

# Lynne Rennie

Design Leader, Educator, and Brand Strategist >> Powered by Insight and Big Heart Energy

**Professional Profile >> PORTFOLIO WEBSITE** [www.LynneRennie.com](http://www.LynneRennie.com)

Brand and marketing leader with 20+ years of experience shaping brand strategy, creative direction, packaging, and integrated marketing campaigns for companies in premium consumer goods, manufacturing, education, and corporate portfolios.

Expert at unifying fragmented brand systems, working independently, leading creative teams, and translating business goals into measurable market visibility and engagement. Known for collaborative leadership, data-driven decision making, and building brand credibility that inspires both clients and internal teams.

## 2021 to present

### Design Director and Brand Manager

**G.L. Black Group**  
Calgary, Alberta

#### **"Chief Brand Wrangler:**

*Bringing discipline, cohesion,  
and clarity to a portfolio of chaos."*

## Challenges

G.L. Black Group, a diversified group of companies, needed to establish a unified brand voice and elevate the professionalism of its internal and external communications across multiple industries while respecting the individuality of each business.

## Strategic Actions

- Built the brand architecture, positioning strategy, and toolkits for each business in the corporate portfolio, ensuring consistency and differentiation across business units.
- Designed and refined brands and visual identities, advertising, digital marketing, and content strategies, integrating owned, earned, and paid media to expand reach and engagement.
- Led social media, website redesign, and optimization to improve SEO, UX, and conversion.
- Partnered with managers and cross-functional teams to align brand expression, employee experience, and business goals.
- Managed vendors, agencies, and creative partners for on-brand delivery within budget and timeline.
- Planned and executed internal and client events that strengthened reputation and culture.

## Results

- Delivered cohesive brand systems and campaigns that increased stakeholder satisfaction and digital engagement subsidiaries year-over-year.
- Improved brand consistency and internal communications across the portfolio, positioning the holding company as a credible, future-ready enterprise while strengthening the positions of the individual brands.
- Established a scalable framework for sponsorships, social media, and marketing measurement, enabling better ROI analysis and informed investment decisions.

## 2016 to present

### Sessional instructor, Alberta University of the Arts

Calgary, Alberta

#### **"Director of Fresh Starts &**

**Future Selves:** *Teaching design as  
both practice and performance."*

## Challenges

Continuously develop and refine course curriculum to reflect cultural shifts, industry evolution, and the emerging needs of design students.

## Strategic Actions

- Designed and taught studio-based advanced courses in **Branding, Packaging, and Advertising**, emphasizing critical thinking, strategy, and practical project-based print execution.
- Integrated real-world case studies and campaign simulations to teach brand systems, storytelling, and market positioning.
- Mentored students and alumni in portfolio development, communication strategy, and industry readiness.
- Collaborated with industry professionals and cross-disciplinary faculty to enhance learning outcomes.
- Assembled and hosted industry panel discussions at the University for the benefit of students

## Results

- As an instructor, I am ranked in the top 5% of instructors by students for teaching excellence, engagement, and professional relevance.
- Strengthened AUArts' reputation for industry-connected design education through mentorship and alumni involvement.

## 2010 to 2021

**Design Director  
Brand Manager**  
**Cococo Chocolatiers**  
Calgary, Alberta

**“Director of Comeback Magic:**  
*Leading a premium chocolate  
brand from near extinction to  
renewed relevance.”*

## Challenges

Following a change in ownership, the company needed to rebuild market trust, modernize its visual identity, and reignite consumer interest while maintaining regulatory compliance and brand authenticity.

## Strategic Actions

- Led the brand redevelopment and evolution, balancing heritage with innovation to re-establish category leadership.
- Designed and directed new products, product development and naming, CPG systems, and custom polycarbonate mold design.
- Launched an integrated digital strategy, including e-commerce (Shopify), social media, content creation, and CRM-driven campaigns.
- Oversaw brand campaigns, photography, copywriting, storytelling, and events to connect emotionally with audiences and strengthen loyalty.
- Managed external vendors, PR, and media partnerships to maximize earned and paid visibility.

## Results

- Increased e-commerce sales and repeat purchases by double digits within the three years of launch.
- Elevated brand perception and visibility, positioning Cococo as a Canadian leader in ethical and sustainable fine chocolate.

## Earlier Experience

**Getty Images** - Seattle: Design Director and Masterbrand Lead

**EyeWire, Inc.** - Calgary: Design Director

**Karo Design** - Calgary: Senior Designer

**HarperCollins Publishers** - New York: Marketing Designer with HarperCollins Children's Books

## Key Skills & Tools

**Strategic:** Brand Design • Brand Strategy • Research • Market Positioning • Integrated Campaigns • Sponsorship Activation • ROI & Analytics • Stakeholder Management • Creative Direction • Change Management • Social Listening • Critical theory.

**Technical:** Adobe Creative Suite • Canva • Procreate • Copywriting • Microsoft 365 • Excel • Powerpoint • Google Workspace • Google Analytics • SEM Rush • Figma • Slack • Capcut • Various AI Tools (ChatGPT, Midjourney, Firefly) • Klaviyo • Shopify • Wix • MS Dynamics CRM • Social Media Analytics • Beginner french.

## Education

**“Creative Triple-Threat:**  
*Part writer, part artist, part  
designer who speaks the  
languages of words, images,  
and ideas fluently”*

## Masters of Professional Studies in Branding - MPS Branding

School of Visual Arts | New York, NY, USA

*Recipient of the “Lauren Zaleski MVP Award,” presented to the top-performing student who exemplifies excellence.*

## Bachelor of Design in Communication Design, Honours - BDes

Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University | Halifax NS

*Recipient of the Josephy Beuys Scholarship for creative excellence.*

## Bachelor of Fine Art in Painting, Honours - BFA

Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University | Halifax NS

## Bachelor of Arts in English Literature - BA

University of Calgary | Calgary AB

## Personal

Based in Calgary with my husband, three children, four scruffy dogs and one rabbit. I value family, empathy, creativity, curiosity, and life-long learning. I write a blog about design and culture and maintain a professional portfolio at [LynneRennie.com](https://lynnerennie.com). Creator of *Drawn to Canada* (@DrawnToCanada on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/drawntocanada)), an illustrated storytelling project exploring Canadian identity, featured nationally on CBC Radio and CBC.ca; PRINT Magazine, Maclean's Magazine (July 2026).

## Community Leadership

### 2026 - current

- **Communications Officer**, Alberta University of the Arts Faculty Association | Calgary AB
- **Secretary**, Nova Scotia College of Art & Design University Alumni Association | Halifax NS
- **Selection Committee, Price Awards for Excellence in Teaching**, Nova Scotia College of Art & Design University | Halifax NS
- **Designer**, Alcove Addiction Recovery for Women | Calgary AB

### 2020

- Artist Selection Advisor for Bridgeland-Riverside Community Mural Project | Calgary AB
- Consultant for Bridgeland-Riverside “Flyover Park” playground and public space | Calgary AB

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