

MALCOLM K. DARRELL

Experiential & Creative Strategy Leader | Executive Creative Producer | Brand & Culture Architect
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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Results-driven Executive Creative Producer with 25+ years building and leading world-class entertainment and high impact brand experiences from the ground up. Expert at designing executive-level experiences, managing multi-million-dollar portfolios, and aligning event strategy to measurable business outcomes. Track record of turning big ideas into measurable results — driving revenue, audience growth, and brand equity. Expertise in immersive experience design, creative strategy, P&L management, cross-functional team leadership, managing vendor and agency relationships, and driving pre- and post-event conversion — a profile built for Executive Creative Director, Head of Events, and Chief Experience Officer mandates. Holds an MFA from Yale University.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Creative Direction/ Experience Strategy
- Field and B2B Marketing
- Budget Ownership (\$1M+)
- Immersive Experience Design
- Live Event Production
- P&L Management
- Cross-Functional Leadership
- Portfolio Management (20+ events/year)
- Innovation R&D
- Content Development
- Talent Acquisition & Development
- Stakeholder Management
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Strategic Planning
- Consumer Journey Design
- Team Building & Mentorship

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey / Nearest Green Distillery | Shelbyville, TN

Director of Distillery Experiences 2022 – 2025

- Owned end-to-end event strategy for a 458-acre destination property — designed and produced the full portfolio from high-profile tentpole events to curated executive and VIP guest experiences, directly increasing on-site revenue and brand loyalty.
- Defined annual event calendar, managed cross-functional stakeholders, and drove revenue strategy tied directly to guest experience programs.
- Served as Executive Creative Producer on CEO special projects, delivering polished brand narratives with measurable brand and business impact that strengthened partnerships with media, retail, hospitality, and tourism sectors.
- Managed cross-functional team of marketing and operations managers, agencies, vendors, and external partners across multiple simultaneous events; set KPIs, hired talent, and built scalable workflows.

Walt Disney Imagineering / Disney Parks Live Entertainment | Glendale, CA

Creative Director, R&D Studio 2017 – 2021

- Led R&D creative studio supporting Disney Parks' global live entertainment portfolio — managed a multi-year pipeline of innovation projects across franchises and markets.
- Identified emerging technologies and cultural trends to build innovative activations for flagship Disney franchises (Marvel, Star Wars, Pixar, Classic Disney).
- Collaborated with senior Imagineering and Parks executives; presented concepts, managed deliverables, and advanced projects from ideation to proof-of-concept.
- Produced playtests, proof-of-concept workshops, interactive mock-ups and executive presentations that informed investment decisions for multi-million-dollar experience builds.

MKD Arts Management | Los Angeles, CA

Founder & Principal 2014 – 2023

- Built and led a boutique consultancy advising cultural organizations and individual artists on brand strategy, revenue growth, and organizational health.
- Delivered strategic plans, DEI training, contract negotiation, capacity building and marketing frameworks for clients across arts, media, and nonprofit sectors.

Center Theatre Group (CTG) — Ahmanson / Mark Taper / Kirk Douglas | Los Angeles, CA

New Play Production Associate 2010 – 2014

- Managed \$1M+ grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, overseeing budgets, artist commissions, and all production logistics for contemporary theatre initiatives.
- Line produced readings, workshops, and special projects; scouted new work and contributed to season planning for one of the country's premier regional theatres.

RADAR LA Festival — CTG / The Public Theater / REDCAT | Los Angeles, CA

Associate Producer 2011–2013

- Managed all production logistics for site-specific events across Downtown Los Angeles, coordinating across multiple co-presenting organizations simultaneously.
- Developed and ran a symposium program for international artists, producers, presenters, and funders — building community and driving strategic partnerships.

Ebony Repertory Theatre (ERT) — Nate Holden Performing Arts Center | Los Angeles, CA

Founding General Manager 2007 – 2010

- Launched and ran daily operations for LA's first African American Equity theatre company — from scratch — including contracts, HR, payroll, and a \$650K operating budget.
- Hired and led a staff of 20; developed a 5-year capacity plan that secured organizational growth and long-term solvency.

Yale Repertory Theatre | New Haven, CT

Associate Managing Director 2006 – 2007

- Managed \$1.1M artistic budget for a 6-show season; built \$1.4M budget for the following season. Oversaw artist contracting and supervised company managers.

EDUCATION

Yale University, David Geffen School of Drama — MFA, Theater Management | 2007

University of California, Berkeley — BA, American Studies (Business Management) & Theatre and Performance Studies | 2001

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- James P. Shannon Leadership Institute — Amherst H. Wilder Foundation (2015)
- Cultural Exchange International Fellowship — Dept. of Cultural Affairs LA / British Council USA (2012–13)
- Nathan Cummings Young Leader of Color — Theatre Communications Group (2012)
- Dexter Wood Luke Memorial Prize — Yale University (2007)
- Producer's Chair Award (Inaugural Recipient) — The Foundry Theatre, NY (2007)
- Yale University Seton Elm-Ivy Award — President of Yale & Mayor of New Haven (2006)