

# rita j. harbie

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**U.S.A NATIONAL & CITIZEN**  
Born & Raised in Miami  
Living in Beirut

I can sum it up.

I'm a Creative Director and English Copywriter who found herself winning international awards and big businesses for a small independent agency. I believe in: creating lasting shared value for both consumer and brand, human-centered service design, and design thinking for innovative solutions.

I got an education.

American University of Beirut – Bachelor of Arts in Political Science - 2012

I like when work takes over.

## **Creative Director**

Interesting Times – 2020-Present

*Abu Dhabi Digital Authority & TAMM - UAE*

- Conceptualized and led the pitch presentations which won Interesting Times both businesses in 2020.

*Dubai Tourism - UAE*

- Conceptualized and led the pitch presentation which won Interesting Times the Modesh Brand business in 2020. The creative work was ranked #1 in the region, leading to the big win.

## **Associate Creative Director**

Interesting Times – 2017-2020

*Pernod Ricard - Absolut - Lebanon*

- Won the agency's first international award - Cannes Lion in Brand Experience & Activation.

- Conceptualized, strategized, executed, and led the agency's largest campaign yet: Absolut Civil Love.

- Designed a solution to bring inter-faith civil marriage the closest it has ever been to Lebanon (in a nation where civil marriage is illegal). This was inspired by Absolut's mission to promote free & equal love.

- My solution was the discovery of a legal loophole: to officiate civil marriages in international waters, only 12 miles off the coast of Lebanon on the Civil Love Boat, where Lebanese marital law no longer applies.

- Created 17.69% market share increase for Absolut Vodka in Lebanon and increased brand love by 78% with over 3 million in engagement and 30 million in views & impressions.

*Red Bull - MENA*

- Led & directed regional Red Bull campaigns and event communications.

- Despite taxes in the region doubling the price of Red Bull, sales saw an increase in 12% by 2019.

*Cadillac - GCC*

- Created a social media campaign and series of films that increased Cadillac sales in the UAE and KSA by 32%.

*Red Bull MOBILE – Oman*

- Launched Red Bull MOBILE in Oman and made it the leading telecom service for Omani youth with 84% voting that it is the "coolest" telecom community.

### **Senior Copywriter**

Interesting Times – 2014-2017

*Ooredoo - Kuwait*

- Managed & led creative teams in Dubai and Kuwait, while headquartered in Beirut, to handle the agency's largest account. Repositioned Ooredoo as one of the leading telecommunications companies and increased brand love by 64%.

### **Copywriter**

Interesting Times – 2014-2015

*P&G Herbal Essences - Arabia*

- Conceptualized and executed an Herbal Essences campaign for the Gulf region that brought the first-ever virtual, interactive live concert to Saudi women at a time when they could not attend musical concerts.
- The website experience saw over 550,000 visitors and made it the trending topic in the region in under 45 minutes.

### **Junior Copywriter**

Interesting Times – 2012-2014

*Volvo - Lebanon*

- Was the creative lead of the Volvo account and created one of the agency's largest campaigns: Only the Lonely.
- The campaign led to an increase in showroom visits by 550%.

### **Writer & Website Editor**

Time Out Beirut Magazine – 2009-2010

### **Co-Founder**

Public Interest Design - Levant — 2014 - Present

Co-founded Lebanon's first human-centered design NGO that employs design-thinking to enhance urban experiences and create shared value in Beirut. Organized a series of hackathons, workshops, and festivals.

### **Creative Consultant**

IZEM Design Agency — 2015-2017

Creative and consultant at a local design, technology, and fabrication agency. Conceptualized a series of products to be designed, engineered, and produced by the agency.

### **Brand Consultant**

Innovation Factory Beirut – 2016-2017

Branding and marketing consultant at Innovation Factory Beirut where individuals, start-ups, and businesses would co-work, create, and fabricate prototypes and products using state-of-the-art digital fabrication machines.

### **Awards Won:**

Cannes Lion 2019 – Bronze Prize [Agency's first international award]

MENA Effies 2019 – Gold Prize

MENA Effies 2015 – Bronze Prize

Pikasso D'Or 2019 – Grand Prix & Gold Prize

3 Shortlists in Cannes Lions 2019

5 Shortlists in Dubai Lynx 2019

1 Shortlist in New York Festival Advertising Awards 2019

### **Lecturer & Speaker:**

American University of Beirut - Media & Communications Lecturer - 2018-2019

Invited Dubai Lynx Festival Speaker – 2020

I've got side hustles.

I've had shiny moments.

I'm quasi-quadrilingual.

I think and function in English.

But I also know Spanish & Arabic and am learning French.