

Profile

I am a Phoenix-based acrylic painter, designer and educator. My paintings bring detailed animal realism into fields of graphic pattern, contrast and scale. Dense brushwork and close observation meet a designer's attention to repetition, hierarchy and rhythm. My wider studio practice includes figure drawing and mural work. In the classroom, I connect making and visual communication through hands-on projects, thoughtful critique and portfolio development.

I hold an MBA in Marketing and a BS in Mass Communications with a focus in Commercial Arts. My experience spans independent creative practice, national event brands, tourism marketing and university teaching, with an emphasis on helping ideas become clear, purposeful visual work.

Education

Master of Business Administration, Marketing

University of Phoenix | 2010

Bachelor of Science, Mass Communications - Commercial Arts

Black Hills State University | 2008

Academic appointments

Grand Canyon University

Phoenix, Arizona | Digital Design & Advertising Faculty | May 2019-present

Adjunct Professor, August 2025-present. Full-time Instructor, May 2019-August 2025.

- Teach undergraduate courses in advertising, graphic design, typography, creative processes, figure drawing, web and interface design, and professional practice.
- Develop and revise curriculum, assignments and assessment criteria that connect design principles with contemporary industry practice.
- Guide students through research, concept development, critique, production and portfolio presentation.
- Contribute to degree and course development as a subject matter expert, peer reviewer and planning collaborator.

National American University

Rapid City, South Dakota | Adjunct Professor, Tourism | 2009-2010

Developed and taught two new courses for the Tourism major: IT Applications for Tourism and Destination Tourism.

Teaching approach

Process, experimentation and critique

I give students a clear process and room to experiment. Research, sketching, making and revision help them connect an idea with an audience; critique helps them explain their decisions and see the work more clearly. Client briefs and collaborative projects bring professional expectations into the classroom, while portfolio development turns that experience into evidence of their abilities.

My goal is to strengthen craft, judgment and creative confidence together. I teach across in-person, online and hybrid formats, using structured feedback and practical tools to support different ways of learning.

Selected teaching collaboration

The Grand Collective

Grand Canyon University | Featured by GCU News in 2022 and 2023

Led a client-based album-cover project in Design Studio II, guiding student designers through a professional creative brief, critique and presentation. Students developed the artwork for review by The Grand Collective's leadership.

Courses taught

Advertising

- ADV 110 - Fundamentals of Advertising
- ADV 350 - Digital Advertising Communication
- ADV 355 - Image Creation
- ADV 456 - Design Studio 2

Design and professional practice

- DDN 110 - Design Fundamentals
- DDN 125 - Layout and Composition
- DDN 200 - Creative Processes
- DDN 205 - Figure Drawing
- DDN 210 - Designing with Type
- DDN 255 - Interface Design 2: Web Design
- DDN 276 - Portfolio 1
- DDN 350 - Web Design 2
- DDN 400 - Business for the Design Professional
- DDN 405 - Design Professionalism
- DDN 475 - Advanced Design Practicum
- DDN 476 - Portfolio 2
- DSM 475 - Social Media Capstone

Tourism

- IT Applications for Tourism
- Destination Tourism

Curriculum development

Degree and course development

Contributed as a subject matter expert, peer reviewer and planning collaborator to:

- Advertising and Graphic Design
- Digital Design, Web Design emphasis
- Digital Design, Animation emphasis
- Social Media Design

Mentorship and service

Faculty Mentor to Adjunct Instructors

2020-2025

Provided classroom guidance, observation support and instructional mentorship.

University service

- GCU Faculty Research Advisory Board and Research Development Subcommittee
- GCU Faculty Advisory Board
- Faculty advisor, GCU Mural Club
- Faculty advisor, The Creative Herd

Professional practice

Jared Trask Design & Marketing

Owner / Creative Director | Phoenix and nationwide | July 2013-present

Lead independent projects across brand identity, advertising, web, email, social and print, from discovery and creative direction through production. Work serves organizations in tourism, real estate, events, health and wellness, and the arts.

CoolEvents

Director of Brand Development & Operations | Phoenix, Arizona | July 2016-December 2018

As Director of Brand Development at CoolEvents, I led the visual direction of seven brands, from initial concepts through visual development and design execution. The brands were Foam Glow, Blacklight Run, Blacklight Slide, Blacklight Wars, Terrain Race, Bubble Run and Ignite Hope. Led a cross-functional creative team and directed campaign work across web, email, social and print.

Earlier professional roles

- Graphic Designer, ATP Flight School | 2013-2014
- Social Media Manager, Village Health Clubs & Spas | 2012-2013
- Multimedia Marketing Manager, Rapid City Convention & Visitors Bureau / Visit Rapid City | 2008-2012

Selected exhibitions and art events

Rising in Phoenix | Shemer Art Center, Phoenix, Arizona | May 1-29, 2019

Juried group exhibition. Jurors: Clare Verstegen and Susan Beiner.

Shemer Arizona Arts Festival | Shemer Art Center, Phoenix, Arizona | November 3-4, 2018

Participating artist.

Presentations and creative contributions

Web 2.0 Tools & Project-Based Learning | 2022

Presentation, GCU Online Teaching Conference / Center for Innovation in Research and Teaching Showcase.

Honest Creativity, by Craig Detweiler | 2024

Acknowledged for leading student artists in the creation of chapter artwork.

Recognition and features

Teaching Showcase Award | 2022

Grand Canyon University, Center for Innovation in Research and Teaching.

Importance of Arts Education | GCU Blog | 2025

Featured educator. Discussed the role of creative practice in student learning, professional development and personal expression.

Certification

Social Media Marketing Professional Certification | Direct Marketing Association | 2011

Areas of practice

Art - Acrylic painting, figure drawing, mixed media, mural production and visual experimentation.

Design - Brand identity, art direction, typography, layout, advertising, web and interface design, email campaigns, photography and video production.

Education - Curriculum development, project-based learning, studio critique, portfolio mentorship, assessment and faculty support.

Tools - Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, Premiere Pro, Acrobat and Express; Adobe XD and Captivate; WordPress, Wix, HTML, CSS and basic JavaScript; Microsoft 365, Google Workspace and learning management systems.