

MARIA ESPARZA

Community Designer | Visual Communications Specialist |
Brand Strategist

CONTACT

Austin Texas
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Portfolio:
mariabydesign.com

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design Academy Arts University,
San Francisco (2014 – 2016)

Bachelor of Arts in Web
Information Technology (IT) College Okinawa,
Okinawa, Japan (2008 – 2010)

Bellissimo - The American Barista & Workshop,
Portland (2016)

SKILLS

- Graphic & Signage Designing
- Sales Planning & Marketing
- Brand Development
- Workflow Optimization
- Positive Workplace Culture
- Market Research & Analysis
- Painting
- Cross-functional Collaboration
- Exceptional Communication

QUALIFICATIONS SUMMARY

Bilingual (English/Japanese) design professional with 15+ years of experience bridging visual storytelling with community engagement. Passionate about leveraging design for social impact, supporting local artists, and creating inclusive spaces through collaborative projects. Proven track record in brand development, public art, and cross-cultural communication across Japan and the United States. Seeking to contribute creative expertise to mission-driven organizations focused on arts, culture, and community development.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Graphic Designer / Lead Production | Austin, TX | 2022-Feb 2026

BAT CITY APPARELS & AWARDS

- Design and produce promotional materials for community events, local businesses, and organizations
- Operate laser equipment to create custom items for awards, recognition programs, and community celebrations
- Manage production workflows ensuring timely delivery for client projects
- Recreate and adapt vector artwork from client concepts, including Canva-based designs
- Develop mockups and visual presentations for stakeholder approval
- Optimize workflow efficiency to maximize project capacity and client satisfaction
- Managed strategic client relationships for high-profile community organizations including We Are Blood and UT Austin's MSF, serving as the primary point of contact for design needs, project scoping, and delivery

Brand Designer & Community Engagement Lead | Naha, JP | 2016–2022

ESPARZA'S TACOS AND COFFEE

- Led complete brand transformation aligning with family values and community-centered mission
- Designed and executed outdoor murals enhancing neighborhood aesthetic and attracting visitors
- Restructured physical space to improve customer flow while honoring establishment heritage
- Developed inclusive brand strategy featuring vegan-friendly options and local entrepreneur products
- Curated rotating art exhibitions featuring 22 local artists, providing exposure and sales opportunities
- Designed event spaces for community gatherings, open mic nights, and Nerd Nite events
- Coordinated pop-up events connecting local artists with broader audience
- Directed diverse team of 10–18 employees in multicultural environment
- Achieved 23% sales growth over three years through strategic brand positioning and community outreach
- Translated brand mission into visual identity through menus, signage, and environmental graphics
- Supervised staff training and facilitated artwork sales during exhibit event

FREELANCE - GRAPHIC DESIGNER & CREATIVE CONSULTANT

SONIA MUTO, CHAMPURI COOKIES 2022

- Designed packaging for vegan cookie product line emphasizing sustainability and accessibility
- Collaborated with vendors to ensure quality printing standards for mass production
- Created brand style guides maintaining visual consistency across product variations

DEREK DESCO, OVER THE TOP PROQUIES 2022

- Developed character mascot logo for food truck startup
- Customized logo for various applications, including T-shirts, prints, and social media advertisements.

CRYSTAL NEFF 2017

- Created invitation cards and tickets for private events.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & VOLUNTEER WORK

OKINAWA BABYLOSS - SHIHO ISHIZUKA (2018)

- Created live paintings for memorial events supporting families experiencing pregnancy loss
- Designed illustrative awareness flyers to educate the community on pregnancy loss resources
- Contributed artistic support to a grassroots nonprofit initiative

LANGUAGES

JAPANESE | ENGLISH