ERIC P. CRONIN

Associate Creative Director, Art

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PROFILE

Concept-driven Associate Creative Director (Art) who champions brands to contrast the competition, leading creative vision from first idea through final execution. Built integrated brand, shopper, digital, experiential and packaging work at Leo Burnett, Walton Isaacson and Upshot, and through the independent studio CRONINMADE. Turns strategy and audience insight into campaigns that hold together across every touchpoint: film, photography, social, retail and live experiences. Mentors art directors and partners closely with strategy, account, production and media teams, while staying hands-on in the craft.

CORE CAPABILITIES

Creative Vision & Concept Development · Integrated & Omnichannel Campaigns · Brand Storytelling
Art Direction · Photography & Film Direction · Digital, Social & Content · Experiential & Activation
Team Leadership & Mentoring · Cross-Functional Partnership · Packaging & Retail · Production & Retouching

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CRONINMADE Founder & Creative Director — Chicago · 2015–Present

- Lead an independent creative studio at Creative Director level, partnering directly with founders, CMOs, CCOs and agency teams to turn business objectives into brand strategy, campaign concepts, art direction and integrated execution.
- **Terremoto Tequila Shots (Pernod Ricard).** The studio's first project, freelanced through Walton Isaacson. Co-created the "Looks Mean. Tastes Nice." 360° launch concept and visual campaign across digital, web, shopper, on-premise and experiential; led distinctive packaging with an integrated screw-on tin shot glass.
- **Gertrude Brandhaus, Freelance Associate Creative Director (three engagements, 2019–2022).** For Annabelle Candy Company, art directed packaging design concepts across Look!, Big Hunk, Rocky Road, Abba-Zaba and U-No, working under the agency's founder and Creative Director.
- **Wild Turkey American Honey (Onion Labs).** Freelance art direction on the launch.
- **The Foundry, Whimsey Lou, CAPM, Billable Hour Challenge.** Built brand identities and visual systems extended across packaging, retail, environmental, vehicle and digital.
- **Creative leadership.** Guide multidisciplinary designers, photographers, production partners and agency collaborators through concept development, art direction, client presentations and execution; at Gertrude Brandhaus, managed a junior art director and a studio photographer.

LEO BURNETT Senior Art Director — Chicago · 2022–2024

- **Copenhagen "Proven Since 1822."** Co-developed the campaign and led its visual art direction, directing photo shoots, photographers and retouching to establish a distinctive campaign aesthetic.
- **Copenhagen Black, "It Can't Be Locked Away."** Art directed a Kentucky smokehouse film and dramatic studio photography with Chris Litwin, translating product craft and flavor into visual storytelling.
- **Copenhagen "Into the American Wild."** Led the program and designed the "Live Off the Land" collectible can series and campaign visuals for a national fan-voting program.
- **Copenhagen "Pledge of Honor."** Co-named the veterans program and designed its identity; the winning direction.
- **Cope Rewards.** Redesigned the loyalty platform's digital experience, infusing it with the photography and art direction built for the "Proven Since 1822" campaign.
- **Cope Snuff Shop.** Created experiential design for a mobile museum extending the Nashville Snuff Shop, touring NASCAR events for Copenhagen and USST.
- **Marlboro 70th Anniversary, "The Finest Flavor You Will Find."** Created graphic explorations for the campaign, partnering with an EVP Group Creative Director.
- **Creative leadership.** Partnered directly with Group and EVP Creative Directors, owning campaign art direction day to day; directed photographers, retouchers and production teams.

WALTON ISAACSON Associate Creative Director — Chicago · 2012–2015

- **Beam Suntory below-the-line lead.** Hired from Upshot to lead agency creative for all Beam Suntory shopper marketing, spanning on-premise, experiential, packaging and promotions, with contributions to above-the-line work.
- **Skinnygirl Cocktails (Beam Suntory).** Lead creative on the brand for two years, developing and directing visual creative for quarterly marketing programs and keeping one cohesive brand expression across every initiative.
- **2 Gingers Irish Whiskey.** Conceived and designed two experiential Irish pub activations: one hand-built in Dublin, launched at the National Irish Whiskey Convention and shipped to the U.S.; another built inside a vintage Airstream that toured 27 U.S. markets.
- **Knob Creek, Courvoisier, Kilbeggan Irish Whiskey.** Developed brand and promotional creative across premium spirits accounts with cross-functional agency teams.
- **Creative leadership.** Led and mentored two art directors and a junior art director; partnered with writers, production artists, photographers and retouchers to deliver integrated work.

UPSHOT Senior Art Director — Chicago · 2007–2012

- **Recognition.** Named 2007 Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable Art Director; promoted to Senior Art Director early on Crown Imports.
- **Miller Lite NASCAR / Penske Racing.** Won an agency challenge with a concept for the No. 2 Penske Racing program and moved onto the Miller Brewing account. Led all creative for Miller Lite Racing, part of Miller Lite national, directing racetrack and studio shoots featuring Kurt Busch with photographer Chris Stanford, plus retouching and 250+ campaign and activation assets.
- **Miller Lite / Miller Brewing.** Three years on the account, art directing Miller Lite sports partnership programs with the Dallas Cowboys and Detroit Red Wings and the Harley-Davidson 105th Anniversary collectible six-can program, bike paint scheme and retail activation. Also created work for Milwaukee's Best, Foster's and Peroni.
- **Crown Imports / Kraft Foods.** Created integrated brand, packaging and retail creative for Pacifico, Modelo, Tombstone and Jack's Pizza; developed the Pacifico U.S. Open of Surfing, Padres and Modelo Unido soccer activations, including the Modelo Unido crest.
- **New business.** Worked on pitch teams that won Crown Imports, Subway, Finish Line and Hilton Hotels.
- **Creative leadership.** Guided junior art directors, writers, three in-house retouchers and external production partners through photo shoots, campaign adaptation and delivery.

H2O+ SKINCARE In-House Art Director — Chicago · 2005–2007

- Directed art and design for skincare launches, packaging, POS, retail, catalogs and in-store communications across 50+ national and international stores, partnering directly with the brand founder.
- **Creative leadership.** Directed studio retouchers to keep product photography consistent across packaging, retail and brand communications.

TOOLS

Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Acrobat · Generative AI: Claude, Higgsfield, Adobe Firefly
Photography & Retouching Direction · Print & Digital Production

EDUCATION

BA, Graphic Design & Mass Communication · Saint Mary's University of Minnesota · Outstanding Senior Artist
Art & Design Studies · Florence, Italy

COMMUNITY

Assistant Coach · Chicago Stallions Hockey, youth Squirt teams