KIRSTEN COLLINS

DESIGN DIRECTOR

EDUCATION

2012 - 2015
Red & Yellow School
Cape Town
Graphic Design
& Art Direction
Graduated Cum Laude

STRENGTHS

Prolific across Adobe Suite, Figma & Claude MCP

Prolific in AI image gen. platforms such as MidJourney, Gemini, Higgsfield etc.

Design Leadership & Collaboration
Leading teams of designers across multiple accounts

Packaging Design Expert
Strong understanding of materials, finishes and print techniques

Brand systems and identity
Brand Identities built to survive production, multiple markets and whichever team inherits them.

Brand Guardianship
Unwavering ability to maintain brand consistency across all touch points

Concept Development & Visual Storytelling
Translating ideas into compelling designs and presentations

Project Management
Managing multiple deadlines in a fast-paced environment

Excellent Communication & Presentation Skills
Effectively conveying ideas and collaborating with cross-functional teams

CONTACT

DUBAI, UAE
971.556.211.730
HELLO@KIRSTENCOLLINS.CO

LINKEDIN
PORTFOLIO OF WORK
BEHANCE
SUBSTACK

EXPERIENCE

December 2025 - Current
Similar Studio
Design Director
Dubai, UAE

Similar Studio is an in-house agency to the private office within the IFZA group, rebranding and repositioning the companies in its portfolio.
Role: As Design Director, led a team of four brand designers and set the creative standard across everything the studio made, working directly with senior stakeholders across the portfolio. Built complete brand ecosystems for clients in the UAE and Europe, including SAY Carbon Yachts, IFZA and IFHub, from strategy and identity through to print, digital and experiential. Led the studio's AI adoption, rolling out Claude across the team, connecting it directly to Figma via MCP and building AI-assisted sprint workflows that took brands from groundwork to identity in 2-3 weeks.

February 2024 - November 2025
Marks
Design Director
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Global brand design and packaging agency working with leading consumer and luxury brands.
Role: As Design Director, led a team of four brand designers and set the creative standard on key accounts, working daily with wider project teams of up to ten across the UK, US and India. Clients included Reckitt Benckiser (Finish) and LVMH (Belvedere Vodka). Led the design and global rollout of new packaging for the Finish additives range across 30+ markets, with adaptations for Europe, the Middle East and Asia Pacific.

April 2019 - October 2023
Aruliden (A Material+ Company)
Senior Brand Designer
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Award-winning design studio working between brand and industrial design, HQ in New York.
Role: As Senior Brand Designer, led design projects and client relationships across LVMH, Pandora, Unilever and Procter & Gamble, as well as emerging DTC start-ups and nonprofits. Managed a team of junior and mid-weight designers, collaborating closely with industrial designers to bring brands and products to life. Helped grow the Amsterdam studio from 3 to 12 people.

March 2018 - March 2019
TBWA\Neboko
Designer
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Full-service creative agency in Amsterdam, part of the global TBWA network within Omnicom.
Role: Designer working on key clients including Albert Heijn, McDonald's and adidas. Responsibilities included campaign identity design, art direction and key visual adaptions.

January 2016 - January 2018
M&C Saatchi Abel
Art director/Designer
Cape Town, South Africa

Full-service creative agency in Cape Town, part of the global M&C Saatchi network.
Role: Sole designer on the brand identity for the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (Zeitz MOCAA), created for its 2017 opening with a bespoke typeface, iconography and wayfinding.

ABOUT

Kirsten is a South African-born Design Director with 11+ years of experience across Cape Town, Amsterdam and Dubai. Her work covers the full life of a brand, from positioning and identity to campaigns, content and everything in between, with a soft spot for packaging and print.

AI is woven through her workflow, structuring projects, documenting brand systems and managing roll-outs across markets, while the creative judgement stays human.

Her clients include LVMH, Pandora, Unilever, Procter & Gamble, SAY Carbon Yachts and early-stage start-ups. She believes good work comes from well-supported teams, so she leads with clear briefs, honest feedback and space to grow.

Outside client work, Kirsten writes about brand design on Substack and makes art by hand: linoprinting, embroidery and paper collage.