

SARA JANSSEN

Creative Director

Designer + Art Director

Portfolio

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Professional Profile

Creative leader with deep experience across agencies, design firms, and in-house environments. Hands-on in design, art direction, and photo/video production from concept through execution. Known for developing strong creative teams, streamlining processes, and partnering effectively across functions to deliver meaningful, high-impact brand work.

Summary

Creative Leadership

Art Direction & Design

Creative Team Management

Photo & Video Production

Art Buying & Negotiation

Video Editing

Adobe Illustrator

Adobe InDesign

Adobe Photoshop

Adobe Firefly

Midjourney

OpenAI Sora

Artlist

Figma

Purpose Brands (FKA Self-Esteem Brands)
Woodbury, MN | 2020 – 2025

Creative Director

Creative leader and hands-on creator across a domestic and global portfolio including Anytime Fitness, The Bar Method, Basecamp Fitness, Stronger U Nutrition, and Waxing the City, as well as enterprise brand development for the parent brand, Purpose Brands.

- *Built and led a high-performing in-house creative team*, elevating brand consistency and creative quality while reducing reliance on external partners; positioned the organization to reduce freelance spend by 22% from 2024 to 2025.
- *Reimagined and redesigned brand foundations and visual identities* across all portfolio brands to strengthen differentiation and market positioning.
- *Increased creative output by 20% YoY* across omnichannel campaigns supporting consumer growth, franchisee enablement, and franchise development.
- *Served as a core contributor* to the launch of the Apple Fitness+ x Anytime Fitness partnership, integrating digital and in-club member experience.
- *Directed and designed integrated brand campaigns* across all five brands to drive lead generation and deepen emotional consumer engagement.
- *Mentored and developed* emerging creative leaders and social content creators, fostering a high-performance culture rooted in innovation, accountability, and strategic brand thinking.
- *Leveraged AI tools* for rapid concepting, audience testing, scratch audio, and video ideation—accelerating production workflows and insight development.
- *Played a key role in the organizational transformation* from Self Esteem Brands to Purpose Brands, including strategic integration of the Orangetheory brand.
- *Collaborated with* executive leadership, Product, Brand Strategy, Paid Media, Franchise Development, and Marketing Operations to ensure creative alignment with enterprise growth targets.
- *Developed and implemented a Unified Design Process* to streamline execution, reduce silos, and improve cross-team accessibility of brand assets.
- *Led large-scale productions* including photo, motion capture, editorial storytelling, and post-production workflows in partnership with creative and marketing operations teams.
- *Created Member Success Story content* that generated 47% higher social engagement than branded videos during the 2024 January campaign.
- *Served as creative steward* across agency, freelance, and media relationships to ensure brand integrity and excellence across all touchpoints.
- *Increased brand awareness and purchase intent* by 3% through the Anytime Fitness Super Bowl Hack campaign (measured immediately post-event).
- *Delivered 13.9% YoY growth* in 2022 for Waxing the City by leading integrated campaigns and developing distinctive brand creative.
- *Reduced cost per lead by over 50% YoY* for The Bar Method by optimizing digital strategy and producing high-engagement creative content.

Thorburn
Minneapolis, MN | 2008 – 2015

Creative Director (2015–2019)
Assoc. Creative Director (2012–2015)
Senior Designer (2008–2012)

Played a key role in launching and growing The Thorburn Group as an independent brand consultancy, applying a strategic creative approach focused on uncovering and articulating a brand's core DNA to drive emotional resonance, loyalty, and marketplace differentiation.

- *Shaped brand positioning and visual identity systems* by identifying core brand narratives and translating them into cohesive, compelling creative across touchpoints.
- *Led, coached, and mentored* multidisciplinary creative teams, elevating creative thinking, strengthening execution, and fostering a collaborative, high-performance culture.
- *Balanced hands-on design with creative direction*, managing multiple priorities and delivering high-impact work under tight timelines and evolving client needs.
- *Developed and executed integrated campaigns and brand launches* across digital, print, environmental, experiential, and retail channels.
- *Led omnichannel creative development* for key initiatives, including a high-visibility Times Square brand activation for American Standard.
- *Delivered creative solutions* across consumer, lifestyle, CPG, technology, membership, and enterprise brands, including Appleton Coated, Ecolab, Halo Innovations, Hearing Industries Association, Lixil (parent of American Standard), Lifetime Fitness, Lutsen, National Geographic, Olay, Polaris, Polaroid, and Pumpz & Co.
- *Guided brand strategy and integrated marketing* for higher education clients including Drake University, Dunwoody College of Technology, North Carolina A&T, Saint Mary's College, and St. Olaf College.

Carmichael Lynch
Minneapolis, MN | 2004 – 2008

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Senior Designer (2005–2008)
Carmichael Lynch Thorburn

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Art Director (2004–2005)

Creative leader skilled in shaping omnichannel brand experiences, guiding visual direction, mentoring creative talent, and partnering cross-functionally to bring brands to life.

- *Developed and executed* omnichannel brand concepts and visual systems rooted in strategic brand positioning and emotional resonance.
- *Directed lifestyle and product photoshoots*, collaborating closely with photographers, producers, and creative leadership to ensure cohesive brand expression.
- *Partnered cross-functionally* with copywriters, brand strategists, account teams, and production leads to deliver integrated campaigns and new business work.
- *Mentored junior designers*, supporting skill development and elevating overall team craft quality.
- *Supported creative development for major consumer brands* including Porsche, Rosetta Stone, Kohl's (Simply Vera), American Standard, Ecolab, Hunter Douglas, and A.G. Edwards.

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Martin / Williams
Minneapolis, MN | 1997 – 2004

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Designer

Cross-functional designer experienced in art direction, photoshoot production, and omnichannel brand execution.

- *Supported integrated brand and campaign development* across print and digital.
- *Designed and art-directed lifestyle and product shoots* for Polaris and Victory Motorcycles.
- *Created the brand identity* for Lincoln Financial Field.
- *Collaborated with cross-functional creative teams* and contributed to new business efforts.

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Recognition

AdFed Minnesota
AIGA
Cannes Lion.
Clio
D&AD
Effie

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Education

Drake University
Des Moines, Iowa
1992 – 1996
B.A. Degree in Graphic Design