

# MARIA MERCEDES LA ROSA

info@mercedeslarosa.com | www.mercedeslarosa.com | 514.885.5611

## PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

- Motivated, high-performing design professional with 14+ years of creating and overseeing the production of concepts, artwork and marketing collateral for complex, multi-layered print, online, mobile, video and environmental way-finding projects.
- Looking for new, cool opportunities that make best use of my professional capabilities and experience.

## AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- art direction
- creative consultation, production, planning
- asset management, negotiation and acquisition
- contract negotiation and management
- project management
- staff, freelancer and resources management
- extremely diverse client relations experience
- creativity and workflow solutions
- print and online media trouble shooting
- Adobe Creative Cloud Suite
- commercial photography
- offset printing and online production

## MAJOR CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS

Graphic Designer, Concordia University

Present–Aug. 2013

- Appointed by the University Communications Executive Director to create and apply comprehensive design themes for all levels of its educational and administrative properties to support strategic marketing goals.
  - Oversees the conceptualization, development and delivery of major projects such as:
    - **Concordia University app.** Conceptualizes and develops interactive content that compliment the utilitarian features of the school's app, designed to attract other usage for it. To date, has designed the app's first two communications-related creative features:
      - **JMSB Mag.** Conceptualized, designed and developed frontend and backend features of this branded editorial product aimed at providing the university's business school's alumni and business community updates on its latest developments. Pilot project was received with great feedback that the school has decided to continue creating branded content, currently working on the third issue.
      - **Ask Meagan.** Riding on the positive feedback of JMSB Mag, designed and developed the front end and backend features of this branded editorial product for the school's Student Services department. It is currently one of the top ten features students use in the app.
      - **University re-branding.** Conceptualized and developed leading direction of revamp, oversaw its soft-launch application on high-visibility displays such as buses and digital screens throughout campus before being used for all visual material the university produces.
- Selected to lead design projects for JMSB to meet its extremely heavy volume of design work.
  - Ensures the visual design themes of various marketing, business and promotional assets for its 35 educational programs (undergraduate, graduate, post-graduate, professional and executive levels) translates to attractive designs that support Concordia University's overall branding strategy.
    - Oversees and manages re-designs for Executive MBA program, Executive Centre professional programs, specialized graduate programs, certification programs and research centres.
    - Executes multifaceted design projects for print, online and environmental ad work as placed in: *Business Insider, The Financial Post, The Guardian, The Globe and Mail, The National Post, Toronto Pearson International Airport, Pierre Elliot Trudeau International Airport, Toronto Transit Commission and Société de Transport Montreal.*
  - Continually initiates mobilization efforts for more efficient work flow from the conception, production and execution phase of major marketing projects.
  - Preferred designer for leading the ideation and strategizing phases of major marketing projects –input consistently results in more efficient production and completion of marketing collateral.
  - Top performer in productivity and consistent on-time completion of multiple projects on extremely tight schedules mitigate client and production stress while surpassing design quality expectations.

# MARIA MERCEDES LA ROSA

info@mercedeslarosa.com | www.mercedeslarosa.com | 514.885.5611

Photo Editor. AskMen (News Corp. asset acquired by Ziff Davis)

Jun. 2013–Jul. 2011

*AskMen is the largest men's website in the world.*

- Innovated custom visual solutions and UI/UX design processes to execute business, marketing and editorial goals concurrent to website re-design.
- Developed a network of photographers, artists, image providers as well as marketing and publicity agencies preferential to AskMen.
  - Negotiated cost-effective licensing fees for high-quality, editorial imagery and managed outsourced contracts for artwork.
  - Fostered relationships that led to the approved use of exclusive imagery.
  - Resourceful asset acquisition on 2 major online features (*Top 49 Most Influential Men* and *Top 99 Most Desirable Women*—each generating over 3MM visitors and 20MM page views within the first week of launch) led to securing an imagery budget for subsequent editions and projects.
  - Consistently used visual tactics and used site analytics (audience research) to guide design. Contributed to increased daily page views, conversion rates and social media engagement.
  - Introduced the innovative and extensive use of customized Photoshop filters to differentiate the AskMen brand. Expertise in Photoshop proved essential in creating the customized filters necessary to achieve a desired distinguished look.
- Role evolved to include producing e-commerce and video projects to establish strategic partnerships and reach a company-wide goal of communicating “aspiration” (a term intrinsic to AskMen branding strategy at the time) to its readership, advertisers and potential clients.
  - Conceptualized, produced and shot successful market editorial gallery on sunglasses.
    - Surpassed its targeted metric (10,000 visitors within the first week), significantly increased pageviews, generated meaningful social media engagement and established relationships with brands such as Ssense.com (luxury e-commerce store), Tom Ford, Dior, Sunglass Hut (Oliver Peoples, Ray-Ban) Karmaloop (popular streetwear e-commerce store), Vans and Converse.
  - Initiated, planned, shot and produced 8 editorial videos to leverage on major international brands as advertising anchors intended to tap into a more lucrative advertising client base.
    - Organizations and notable people involved include BMW (Benoit Jacob, Adrian van Hooydonk), Ford (Alan Mulally, Mark Fields), Nissan, the North American International Auto Show, Behance (Scott Belsky), Ogilvy, Erwan Bourellec and Hipstamatic.
  - Recruited a team of interns to keep up with the growing workload and complexity of the position.
    - Organized projects and milestones for interns to accomplish, mentored them with insight and feedback on creative deliveries, identified their strengths and matched them to suitable tasks, motivated them to innovate ways to translate the new, “aspirational” AskMen look to various photo-based social media platforms.
    - Productivity and success from of the initiative was precedent setting. Peers in other departments replicated the closely mentored, focused and objective-driven interning process.

## OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Visual Designer, *Maisonneuve Magazine*

Aug. 2007–May 2006

*Maisonneuve Magazine is Montreal's literary magazine equivalent to the New Yorker.*

- Conceptualized and delivered magazine's spec work for 2 major project pitches:
  - *M Magazine*, a monthly positioning itself as the city magazine for Montreal (like *New York Magazine*).
  - A publication in collaboration with IdeaCity, a Toronto broadcast media company, for its ideas festival.
- Assigned to act as holdover manager on the abrupt departure of incumbent Art Director at a critical production phase.
  - Prioritized and managed workflow over unexpected events, filled-in functional gaps and essentials including the sourcing and selecting of cover image options under extremely short deadlines.

# MARIA MERCEDES LA ROSA

info@mercedeslarosa.com | www.mercedeslarosa.com | 514.885.5611

## Design Freelancer

Jul. 2011–May 2009

- Assessed, developed and designed websites, visual identity, print and online ads for clients in the food, restaurant, retail, construction and non-profit industry looking for better value alternatives to design firms.
- Developed projects within client's budgets. Self-initiated consistency in communication led to exceeding clients' expectations of quality projects delivered on schedule.

## Graphic + Web Designer, SAV Technology

May 2009–Aug. 2007

- Designed website templates and marketing material for clients in retail, real estate, entertainment and small to mid-size business industries.
- Photographed, styled and retouched product images.
- Consistently produced deliverables on time and on budget.

## Arts Editor and Graphics Editor, *The Link*

Aug. 2006–Jan. 2004

*The Link is one of Montreal's university news publications with a circulation of 10,000 copies weekly.*

- Mastered skills and abilities to develop an efficient workflow for producing multiple design and editorial projects on tight deadlines
- Concurrently recruited and managed a roster of 20 freelance contributors.
- Created relationships with key cultural organizations and people to help foster arts community at a grassroots level.

## EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION

- UX Certification, Nielsen Norman Group, Vancouver, BC, Canada. Nov. 2015
- Attestation d'études collégiales(AEC) Commercial Photography Certificate, Dawson College, Montreal, QC, Canada. May 2015–Sept. 2013
- BA, Communications (Specialization: Visual Dynamics) and Liberal Arts (Western Society and Culture), Concordia University, Montreal, QC, Canada. Nov. 2006–Sept. 2002
- BA, Liberal Arts and Arts Administration, Bishop's University, Lennoxville, QC. Canada. Jul. 2002–Sept. 2000
- High School Diploma, York House School, Vancouver, BC, Canada. Jun 2000–Sept. 1994

## SKILLS

### Technology

- Expertise in Adobe CC (InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, Bridge, Acrobat), Wordpress (CMS and back-end customization ), Microsoft Office.
- Knowledgeable in CSS, HTML, modes of online marketing (SEO, Google adwords, Facebook ads), social networking (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Pinterest, LinkedIn), video / audio editing and other creative software such as Sketch, FinalCut, Lightroom and Flash).

### Design

- Capable of creating concepts, artwork and layouts based on project intakes. Able to write and explain design rationale behind proposed design solutions and contribute to critique discussions.
- Extensive pre-press experience planning and laying out information in a current, professional and tasteful manner for large format signage, displays, ads (print, online and mobile), magazine and newspaper articles, brochures, linesheets, presentations and websites.
- Designs with user-friendliness in mind, interest in app design, typography and colour application.

## CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

- 2015: Nielsen Norman Group UX
- 2016: Core77–Designing Here Now, Torino Graphic Days, Web Summit Lisbon
- 2017: OFFF Barcelona, Emotional Design Psychology & Neuroscience, Psychology for Digital Behavior
- 2018: Monocle Media Summit, Monotype Brand Day