

# SARAH-GRACE MANKARIOUS

47

Art Direction



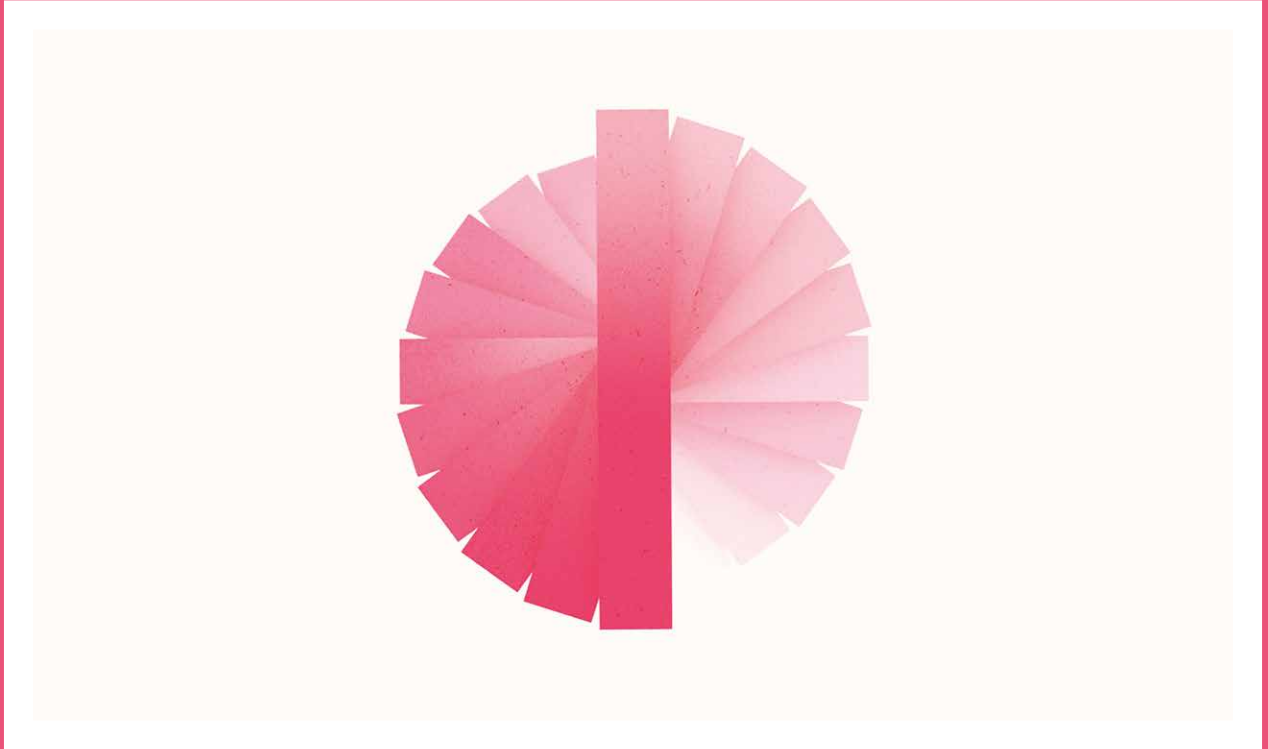
***I WANT TO TELL STORIES  
THAT ALLOW PEOPLE TO CONNECT  
ON A PERSONAL LEVEL  
TO LARGER ISSUES.***

# SARAH-GRACE MANKARIOUS

DESIGN FRIENDS



COVER:  
**WHAT IS BEAUTY**  
Directed by Anna Ginsburg



**COLORSCOPE PINK**  
Directed by Giant Ant

**HOW DID YOU MAKE THE LEAP FROM PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY TO DESIGN? AND WHAT AWAKENED YOUR INTEREST IN DESIGN?**

I was always more interested in visuals, but my brother was the artist in the family. He was always drawing. Because I couldn't draw I never envisioned myself being in the visual arts, which is weird to think about now. So, from 14 onwards I dropped arts entirely and didn't pick it back up until after university. But I always made things, crafts, sketching, etc. When I finished university I couldn't find a job that I wanted. I initially decided to do a Masters in philosophy but then dropped that idea. I was getting ready to do a teaching programme in Japan for 2-3 years. Two weeks before I was due to leave, they dropped me off the course. I was heartbroken. Then I started taking on jobs. I was doing some work for the Discovery Channel. I was next to the art department and that's where I saw what they were doing sort of over the shoulder. I got to know the creative director, and decided to take this part time graphic design course at Shillington while I was working. It was nice because I would show this creative director my work and he would advise me. That was it from there.

**YOU HAVE A MIXED BACKGROUND AND HAVE LIVED IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD, HOW DO YOU THINK THIS HAS INFLUENCED YOUR DESIGN SENSIBILITY AND AESTHETIC?**

When I finished that course, I specifically wanted to gain design influences from around the world. I had a life plan: I was going to go to New York, and then it was Mexico City, Buenos Aires and Barcelona. I wanted to gather all these influences and open my own studio eventually. I just thought it was really important to get those different points of view in terms of aesthetics.

**WHAT DID YOU THINK THOSE SPECIFIC CITIES COULD OFFER YOU?**

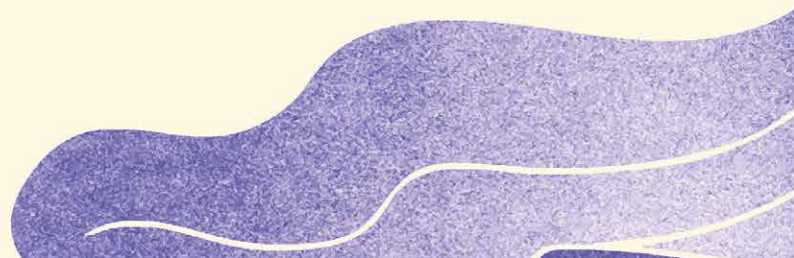
New York I love. The buzz. Design is top class there. Mexico city was easy because my mom's Mexican so I have the passport, but it's really innovative in design. They really have their own scene. They have a very strong cultural sensibility and it manifests itself in this unique design scene. I visited Bangkok during the holiday, and I remember being struck by how they had their own scene as well.

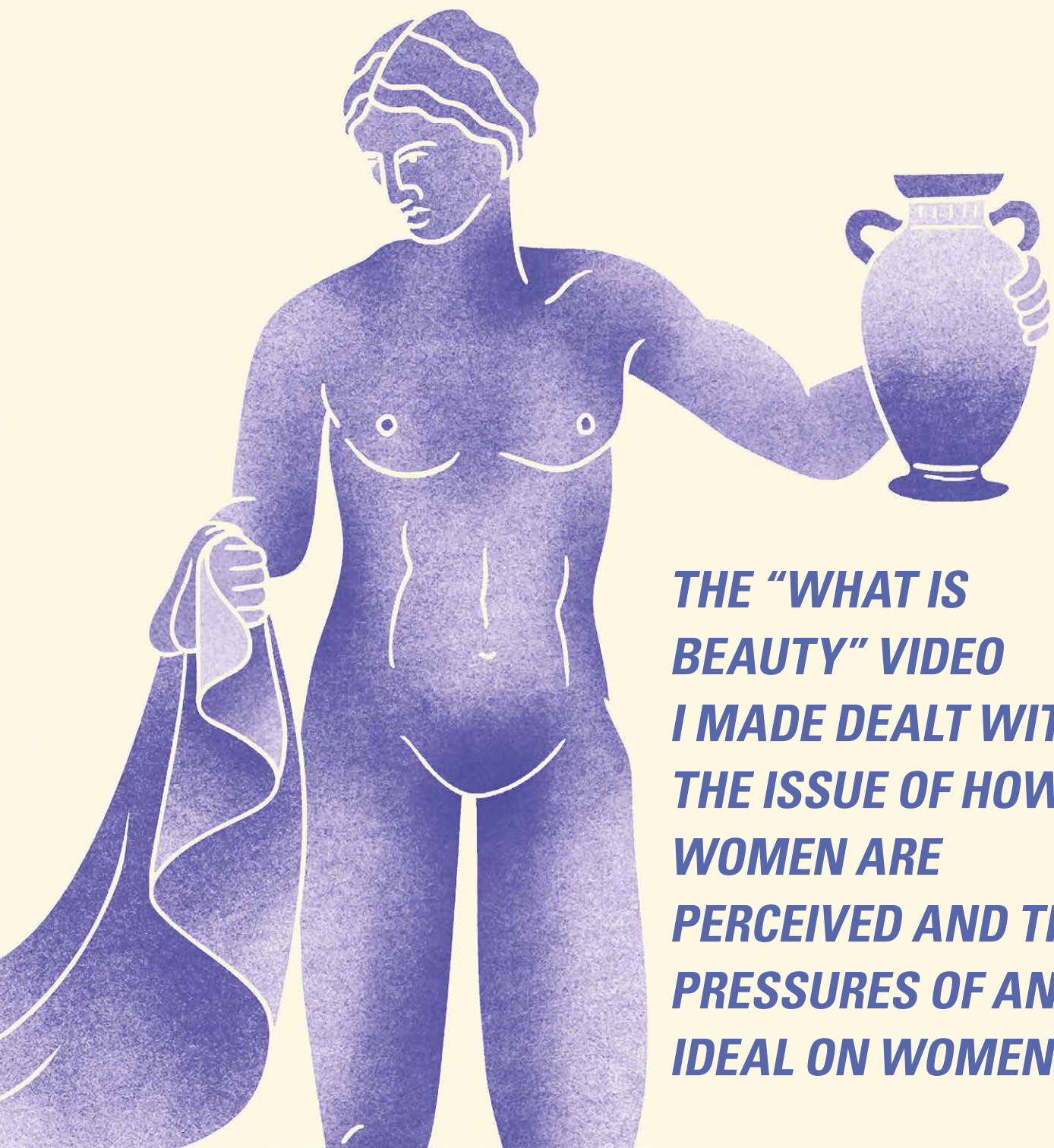
I did not have any Middle Eastern city on my original list but if I were to do it again I would put Beirut on there. Ibrahim Nehme from the Outpost magazine is based there.

I had heard a lot about Buenos Aires, they are pretty big in TV production and animation. I went there for several months and got a nice flavour of the city.

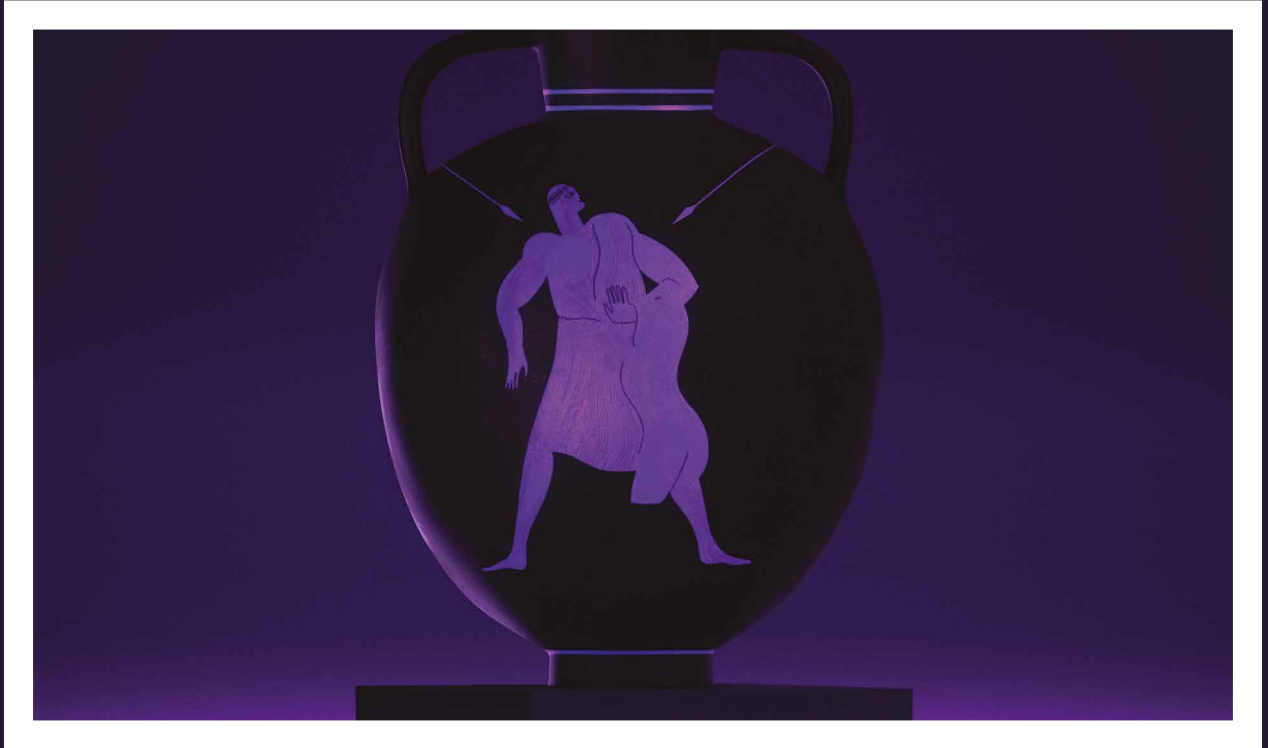
**WHAT IS BEAUTY**

Directed by Anna Ginsburg





***THE "WHAT IS  
BEAUTY" VIDEO  
I MADE DEALT WITH  
THE ISSUE OF HOW  
WOMEN ARE  
PERCEIVED AND THE  
PRESSURES OF AN  
IDEAL ON WOMEN.***



**COLORSCOPE PURPLE**  
Directed by BUCK

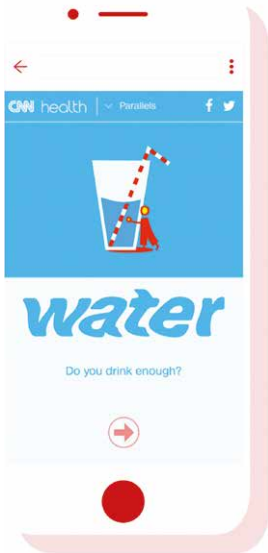


**BARCELONA IS SUCH A GREAT CITY AND IT HAS A GOOD CREATIVE SCENE WITH LOTS OF INTERNATIONAL CLIENTS.**

In terms of my heritage influencing, maybe it's just being open... in all of my projects I try to not think in terms of a "talking" to a specific type of person but be open in terms of who the readership is.

**YOUR JOB ESSENTIALLY CONSISTS OF FINDING NEW AND ENGAGING WAYS TO DRAW IN YOUR AUDIENCE TO A STORY. WHAT ARE IN YOUR EXPERIENCE THE MOST ESSENTIAL HOOKS IN ORDER TO DO THAT?**

Every brief is so different, with different formats, be it text, photography or video heavy, so there is no one formula. The great thing is that you get to try new ideas all the time, successfully, or not. We do have things that we have to do at CNN, so each story regardless has to have an image attached to it, so that we can display it on the homepage. That's a tough one sometimes because sometimes the story doesn't really have images. I find animation a really useful and winning tool, but older audiences don't always connect with it.



**PARALLELS WATER**  
Illustration by Animade



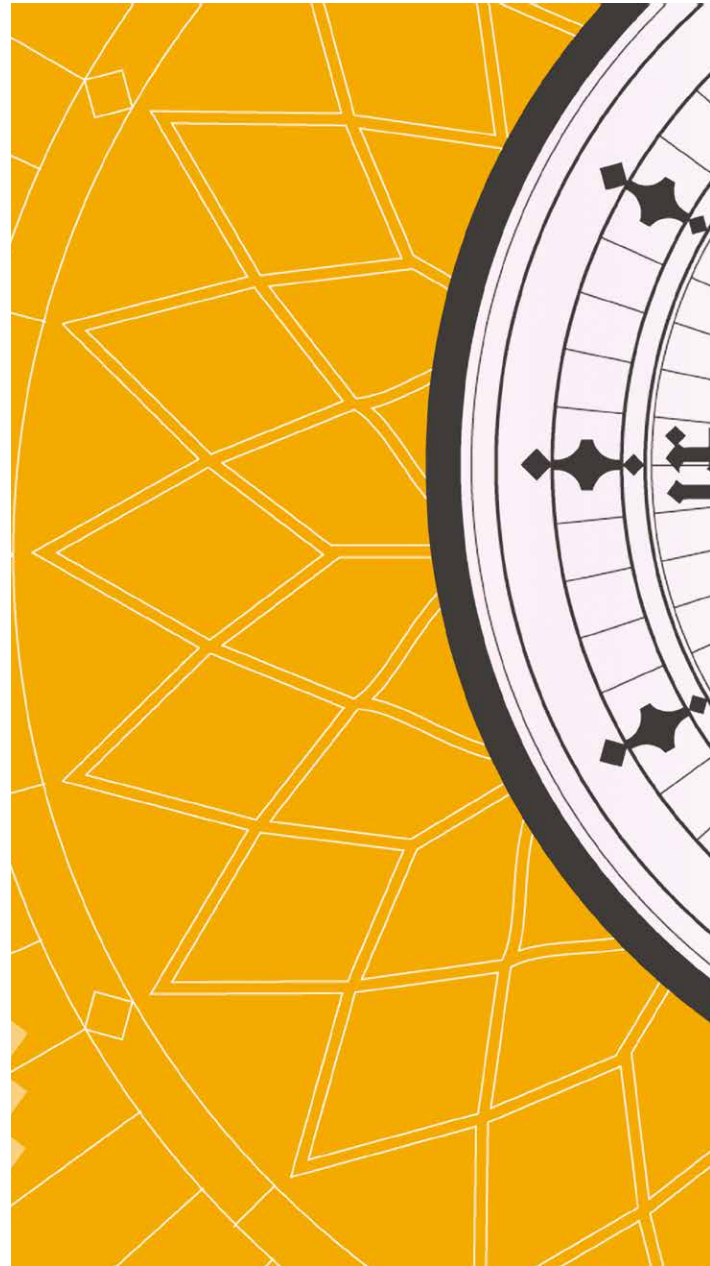
**PARALLELS ALCOHOL**  
Illustration by Linn Fritz



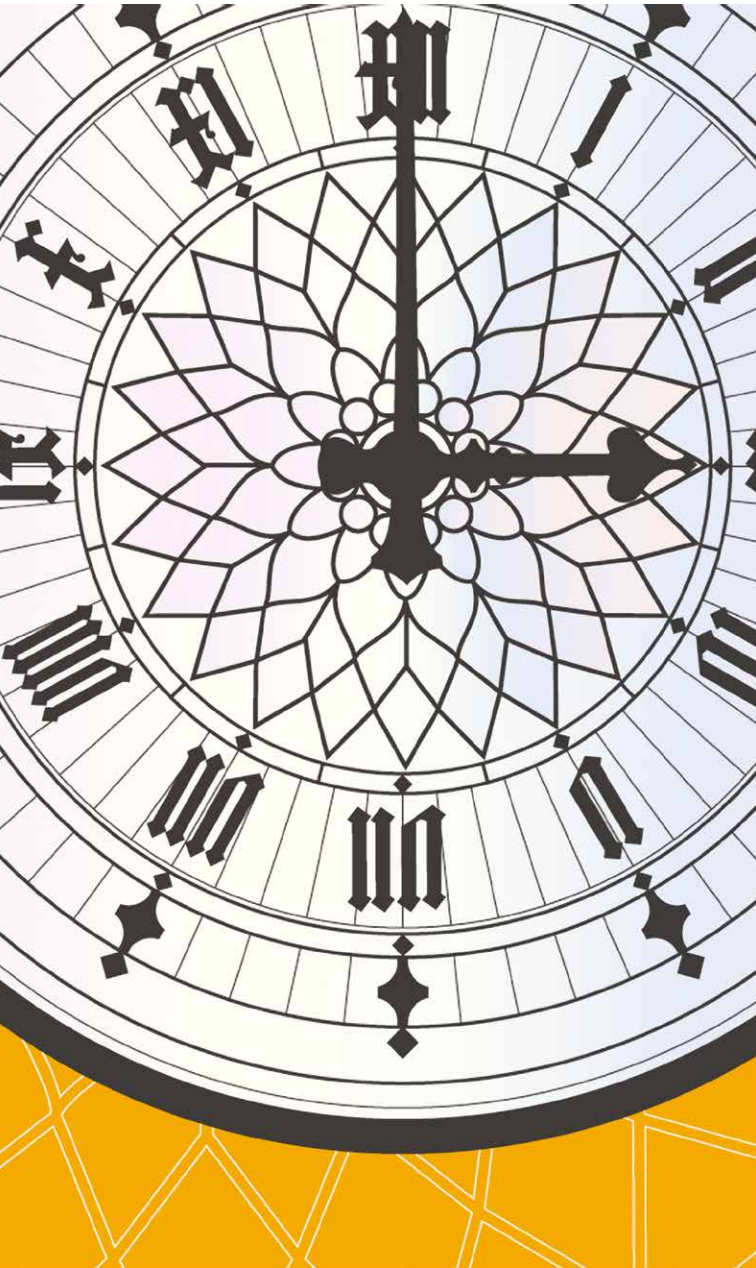
**PARALLELS SLEEP**  
Illustration by Wednesday Collective



**PARALLELS SEX**  
Illustration by Kirstin Smith



**HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT**  
Directed by Giant Ant



Sensing Realities

Sensing Realities

**Sensing  
Realities**

**SENSING REALITIES**  
Branding



**COLORSCOPE ORANGE**  
Directed by Emmanuelle Walker-Nexus



**COLORSCOPE RED**

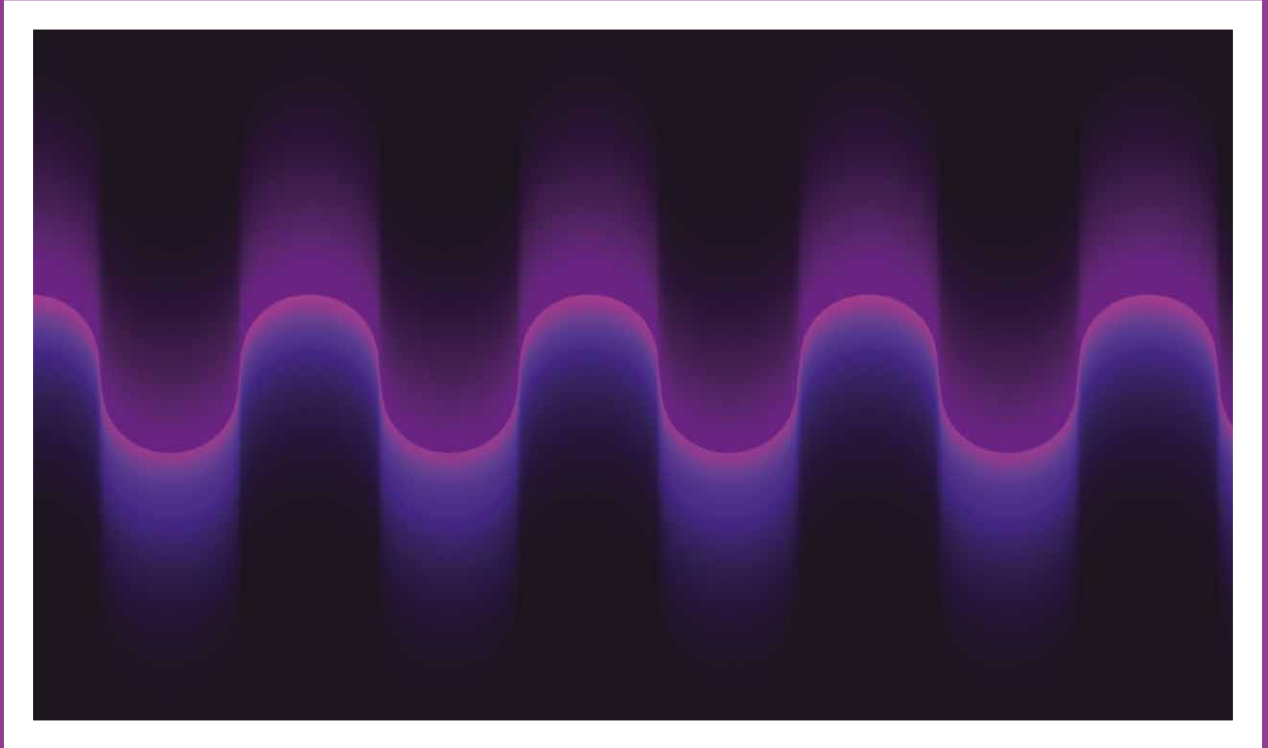
Directed by Abel Reverter

**CONVERSELY, WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES AUDIENCES SWITCH OFF? HOW WOULD YOU GO ABOUT PORTRAYING “NEGATIVE” NEWS IN SUCH A WAY THAT PEOPLE STILL STOP AND HAVE A LOOK, GET INFORMED ON THE WAY AND DO NOT TRY TO IGNORE IT. I AM THINKING SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THE TYPE OF WORK YOU DID FOR THE “PARALLELS SERIES”, HOW CAN THAT BE EXTRAPOLATED TO ENVIRONMENTAL CATASTROPHE, FAMINES, AND ONGOING WARS?**

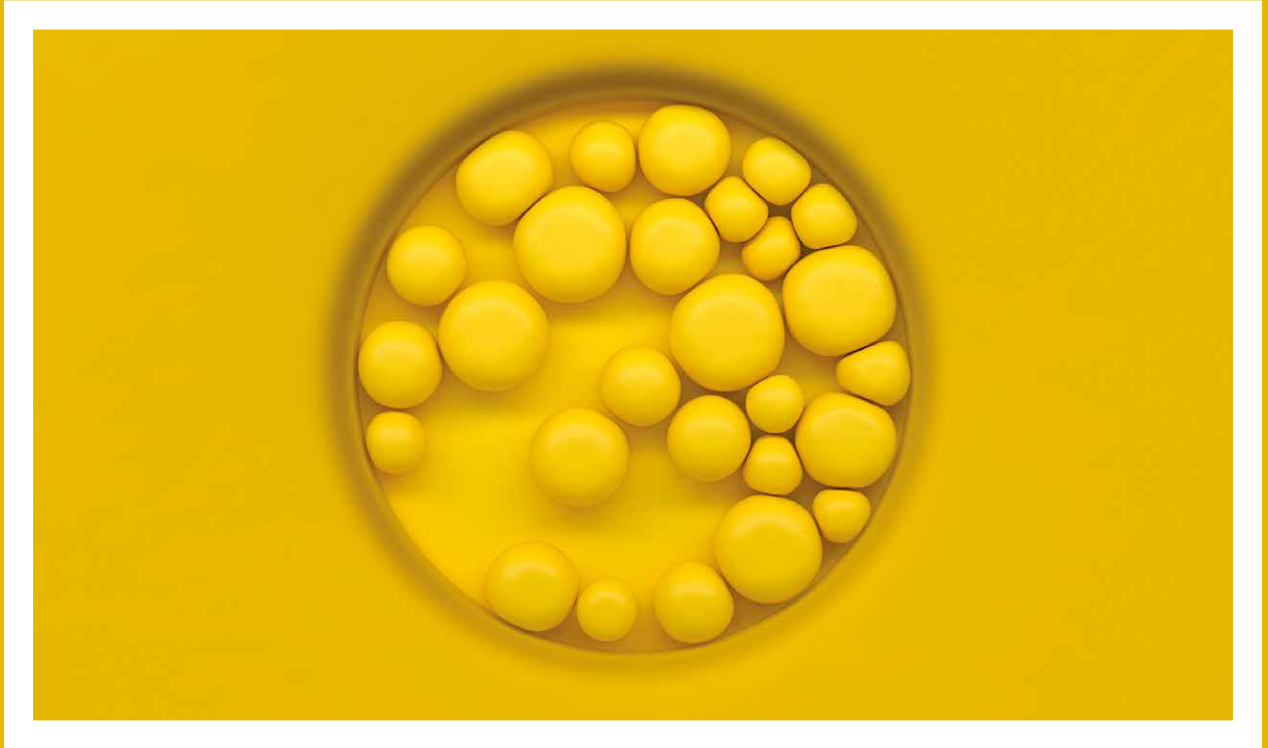
Two main ways jump to mind: making something really beautiful generally grabs attention. The “What Is Beauty” video I made dealt with the issue of how women are perceived and the pressures of an ideal on women. We wanted to address that thorny issue, so we just made it really beautiful. It had lots of celebrities in it too, but they didn’t come in until much later, so you had to already be hooked. Another way is to connect the story to the individual person, so if we were talking about the war going on in Syria, perhaps we could connect this to a person in Oklahoma by talking about the food they eat in the morning for breakfast. So, they can relate to the action of eating breakfast but realising that their realities are different.

**IT’S INTERESTING THAT YOU MENTION BEAUTY, BECAUSE I OFTEN WONDER IF BEAUTY, SPECIFICALLY IN THE CASE OF PHOTOGRAPHY, DOESN’T MAKE YOU LOOK AT SOMETHING FROM AN ARTISTIC ANGLE RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE IMAGE. THERE WAS A DEBATE AROUND THE PICTURE OF A PALESTINIAN FREEDOM FIGHTER RECENTLY THAT WAS VERY STRIKING.**

I think that even if you do, you still remember it... in fact you still remember it was a Palestinian fighter, which is great.

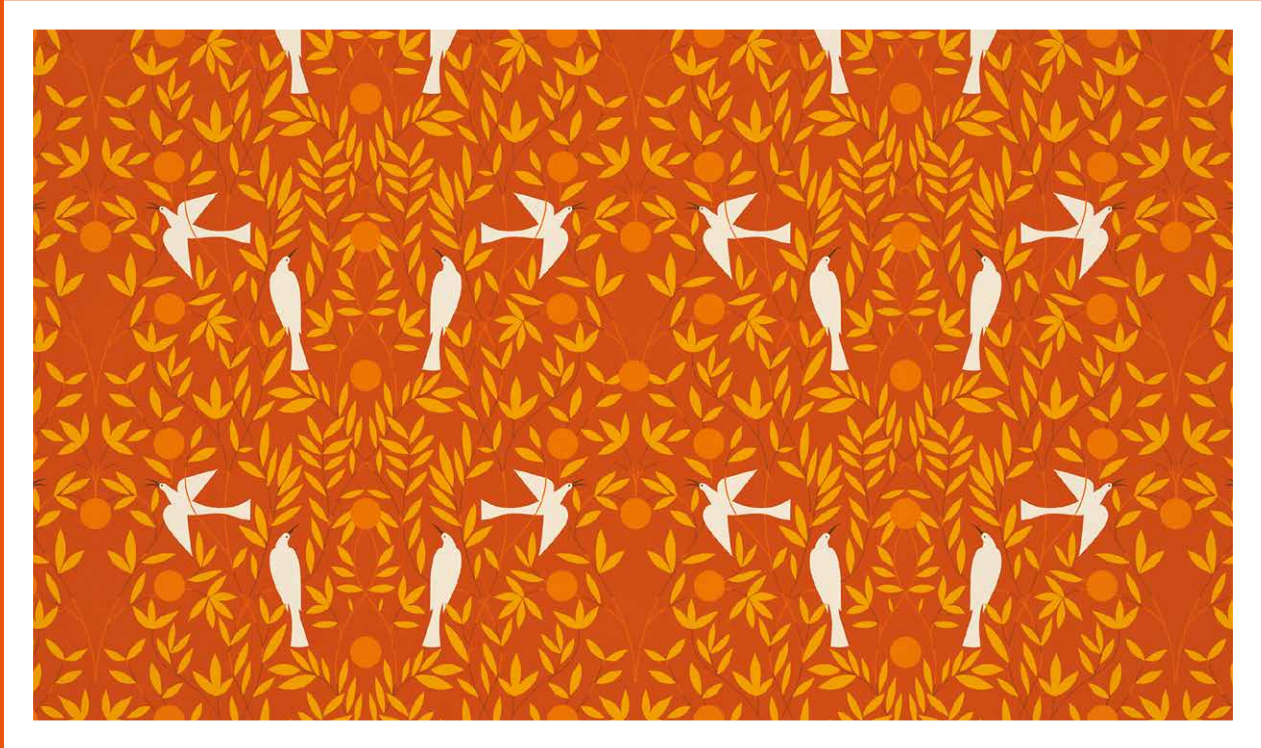


**COLORSCOPE PURPLE**  
Directed by BUCK



**COLORSCOPE YELLOW**  
Directed by Sebastian Baptista





**ONE OF YOUR MOST SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS HAS BEEN THE CNN “COLORSCOPE SERIES”, LET’S TALK ABOUT THAT.**

At the time, I was leading the team and I had just finished making “Get it? Got it! Good.” and I wanted to expand and do a section all about colour. I had seen this guy on the BBC, James Fox, and he was presenting the history of art through three colours, which I thought was really smart. He was so knowledgeable and I had wanted to get in touch with him. I just put it down on my to do list. One day, as I was biking to work, I happened to see him on the street and I just accosted him. I invited him to talk. He was so passionate about the subject; I thought we could just make a bigger series. He wrote the script and I could visually just see things coming together. At CNN you can’t really publish anything unless it’s under health, style, art, etc. So after it was completed I just pitched it to the editorial team to see where it would live. After that, a lot of animators started to get in touch with me, and we won a lot of awards.

**WHAT WAS THE IDEA BEHIND “GET IT? GOT IT! GOOD.”? YOU WERE THE ART DIRECTOR AND WERE INVOLVED IN THE ILLUSTRATION AND ANIMATION PART OF IT.**

It was just about showing data in a visually interesting way and making you understand the world a bit better. I really like data. I also really like creating rules around the things that I make. So, in this case it had to be 3 cards, so you had to find 3 facts and relate them together.

**YOU MOVED FROM BREAKING NEWS TO FEATURES... IS THE APPROACH DIFFERENT WHEN YOU TRY AND DRAW THE RELEVANCE OF THE STORY? I WOULD ASSUME THAT YOU HAVE MORE FREEDOM IN A FEATURES STORY.**

It’s more time really. Breaking news is just so reactive. They have a number of infographics they have to produce every day. In features you have more lead-time to delve deeper into ideas. The features’ team is also a lot bigger so there is loads more to do amongst all those producers.



**WHAT IS BEAUTY**

Directed by Anna Ginsburg



**COLORSCOPE WHITE**  
Directed by Jocie Juritz

**WHAT ARE THE STORIES THAT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN TELLING?**

Definitely stories about cultures. I want to encourage empathy through the stories we tell. I am very aware of how lucky we are here at CNN with the size of the audience we have, and I don't take that lightly at all. I want to tell stories that allow people to connect on a personal level to larger issues. I love storytelling and the tools we have in digital are just everything. Keeping that human connection is what I feel very passionate about.

**WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DREAM PROJECT?**

Branding a theme park or an airline, or something to do with contemporary dance. I love contemporary dance.

**WHY ARE YOU HAVING FUN IN RENO?**

Have you ever seen Sister Act? All the nuns go to Reno and have loads of fun. I thought Reno just looked like lots of fun!



## PUBLICATIONS

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