

Gary Watson

Creative Director/Writer



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OVERVIEW

- **Almost 30 years in the business with 20+ years as a Creative Director at some of Canada's top creative agencies**
- **Won over 150 National and International Awards including Cannes Lions, One Show Pencils and Clios**
- **Been named in the Top 10 Creative Directors in Canada on Strategy's Creative Report**
- **Chosen from an international talent pool to launch a new Walmart acquisition in the United Kingdom (Publicis)**
- **Founder of Gas Bottle Jack, creators of original film and TV concepts**

EXPERIENCE

March 2024 – present: Freelance Creative Director | Writer, Toronto

April 2022 – February 2024: Contract Creative Director, Rethink, Toronto

August 2021 – April 2022: Freelance Creative Director | Writer, Toronto

February 2021 – August 2021: Executive Creative Director, Community, Toronto

Highlights: Created branded communities for some of Canada's largest real estate clients; launched a Canadian-first Bombay Sapphire Art Project for their global Stir Creativity platform: <https://bombayartproject.ca>

January 2019 – February 2021: Freelance Creative Director | Writer, Toronto/Montreal

Highlights: while at K72, Montreal, wrote and directed a 4-part content series for *Banff Centre for Arts & Creativity* featuring notable and award-winning Canadian artists: <https://www.banffcentre.ca/is>. Placed in Top 100 CD/Copywriters in Canada.

August 2017 to Dec. 2018: Contract Creative Director, Zulu Alpha Kilo, Toronto

Highlights: led a multi-disciplinary team of designers, art directors and writers on Consonant Skin Care with campaign contributing to ZAK winning *2018 Strategy Design Agency of the Year* plus numerous national and international awards. Also, helped operationalize the recently-won Tim Hortons business.

January 2017 to July 2017: Freelance Creative Director, TAXI, Montreal/Toronto

Highlight: recruited from a pool of Canadian freelancers, based upon my extensive telecom experience, to lead the Fido wireless brand - working primarily out of the agency's Montreal office while coordinating with the Toronto design team.

May 2016 to December 2016: Freelance Creative Director | Writer, Toronto/New York/Montreal

November 2015 to May 2016: Executive Creative Director, 6 Degrees, Toronto

Highlights: led integration of the agency's shopper marketing, experiential and digital/social media divisions. Launched a omnichannel campaign for Schick Hydro razors that received significant consumer & industry PR.

August 2014 to October 2015: Executive Creative Director, T1, Toronto

Highlight: helped this experiential agency win their first major mainstream awards in shows like AToMiC Awards, ADCC and Shopper Innovation Awards for "Pictionary Mall Surprise."

February 2013 to July 2014: Chief Creative Officer, Capital C, Toronto

Highlights: helped transform the agency from promotional to full-service agency winning AOR assignments for Sleep Country and Miller Lite and global awards for "Bissell Symphony Subway Stunt" and "TedX Columbia Promo Films. Placed in the *Top 100 Creative Directors* in Strategy Magazine's 2015 Creative Report Card.

July 2012 to February 2013: Freelance Creative Director | Writer, Toronto

Highlight: while at Innocean Worldwide, created the Hyundai Canada Super Bowl commercial "Gaspocalypse" which garnered over 4 million views in 1 week.

November 2004 to July 2012: Creative Director, BOS, Toronto

Highlights: helped grow the Toronto office from 6 people to 46 in under 4 years winning significant new business along the way. Led a team of media-agnostic art directors, designers and writers, winning national and international awards for Monster.ca and Mac's Convenience Stores.

Nov. 2001 to Nov. 2004: VP, Group Creative Director, Maclaren McCann, Toronto

Highlights: led the Rogers Wireless/Cable businesses, Air Miles and Toronto Blue Jays with every account winning major awards for 2 successive years, including a Cannes Lion. Placed in top 10 Creative Directors in Strategy Magazine's 2003 Creative Report Card.

May 1999 to November 2001: Writer, Publicis, Toronto

Highlights: helped Publicis win Marketing Magazine's Agency of the Year in 2000. Chosen from a global talent pool to launch ASDA (UK grocer acquired by Walmart) and spent a month in London leading the Publicis UK creative and production teams.

EDUCATION

York University, Bachelor of Arts (English)

AWARDS

Domestic: Ad & Design Club of Canada (ADCC), Applied Arts, AToMiC Awards, Bessies, Canadian Marketing Awards (CMAs), Cassies, Digital Marketing Awards, Effies, The Extras, Marketing Awards, Media Innovation Awards, Shopper Innovation Awards, Strategy Awards

International: Cannes, Clios, One Show, London International, Communication Arts, Kinsale Shark, HOW Design

DISTINCTIONS

Judging: Applied Arts, Canadian Marketing Awards, The Crystals, Digital Marketing Awards, The Effies, The Extras, London International, Marketing Awards, New York Festival

Published: Numerous industry articles appeared in Applied Arts Magazine, Marketing Magazine, National Post, Stimulant and BestAdsonTV.com

Boards: Advertising Advisory Board, Applied Arts Magazine, 2006-2010

Speaking: Guest lecturer at OCAD. Keynote Speaker at Youth Marketing Conference

Mentoring: Portfolio reviewer at eight IHaveAnIdea Portfolio Nights plus ADCC, Humber College and Seneca College portfolio reviews. Hosted student days at Bos during Advertising Week. Hosted Seneca College Breakfast & Learn at Bos