, Band-Aid, Neosporin, KY, Tucks, Rembrandt, Rogaine, OB, and Healthy Essentials

- Supporting the development of several brand strategies, including an evolution of the core
- J&J brand positioning and communication hierarchy
- Implementing multiple social media campaigns that drove measurable results
- Provided caring mentorship to a diverse and brilliant creative team.
- Leading the "Bathroom Brief" process of gathering ideas for current clients from across all departments in the agency.
- Participating in Senior Leadership initiatives including working with operational teams (Ops, Finance, HR) to achieve the agency financial objectives.

Executive Creative Director, East Coast Blast Radius

Oct 2011 – Apr 2012 (7 months)

Ensuring the overall quality of all creative work in the Northeast from Toronto to NYC on clients including Nike, Bacardi, Novartis, and Levi's

- Proactively engaging with senior management across the globe to maximize the agency's service offering, improve agency processes, develop go to market strategies, and integration efforts with other Omnicom Partners
- Leading a large-scale creative development to win AOR as the Global Digital Levi's account including a turnkey influencer strategy for five, global markets.
- Identifying innovative technical approaches for retail and non-retail environments including a working model demonstrating how the technology will improve the customer's experience.
- Securing the budget and activating training to support multiple creative's progress.
- Creating a database of potential vendors, artists, and brand partners for content collaborations
- Instituting a series of internal creative inspiration sessions, open idea forums, and field trips.

Creative Director, Strawberry Frog

Nov 2009 – Apr 2011 (1 year 6 months)

Associate Creative Director, R/GA

Apr 2007 – Oct 2009 (2 years 7 months)

Freelance Associate Creative Director, Arc Worldwide and Publicis

2005 – 2007 (2 years)

Senior Copywriter, Leo Burnett
Sep 1999 – Jan 2005 (5 years 5 months)

Copywriter, The Integer Group
1995 – 1998 (3 years)

SKILLS GALORE

Storytelling • Brand Positioning • Brand Strategy • Branding • New Business Development & RFP Responses
• Integrated Campaigns • Copywriting • Video Scripts • Screenwriting • Comedy Dialog • Broadcast • Radio
• Branched Narratives • Experiential Marketing • Virtual and Live Events • Experience Design • Run of Show •
Live Action Digital Video • Hands-on post-production • Volumetric Video Capture • CG Content Design •
Adobe Creative Suite • Earned media • Immersive Content Authoring • 3D Narrative Design • AR • VR • XR •
MR • Extended Reality Content Development • Virtual Reality Content Creation • Interactive Innovation •
Emerging Technology • Microsoft VR Platform Development • Oculus Development • Unity Development • IP
Development • AI: Midjourney, Pika, ChatGPT, Bard

EDUCATION

University of Colorado Boulder School of Journalism B.S. Major: Advertising

DePaul University Major: Acting

Natural Gourmet Institute for Health and Culinary Arts

Wine & Spirit Education Trust Level 2, Wine Steward/Sommelier

HONORS & AWARDS

- Winner VR for Social Impact: "AVenueS – Race Equity in Child Welfare" - The Academy of International Extended Reality VR Awards Jul 2021 AVenueS (Accenture Virtual Experience Solutions) won The VR Awards Social Impact Award, which is given to companies or individuals that produce and execute either an experience, product, and/or service, which has resulted in positively impacting a cause for social good.
- Gold for "Advancing Race Equity in VR" Responsible Technology Awareness Categories - Anthem Awards (Inaugural Year) A new initiative by the Webby Awards Jan 2022
- Jury Member Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts Communicator Awards - Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts Oct 2022-Present
- CLIO AWARDS - The Clio Awards June 2018 GOLD CLIO Event/Exhibit Design: American Express 'Air Tennis' 2018
- SILVER CLIO Product Innovation: American Express 'Air Tennis' 2018
- BRONZE CLIO Virtual/Augmented Reality: American Express 'Air Tennis' 2018
- BRONZE CLIO Event/Experiential: American Express 'Air Tennis' 2018
- CLIO Shortlist | Branded Entertainment & Content | Events / Experiential
- CLIO Shortlist | Branded Entertainment & Content | Games
- CLIO Shortlist | Digital / Mobile | Games
- Cannes Lions - THE CANNES INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CREATIVITY Jun 2013
- One Show Pencils - The One Club
- Art Directors Club Cube - The Art Director's Club
- Webby Awards - The Webbys
- Shorty Awards - The Shorty Awards
- The One Show: Jury Member - The One Club
- Cannes International Festival of Creativity: Young Lions: Jury - THE CANNES INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CREATIVITY
- The Young Ones: Jury Member - The One Club
- IAB Mobile Rising Stars: Jury Member - The IAB

SOFTWARE

Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, Keynote, and After Effects for motion design) • MS programs (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, etc.) • Working knowledge of 3D software including Cinema 4D and Unity • Plus, experience in utilizing AI with proficiency in OpenAI Platforms: Midjourney, Pika, ChatGPT, Bard, etc. Deep knowledge of Web3, volumetric video capture, and Blockchain