



PEACE 50
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"In a branding campaign - like I created for PEACE, Inc. Big Brothers Big Sisters 'Bowl for Kids' Sake' - it is very important to keep the elements of the design consistent across posters, brochures, etc. to ensure a potential audience member draws a line in the connection between them."

self portrait

RYAN DE TOMI
Ryan De Tomi

GRAPHIC DESIGNER | LITTLE KING GRAPHICS

Q: Why did you do the designs you did for the Big Brothers Big Sisters 'Bowl for Kids' Sake' promotional materials?

A: One of the most important phases in the designing process is getting to know your client. Therefore, before I could begin conceptualizing, I needed a strong understanding of basic marketing principles - such as the target market and demographics of the event. Beyond this, I needed to understand what the client was looking for in terms of their event, such as the theme. They seemed to lean strongest toward the superhero theme that resulted in my designs, but I took into account all of their other potential prompts to see which would be stronger toward their market. From that point on, it is important to narrow down 50 good ideas to five. From there you pick what could potentially be the best idea in terms of design principles - including color theory, balance, movement - and hierarchy. Ultimately, these are key players in drawing audience attention. While I could continue to talk about the evolution of my process, to make a long story short, from this point forward the process speeds up immensely. And, in a branding campaign such as this, it is very important to keep the elements of the design consistent across posters, brochures, etc. to ensure a potential audience member draws a line in the connection between them.

Q: When did you know you were an artist and what are your ambitions?

A: I think part of me has always known; I have always enjoyed creating things no matter the resources I had. However, growing up, it was a struggle to balance my love for both art and music. I almost went to college for music - and was even ready to audition at several schools for musical theatre, before realizing that I could merge these two loves with one perfect career. With that being said, it is my dream to start a career in New York City working on advertising campaigns for Broadway shows. I was in my senior year of high school when I made the decision to go to college for a visual arts degree in visual communications instead of a bachelor's degree of fine arts in musical theatre. I've been very fortunate, however, to be involved in both aspects throughout my college career. I will even be playing Mark Cohen in my college's production of RENT this year - which has been nothing short of a dream role of mine.

Q: Talk about effective tips, tools, resources you use.

A: While I am an artist in both a traditional and digital sense, I strongly prefer working digitally. I find that I work faster and my end results are more satisfactory in regard to my style. I work with the Adobe Creative Cloud, which includes programs like Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Dreamweaver, Premiere, etc. and I use my 15-inch MacBook Pro. Although I love working with my Mac, sometimes it simply is hard because it limits either the number of windows I can have open at once. It is simply on the small side for the type of work I do. Therefore, I tend to hook my Mac up to my 4K 28-inch monitor with my magic keyboard and magic mouse ... yes, I'm an Apple junkie! Also, while I can work in a quiet environment effectively, I also like to have my smartTV in the background with Pandora playing my favorite pop hits or Broadway show tunes.



*photo by
Alexis Hawley*



DE TOMI

Q: How do you incorporate feedback into your designs?

A: Feedback is a very important aspect during the creative process. While designing I, of course, follow all the principles and use several conceptual methods to create as many ideas as possible. Once I have created a draft or two, though, I like to reach out to fellow design students on campus to receive feedback on my design and see what they believe is working and what is not. Not only do I ask for their feedback, I ask students or other individuals who are not as exposed to design because I perceive them as the majority of the audience - those who are not going to judge the aesthetics of my work. Rather, they are people of society who will simply be drawn in by one thing: good design. I then take this feedback and create as many drafts that are required to create the most successful piece.

Q: Was this your first project working with a client?

A: No. In my sophomore year of college, I made the decision to open my own small freelance business that I named "Little King Graphics." I anticipated little success - I have had a nice pool of inquiries and clients that I have had the pleasure of working with. Most recently, I worked with one of my hometown's political nominees. I ran all design aspects of their advertising campaign - the candidate was running for city court judge. This gave me

hands-on experience in client relations and a new campaign to add to my portfolio. I feel as if I played an essential role in the campaign's success - they won, the then candidate is now the new sitting city court judge. I cannot express how surreal it was to see flyers, signage, and promotional materials plastered when I visited home on school breaks and weekends.

Q: Describe your experience with mentoring.

A: While I have never personally met him, I have to acknowledge how Broadway show poster artist Frank "Fraver" Verlizzo has helped me get to where I am today. In my freshman year of college, after realizing my dream career, I decided to do my research on the work in this industry. When I stumbled across Fraver and his work, I was amazed to see that he had designed a number of iconic posters for my favorite shows - such as The Lion King and Sweeney Todd. I took a chance and reached out to him with questions. I hoped to hear back from him. It was either that same day or the following day that I heard back from him. Not only was this an amazing mentoring experience, I still stay in contact with Fraver. He recently helped me search for internship sites in New York City. Fraver also helped me gain contact at a Broadway advertising agency in the city. I'm truly thankful for the help and guidance he has given me in pursuing my career dreams and ambitions.



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