



2017-2020
Marissa Ifeoma Abara
Portfolio

About

Marissa Ifeoma Abara is a fourth year student at the University of St. Thomas majoring in **Creative Multimedia** and double minoring in **American Culture Studies** and **Graphic Design** (through ACTC at St. Catherines University).



Intro

I work as a Teaching Assistant for the Communication and Journalism department and I am also the Director of KUST, St.Thomas student radio station. Upon graduation, I will like to work within the [Visual Communication Design](#) or the [Print Media fields](#).

My love for print design started sophomore year of high school when I joined the school's newspaper. This then led me to the University of St. Thomas where I could pursue not only graphic design but expand my knowledge and practice in photography, video, web and audio, with the Creative Multimedia track through the Communication and Journalism department.

I then went to further my graphic design practice by also pursuing a minor at the University of St. Chatherines, a neighboring university. I have been lucky to have many successful freelance projects with start ups, small businesses, and non-profits including [Aguy Innovation Group](#), [New Rules](#), Win Back the Community LLC, [Rondo Commemorative Plaza](#) and [Youthprise](#).

I also worked with St. Thomas's Student-run Communications agency, [TommComm](#), for two years. With them, I had the pleasure to work with Eco-Lab, Target and help conceptualize the design identity of TommComm along with designing marketing materials.

I feel that with my skills I will be a great asset to Penguin Publishing and will be able to contribute with brainstorming, sketching, prototyping, editing and every other step within the ideation process.

More about MIA at: ifeomaabara.com

Project: Branding Materials TommComm

Objects include logo, toolkit, flyers, trifolds, online ads, manuals and helping with social media.



Original logo

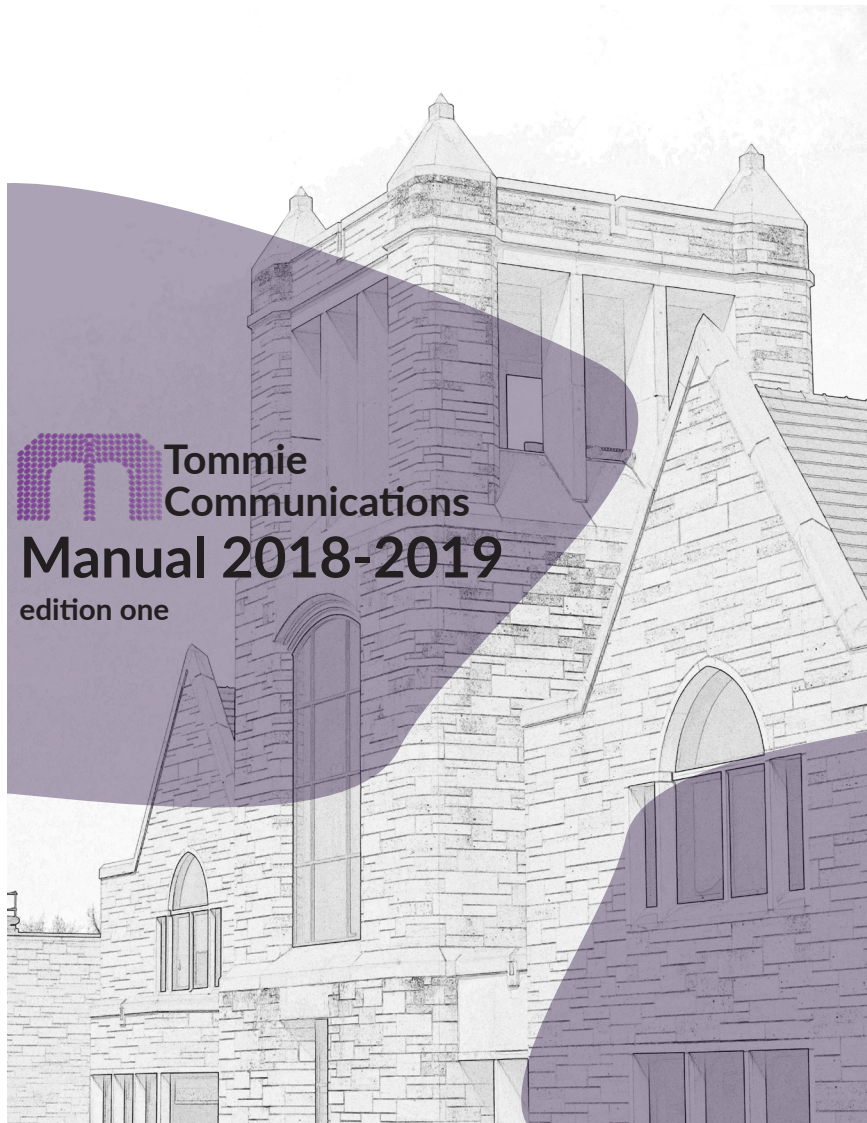


Tommie Communications

Alternative logo designs



Final logo



Copy

TommComm’s goals with all of our copy is to be presented professionally in formal and informal settings. Most of our approach will be marketing writing. This will entail occasionally breaking grammar rules for a variety of reasons (rhythm, emphasis). For the most part TommComm will use AP style.

Voice & Tone

A company’s tone of voice will inform all of its written copy, including its website, social media messages, emails and packaging. A tone of voice both embodies and expresses the brand’s personality and set of values. It’s about the team that make up the brand – the things that drive them, their loves and hates, and what they would like to share. Our brand’s tone of voice should be distinctive, recognisable and unique.

To begin, there is a strong link between familiarity and trust. Because if it is familiar it requires little effort to process mentally, we are more likely to feel at ease around it. Thinking along these lines, a company must be consistent in its use of language so that its writing becomes familiar to the customer. Using mostly simple sentences is a way of projecting the idea of honesty and directionality. Emotional free copy on all platforms is the most ideal (unless it is requested by a customer for a specific project). The copy should convey a sense of professionalism as well as the qualities of being respectful and engaging not authoritative and boring.

Thinking of TommComm as a person with a personality, what would we want him to be? The copy should be as professional as a conversation between a professor and student or an executive and student. Professional and still at ease, direct and consistent, occasional jokes but in good taste. Try to sound educated but not too academic. Stay away from colloquial language.

Example, “TommComm was established in 2016. It had a rather simple beginning and rough start but so far this year we are stronger and better than ever”.

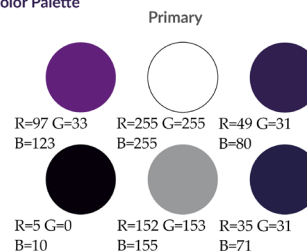
Copy Development

Website: Formal
Social Media: Informal
Emails: Formal

Surprise your audience. Lead with good news when possible.
Active writing only. Use action words to propel the brand forward or for a call to action.
Short and sweet. The clearest communications have one main message. The more messages you try to get across, the fewer audiences retain.
A good conversationalist. Good copy sounds more like how people speak and less like how they write. Be sure to eliminate extra words.
Youthful and engaging. Don’t be afraid to be provocative. Punchy headlines that jolt an audience get their attention. Avoid generic language that doesn’t tell your reader anything specific- don’t be boring.

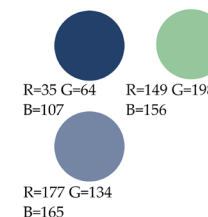
Design

Color Palette



Use of core organizational colors. This palette is to be used for formal needs.

Secondary

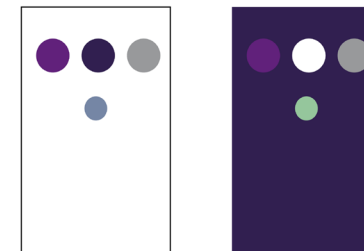


Additional shades to expand palette. This palette is to be used for informal needs.

Distribution

Purples will be our main color to show our affiliation with the University of St. Thomas. The best uses of these colors is to have them with a good amount of blank white space because they are heavy on the eye.

The light blue shows the appropriate amount of the secondary colors to use inconjunction with the primary. They are to be used as accents or to provide subtle emphasis.



Fonts

Headlines
-Lato Bold
Sub-headlines
-Raleway Medium
Body
-Palatino Linotype Regular

I am the Title use for...

I am the Sub-head use for...
This is the body text to be used on all documents and materials.

Logo

Versions



Use any of the Primary colors but only those colors.

Clear Space

- When placing the logo, be sure to leave clear space around it for proper visibility.

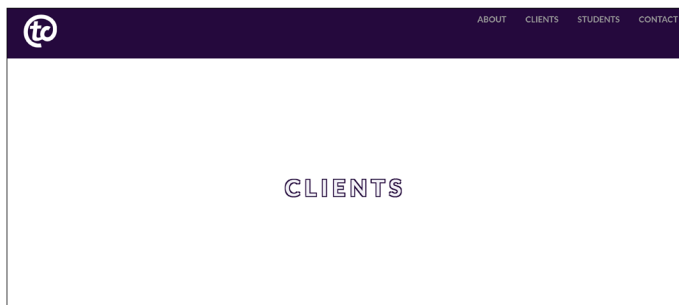
- Do not "crowd" the logo with other graphic or textual elements.

- Leave at least a slightly larger box as clear space on all four sides of the logo.

- There may be times when maintaining proper clear space is not possible.



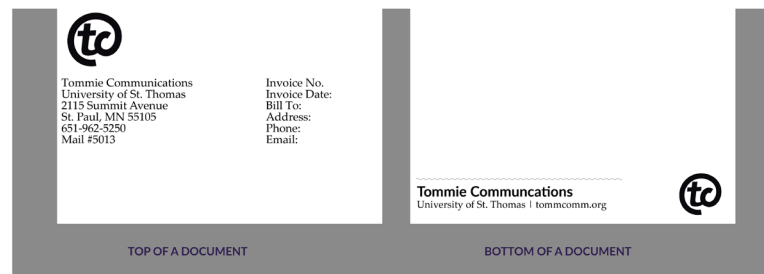
Website



Wherever there is heavy colors on the page use the lighter versions of the logo and vice versa. Smaller version of the logo should appear in the footer as well. Where there are other graphic elements on the page do not use logo as it will make the page feel too busy.

Examples

Header & Footer



Email Signature

Example 1

FirstName LastName | University of St. Thomas | Year Major

[TC logo]
Title | Department
tommcomm.org
email_address@stthomas.edu | optional additional email p 1 (651) 96X-XXXX

Samuel Shay | University of St. Thomas | 2019 Human Resources Major



HR Manager | Tommie Communications
tommcomm.org
samshay123@stthomas.edu
(763) 516- 0088

Example 2

FirstName LastName | University of St. Thomas 'Year
Title | Tommie Communication
Major
email_address@stthomas.edu | additional_email_address@gmail.com
p (612)- 000- 0000
[TC] Logo
tommcomm.org

Aaron Cornelius | University of St. Thomas '19
Director | Tommie Communications
Strategic Communications Major
Corn0002@stthomas.edu | adc.cornelius@gmail.com
(612) 437-0882



tommcomm.org

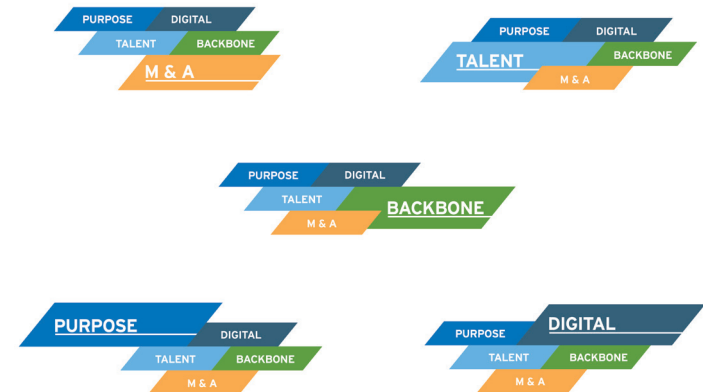
Project: EcoLab



Ecolab Inc., which is headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota, is an American global provider of water, hygiene and energy technologies and services to the food, energy, healthcare, industrial and hospitality markets.

Through TomComm I was given a project to create banners that will be used at the bottom of some on-line articles. The banners were used to call out certain stories related to Ecolab's company strategy - Strategy 2020.

The strategy includes 5 "priorities" which are: Purpose, Digital, M&A, Talent and Backbone.



Project: Postage Stamp



Original sketch



Final stamp

This was a class assignment was to create a stamp that would represent itself as part of a series. My series was "queens", which included Queen Latifah, Beyonce, and Queen Elizabeth.

Project: New Rules

New Rules is a community innovation hub, located in North Minneapolis, which was built on the idea of developing spaces for local social entrepreneurs to have access to resources in order to create solutions and lasting change.

The space is used for public, private, community and philanthropic events in addition to being a membership based workspace where individuals can rent equipment and use software at a reasonable price.

I have been taking on design and photography projects for New Rules in addition to helping organize and curate events and art gallery showings. Here are some samples of a Frequently Ask Questions booklets (and PDF for the website), which was my most recent project with New Rules.



WORKSPACE FAQ

Why NEW RULES collaborative workspace?

NEW RULES is an Innovation Hub for Enterprise, which brings diverse & creative professionals together at the nexus of culture, wellness & progressive social change. We are building a community of change-makers with the shared ethos of caring for each other and creating the world we want to live in.

When can I come in to tour the space?

Although NEW RULES has regular office hours Monday through Friday, we do ask that you use the schedule a time to tour or meet with a staff member about your event to help us manage visits. You can schedule tours 24/7 at www.newrulesmn.com/events. For questions, please contact our office at 612-548-4110 or email info@newrulesmn.com

What does my base membership include?

- Personalized member orientation + on-boarding
- Access to on-site kitchenette and refreshments; coffee, tea + available snacks
- Business class wi-fi internet
- iMac computers + all the software you could possibly think of
- Printing + scanning
- Credit hours for equipment and/or meeting room reservations
- Instant access to our online member network where you can find clients and grow your freelance business
- Members get priority consideration for economic and partnership opportunities
- Ability to sell merchandise can showcase their products for an additional cost
- Discounts on all NEW RULES products + services (event space, food + beverage and equipment bookings)

What computer software / programs are included with my base membership?

Adobe Creative Suite
AutoCad
iMove
Final Cut Pro
SketchUp
Garage Band
Virtual DJ

What are the Off-site Food & Beverage Catering Minimums?

Bar Service Only	Food Service Only	Bar & Food Service
\$500 minimum - Cash Bar (bev/corkage)	No minimum - Pickup during normal hours	\$750 Bar Minimum (food/bev/corkage)
\$500 minimum - Pre-Paid Bar Service (bev/corkage)	\$75 minimum - Food Catering Drop off & delivery during business hours	
	\$250 min - Food Catering Drop off & delivery after business hours	

A 20% service fee will be applied to all catering services that are offsite. Deposit required for all services.

BEVERAGE CATERING

What is included with Beverage Catering pricing?

One dedicated bartender
Three hours of bar service - includes 30 min setup & 30 min breakdown
Mixers, garnish, can soda, water station, ice

When is my beverage catering payment due?

Beverage Catering Payment

- Onsite events requesting a bar have a \$250 Beverage Minimum due at booking
- Offsite events or Pre-paid Bar Services will be due at booking. If you have selected Cash Bar Service vs prepaid Bar Service, a \$250 (onsite events) or \$500 (offsite events) beverage deposit is due at booking. In the event that you meet your Beverage Minimum through cash bar sales, your deposit will be returned minus the 20% Service Fee. If plans change for any reason, you can add food or beverage services up to 2 weeks prior to your event.

*All Catering Payments are non-refundable once paid

Can I use your Alcohol Catering only + bring in outside food?

Outside food catering is allowed. All food caterers are required to must comply with all Local & State Statutes for Food & Health Safety Regulations for the protection of you and your guests.

Can I bring my own beer, wine + spirits to save money?

Why hassle with having to coordinate product for your event when you can have our expert staff serve your guests?! The convenience of not having to buy materials, host, and entertain at the same time will allow your event to run smoothly and save you some money!

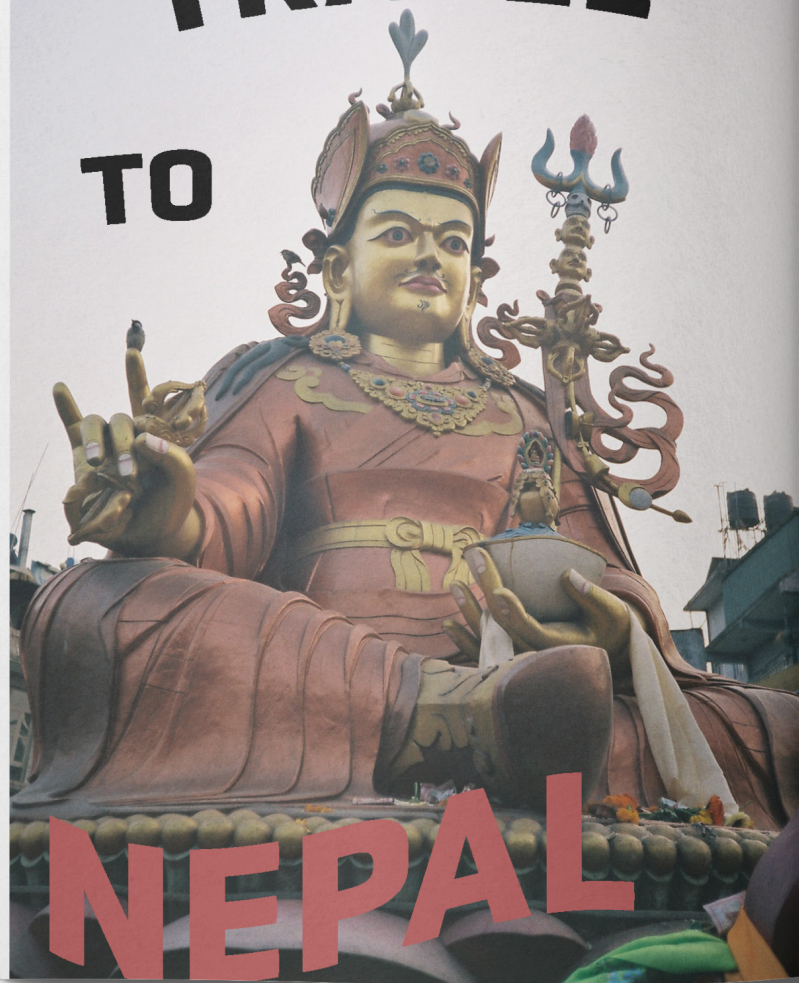
The fee to bring in your own outside product onsite is a flat \$150 and the guest assumes full liability for any damage(s) / lost. For events held in Studio 1 with small groups under 11 people, this fee is waived. NEW RULES allows guests to furnish their own product to NEW RULES staff for distribution for \$250 (onsite events) or \$500 (offsite events) + 20% service fee, which includes bar set-up and a

Project: Spot Illustrations



I choose Nepal for my series of spot illustrations for a class project for Illustration Design.

TRAVEL TO



NEPAL

NEPAL MUST SEE TRAVEL DESTINATIONS

Nepal draws visitors who come for a variety of reasons. Some are lured by the call of the mountains and seeking to climb or trek in the Himalayas, others are intrigued by the culture and come hoping to find some sort of spiritual awakening.



Article Lana Law & Discover Nepal
Photo and Illustrations by Marissa Abara

PATAN

Patan is 5 km away from the capital city, Kathmandu, and is reached by crossing the Bagmati River. Despite its proximity to Kathmandu, it still retains its old world charm and traditional professions such as woodcarving and especially metal crafts. As you walk through the city you still hear the tapping of tiny hammers as a craftsman works on a statuette or ornament. Patan is full of temples and monasteries which look similar in their pagoda style architecture and wood-carved windows. The district is known as Lalitpur which covers a vast area that includes the hills nearby.



Patan is a city of 55 major temples, 136 Buddhist monasteries and its artisans are known for their fine metal works. The city celebrates countless festivals both Hindu and Buddhist, many of which like the Rato Machhendranath Jatra and the display of Dipanker Buddhas are spectacular. Patan takes pride in producing great thangka and pauba painters whose works are exported to many

countries. Such paintings can be seen in the little alleys of the city.



BOUDHHA

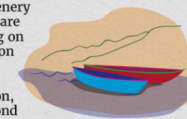
The Bodhanath Stupa, just outside of Kathmandu, is one of the largest stupas of its kind in the world, and dates to sometime around the 6th century, possibly even earlier. Like Bhaktapur, it lies on the old trade route to Tibet and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The stupa sustained minor damage during the 2015 earthquake but is otherwise in good condition.

The stupa itself is a symbol of enlightenment but at Boudhanath the symbolism is particularly clear. Each different shape represents one of the five elements, earth, water, fire, air, and sphere, which are also the attributes of the five Buddhas. Brought together in the form of

the stupa, their unity reflects in abstract fashion the structure of the universe itself.

POKHARA

Pokhara, at the base of the foothills, is 200 kilometers west of Kathmandu and surrounded by some of the highest mountains in the world - Dhaulagiri, Manaslu, and Annapurna I. For many trekkers, Pokhara is the gateway to the Himalayas. It is the starting point for treks to Jomsom and the Annapurna region. But visitors will enjoy Pokhara and the beautiful scenery even if they are not planning on heading off on a hike.



By population, it is the second largest town in Nepal after Kathmandu but still does not feel like a big city. People coming from the Kathmandu Valley notice the much cleaner air and pleasant climate almost immediately. Lake Phewa, with its cluster of lakeside hotels, restaurants, and shops, is ideal for those looking for relaxation and for day excursions.

Read more at: <https://www.planetware.com/tourist-attractions/nepal-nep.htm>
& <https://www.welcomenepal.com/places-to-see/patan.html>

Project: Rondo Commemorative Plaza



Most of my projects for this internship included flyers for mass distribution, weekly email newsletters, on-line web work (can view here: rondoplaza.org), trifold, PowerPoint presentations, writing press releases, envelope flyers for a fundraising campaign, and also maintaining social media pages.

I also helped organize and develop the plaza's first summer of series of events and workshops that were open and free to the surrounding community.

MUSIC, HEALTH AND WELLNESS SUMMER SERIES AT THE RONDO PLAZA

TUES, WED, THURS EVENINGS AND SATURDAY MORNINGS

MEET YOUR LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS 5:30-7PM 6/25	TAI CHI 5:30-6:15PM 7/10, 7/31, 8/14, 8/28
ROOTS AND BLUES MUSIC WITH LADY J 5:30-7PM 6/29, 7/27, 8/24	REGIONS HOSPITAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING WORKSHOPS 5:30-6:15PM 7/11, 7/18, 7/25, 8/1
CHESS FOR BEGINNERS 10-11AM 7/6, 7/13, 7/27, 8/3, 8/10, 8/17	HEART AND SOUL DRUM ACADEMY 5:30-6:30PM 7/17, 8/7, 8/21
ZUMBA 11:30-12:15PM 7/6, 7/13, 7/27, 8/3, 8/10, 8/17	TERON BUFORD COLLEGE APPLICATION WORKSHOP 5:30-6:15PM 8/6
JAZZ WITH JAMELA PETTIFORD AND TRIO- 5:30-6:30PM AND OPEN MIC 6:30-7PM 7/9, 7/23, 7/30, 8/20	SAINT PAUL FIRE DEPARTMENT SUMMER SAFETY FAIR 5-7PM 8/13
3M SCIENCE FOR KIDS TBD	

Programming made possible with the generous support of the following sponsors:

3M  HealthPartners  **HBFoundation** 

For more information or to register for workshops contact us at rondoplaza@gmail.com or RCP director Marvin Anderson (651) 402-0095

[HTTPS://RONDOPLAZA.ORG/](https://rondoplaza.org/)
820 CONCORDIA AVENUE
ST. PAUL, MN 55104





All Times 5:30 – 6:30 PM unless otherwise noted.

Tuesday, July 30th: The critically acclaimed **Jamela Pettiford Trio** returns for her second performance. Be sure to come out to hear this amazing singer. She will entertain and host an open mic session for all those who would like to discover their musical or spoken word talents.

Wednesday, July 31st: WELLNESS SERIES: TAI CHI. Tai... big or great. Chi... ultimate energy. Tai Chi is an ancient form of Chinese exercise consisting of slow, beautiful, relaxed movements that develop a sense of balance and harmony between mind and body. Tai Chi practice will give you the opportunity to use all the information and movements learned in the instruction class in a moving meditation. Our instructor, Bruce Tyles, has studied Yang-style Tai Chi locally since 2005, and Sun-style Tai Chi (Tai Chi for Health) since 2011. Children 10-15yrs are welcomed to attend but must be accompanied by an adult.

Thursday, August 1st: WELLNESS SERIES: Sponsored by REGIONS HOSPITAL to bring awareness on health issues of critical importance to the community. On Thursday, we welcome Shonette Doggett, Regions Hospital Injury Prevention Program who will review safety in and around vehicles; bicycle and helmet safety; pedestrian and railway safety to make sure you and your family will enjoy a safe summer.

Saturday, August 3rd:

10:00 – 11:00 AM. Chess for Beginners. Here's your chance to learn on of the world's great games.

11:30 – 12:15 AM. Zumba with Eli Murdock. Here's your chance to get your heart pumping, raise your energy level and feel good the rest of the day!

Feel free to bring your folding chairs and enjoy summer at the Plaza!

All events take place at the Rondo Commemorative Plaza
820 Concordia Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104

Call (651) 402-0095 for further information – rondoplaza@gmail.com



All Times 5:30 – 6:30 PM unless otherwise noted.

Tuesday, August 6th: Do you have or know someone with a child interested in college? If so, you will want or encourage others to attend to hear Teron Buford, Associate Director of Admissions at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul. Mr. Buford is an expert and will provide information on how to smooth the academic and financial transition from high school to college.

Wednesday, August 7th: We are pleased to welcome Jesse Buckner and the members of the Heart and Soul Drum Academy. Audience members will be asked to join in, and you don't want to miss this opportunity to participate in the rousing sounds of live drums at the plaza. Baba Jesse is a Twin Cities crowd favorite come and free your soul. All ages.

Thursday, August 8th: WELLNESS SERIES: Sponsored by REGIONS HOSPITAL to bring awareness on health issues of critical importance to the community. On Thursday, we welcome DR. JENNIFER HINES. DR. Hines will present information on the management of Chronic Disease.

Saturday, August 10th:

10:00 – 11:00 AM. Chess for Beginners. There's still time for you to learn one of the world's great board games. All skills levels are welcomed.

11:30 – 12:15 AM. Zumba with Eli Murdock. "Eli's class is one of the best I've ever taken" Actual quote from a participant in one of Eli's classes. Here's your chance to get your heart pumping, raise your energy level and feel good the rest of the day!

Bring your folding chairs and enjoy summer at the Plaza!

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820 Concordia Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104

Call (651) 402-0095 for further information – rondoplaza@gmail.com



All Times 5:30 – 6:30 PM unless otherwise noted.

Well, it has happened. Our first summer of Music, Health and Wellness is entering the last full week of events with only the **final Tai Chi class next on August 28th**. We'd like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to all the entertainers, speakers, the instructors and all those community members who attended for making this inaugural series a success. We learned a lot and we will return next summer with another slate designed to bring a fresh approach to our beloved Rondo Community. Be assured we'll continue to inform you of activities and events here at the Commemorative Plaza and in our new building adjacent to the Plaza as soon as renovations about to begin are completed. I know they would love to see you so please join us to say goodbye to Jamela, Jesse, the 3M speaker and Lady J Maddix.

Tuesday, August 20th: The critically acclaimed **Jamela Pettiford & Trio** returns for her final performance. Be sure to come out to hear this amazing singer. She will entertain and host an open mic session for all those who would like to discover their musical or spoken word talents.

Wednesday, August 21st: The Heart and Soul Drum Academy, under the direction of **Baba Jesse Buckner** provides an experience that everyone can partake in and enjoy no matter your musical talent. Stop by and see for yourself why Baba Jesse is one of the Twin Cities top performers. All ages welcomed.

Thursday, August 22nd: STEM SERIES: **Data Collection and Analysis**. Stop by Thursday when one of our young scientists from 3M will explain why this subject so interesting. You will be intrigued by the knowledge and skill of the presenters to make science interesting and fun. Although designed for youths, adults will also find the information helpful and exciting.

Saturday, August 17th: **Roots and Blues Music** with **Lady J** returns for her final performance and will entertain with songs and stories about the genres upon which most modern music is based.

All events take place at the Rondo Commemorative Plaza
820 Concordia Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104

Call (651) 402-0095 for further information – rondoplaza@gmail.com

WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO RECOMMEND SATURDAYS ON SELBY FOR FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT!



Project: Rondo Commemorative Plaza

RONDO PLAZA— NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

The Rondo Commemorative Plaza (RCP) is the first memorial plaza of its kind in the nation. Help us pave pathways with personal notes and memories of the Rondo Community.

Brick Paver

Memorialize your family, an event, a place of business, a loved one or yourself by purchasing a brick paver. 8" in by 3" in size. Three lines of 14 characters per line maximum for engraving. Generous donation of \$120. Unlimited quantity.



Striker

Commemorate the name and address of your family home, business or favorite place lost due to the construction of I-94 through the Rondo neighborhood. Generous donation of \$200. Limited quantity.



DONOR BRICK & STRIKER ORDER FORM

Please fill out the following and mail to:

Rondo Commemorative Plaza
315 Fisk Street N. St. Paul, MN 55104
Questions call 651-492-0095

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/ STATE/ ZIP _____

DAY TEL _____

EMAIL _____

ORDER FORM MAXIMUM 14 CHARACTERS

1														
2														
3														

Your support will help us capture the memory of Rondo, nurture scholarship, and introduce new generations to Rondo.

If this purchase is a gift send acknowledgement to:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/ STATE/ ZIP _____

Enclosed is my check/money order payable to Rondo Commemorative Plaza

Charge to:

- VISA
- AMERICAN EXPRESS
- MASTER CARD
- CAPITAL ONE

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

ACCOUNT NUMBER _____ EXPIRATION DATE & CVV _____

SIGNATURE _____

One Paver: \$120
Discount Available for multiple Pavers
Striker: \$200

ORDERS MUST BE IN BY JUNE 30TH 2019

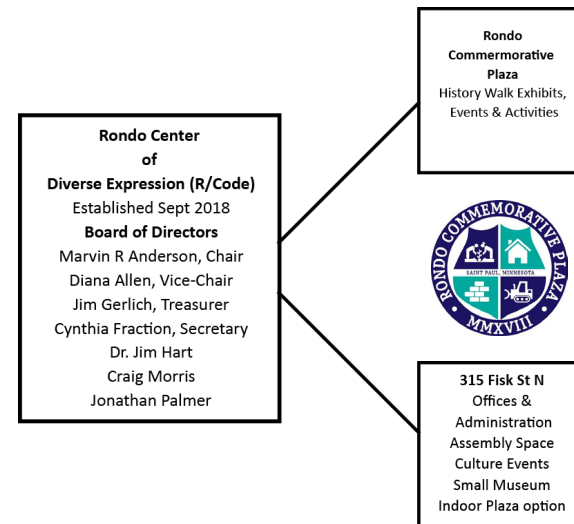
TO OUR NEIGHBORS

RONDO CENTER OF DIVERSE EXPRESSION Q&A SESSION



You are cordially invited to come to our new headquarters to meet members of our board and hear our plans for renovation and future use of the property. Staff members from the city of Saint Paul will also be there to answer your questions.

The property is not yet fully accessible. If that is a problem for any neighbor we will make alternative plans.



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13TH, 2019 AT 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM
315 FISK ST. N. (NEW JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH)

QUESTIONS: PLEASE CALL MARVIN ROGER ANDERSON (651) 402-0095



LECTURE SPACE



The Rondo Commemorative Plaza illustrates what can be achieved when government, private and community-led interests unite their resources to achieve results that not only strengthen the neighborhood but lays the foundation for future growth as well.

With the acquisition of the building at 315 Fisk Street, R/CORE will now have space that will offer an indoor option for RCP activities but can also develop an independent slate of programs in a space outfitted for a multi-purpose that meets the needs of users.

PURPOSE

R/CODE's overriding purpose is to support the goal to equip the Rondo Community with the tools to solidify Rondo's unique and historic roots; to build wealth; to spur investment in affordable housing, jobs and economic development; to improve the environment and transportation infrastructure; to champion activities that will define and build community among the diverse groups living in Rondo and counter disinvestment and gentrification within this historic neighborhood.

P: 651-402-0095
E: mranderson989@comcast.net
A: Old Rondo Avenue
822 Concordia
St. Paul, MN 55102
www.rondoavenueinc.org
www.rondoplaza.org



RONDO CENTER OF DIVERSE EXPRESSION

RENOVATION OF THE 315 BUILDING
03.19.19

Project: Blank Mag



This was a personal undertaking with a few of my closest friends and I who were frustrated with the dominance of male artists within the local Twin Cities art scene.

I wanted to create something with no real theme, and that was experimental in nature. To give no name to the magazine itself so that people would have to open it before drawing any conclusions or ideas about it.

Another aspect of this project was to open submissions up to only local female and female identifying persons, because I feel like we are often pushed out and that our voices often go unheard.

We created four, fifty page, half letter sized booklets. Additionally, for our first release event we had a gallery, fashion show and a dozen local musician performances. Over 600 hundreded people attended and we sold over half of our copies.



[] mag
zine release party

Dec 28th
doors @ 6pm
music 8pm-1am
\$8 at doors
\$10 after 10 pm
New Rules
2015 Lowry Ave N MPLS

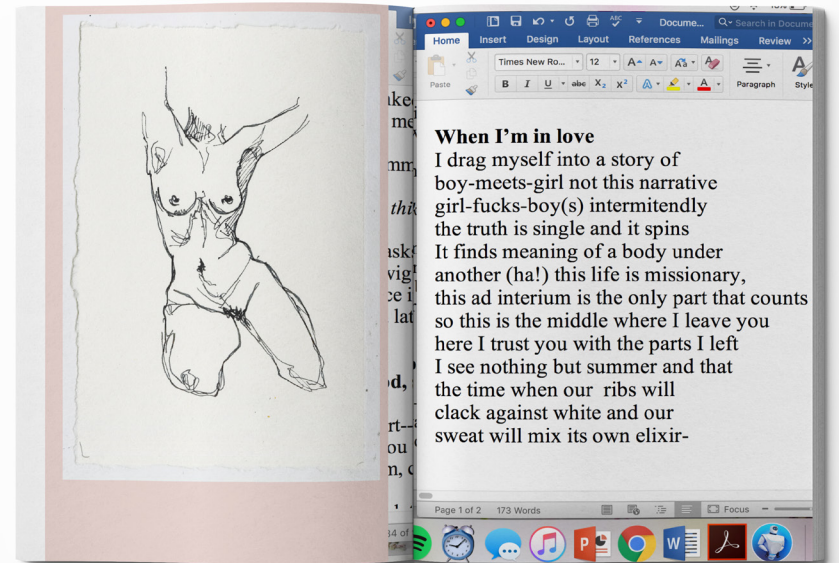
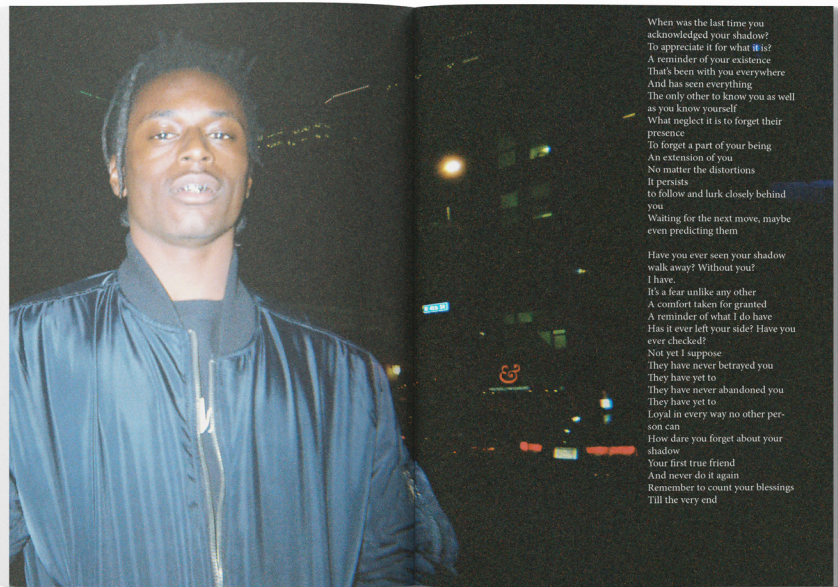
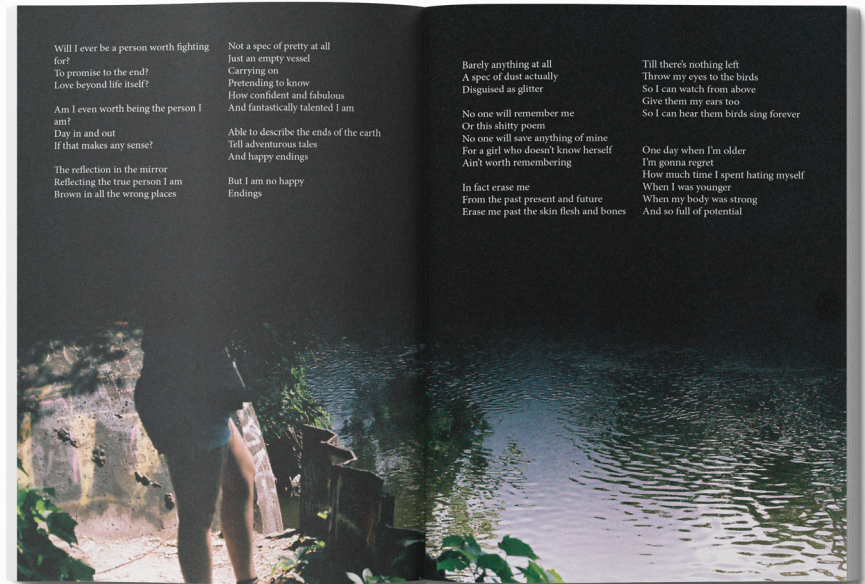
"ILLUMINATED"

music by

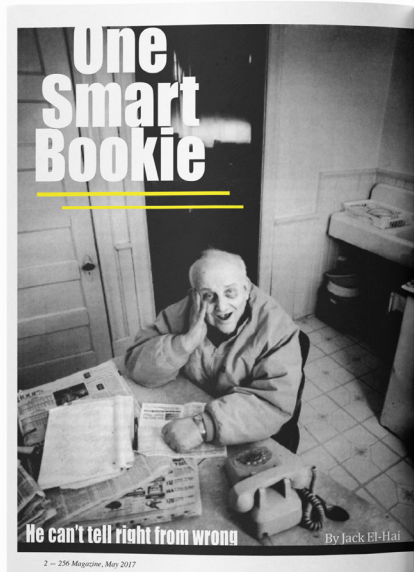
Maki		
Moise		
Artestry	GYM	
Bakarii	bleeplord	Hard r
	MadWorldMi	Ratliff

Yoni Light
Mouthfeel
Plastered Rabbit
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Project: Magazine Layout



One Smart Bookie

MAX WEISBERG: See, I don't have the education other people have.
JUDGE: That's right, but you are better with numbers than I am.
WEISBERG: What?
JUDGE: But you are better with numbers than I am.
WEISBERG: Well, I try my best anyway. That is all I know, is numbers. I don't know the other stuff.
 —Ramsey County, Minnesota, District Court, April 19, 2000

On the morning of February 5, 1999, agents from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety invaded themselves into Max Weisberg's house on Light Avenue in St. Paul, showed a search warrant, and began picking the place apart. They found cash everywhere, including \$7,028 in a garbage bag in a bedroom, \$2,000 in a dresser drawer, \$5,521 in the pockets of pants tossed across the dresser, \$10,930 in two grocery bags, and \$2,090 in a flannel jacket. They also discovered a deletion key that opened a locked front-entry closet. The closet held an additional \$37,420. The agents hauled away the money, a total of \$126,989, along with notebooks containing gambling information, betting sheets, and scorebooks. Weisberg, then seventy-five, did not read the report of the agents' left him. Written documents are difficult for him to understand. He cannot do his laundry or figure out his electric bill without help. One of the most celebrated sports bookmakers in the Midwest, he is mentally disabled, with an IQ that has at various times been measured in the mid-50s to the low 70s. Although Weisberg's speaking skills, as reflected in court records, appear roughly normal, he is not, in fact, an articulate speaker, and he has a sharply limited conversational range. But few people can approach Weisberg at calculating odds and handicapping games. A St. Paul pool-hall owner whose establishment regularly filled with bettors and bookies

testified in court in 1990 that Weisberg had "probably the greatest gambling mind in the world."
 Weisberg is a man with savant syndrome—"someone who has special abilities that stand in stark contrast to his overall handicap," according to Darold Treffert, a Wisconsin psychiatrist whose book *Extraordinary People* (2000) examines the cases of mentally disabled and autistic people with unusual talents. These savants, whose special abilities come in several varieties, usually excel in calendar calculating, music, art, or numerical ability. Weisberg is the only savant Treffert has ever heard of whose gift has run him afoul of the law. In repeated raids the police have seized betting records and about \$700,000 from Weisberg's house and safe-deposit boxes. Three times in 1989-1994 Weisberg faced felony charges of sports bookmaking. The first time he pleaded guilty and received five years' probation. Since then judges, a jury, psychologists, and psychiatrists have determined that Weisberg is not responsible for his actions because his mental disability prevents him from distinguishing between right and wrong.
 Despite all the evidence of bookmaking seized in that 1999 raid, Weisberg faced no charges afterward. "It was a sure bet that we were going to lose if we charged him again," says Susan Gaertner, Ramsey County's chief prosecuting attorney. "He would obviously again raise a defense of mental disability.

Ever since the death of his older brother, Solly, in 1998, Weisberg has lived here alone. "Solly was like my right arm," he says, in the thick and moist voice that signals his mental disability. His blue eyes and sagging face are composed now when he remembers his brother, but the loss of Solly depressed Weisberg for months. That face, along with Weisberg's waddling gait and the baggy pants that puddle at his feet, are well known to anyone who has spent much time in Minnesota's capital city during the past six decades. Weisberg began his working life in the 1930s, helping his father sell junk and vegetables door to door. Later he joined Solly in a newsstand at Seventh and Washburn. Eventually Weisberg became a highly visible flower vendor whose statements of prominent intersections and sales expeditions into bars earned him the nickname "Blaze Flowers." Flowers, from bankers to cops to politicians, bought flowers from Weisberg.

Flower selling proved a great cover for taking bets. Weisberg attended school only through the fourth grade, but the streets gave him an education in gambling. In St. Paul's saloons and alleys, which had provided a haven for such crooks as John Dillinger and Ma Barker, Weisberg absorbed the fine points of bookmaking. A successful bookie weighs a team's strengths and weaknesses, judges the home-field advantage, and senses the enthusiasm of bettors, all with the aim of "setting the line." The "line" the Vikings over the Giants by four points, for example. Nestablishes the point spread that the bookies believe will attract gamblers in equal numbers to each side of the bet. On this delicate balance, divined by psychological as well as mathematical acuity, the bookmaker's financial success hangs. Ron Rosenbaum is an attorney who frequently ran into Weisberg and other bookies in St. Paul pool halls in the 1960s. Back before Las Vegas odds makers supplied the whole country with computer-generated point spreads, Rosenbaum says, "Max was considered the best at setting the number." Working in his head, Weisberg could perform the calculations necessary to set odds on complex parlays and wagers based on the total number of points opposing teams would score.

Weisberg's slow speech becomes even more hesitant when he tries to explain how he arrives at his odds and point spreads. "I look at a line and find this game five to six points off," he says. "Other bookmakers are mad at me because I look at a line and don't see how the points they give are right." He maintains that he works with only half a dozen customers now (figures whose bets he has taken for decades, and whose fondness for him allows for the forgo those occasions on which the legal fortitude of money have kept him from paying off clients. "I don't want any more [customers]," he says. "I don't take any more."

Now Weisberg's legs are in a bad state, and he can no longer go out and sell flowers. He awaits calls from

Dr. Darold Treffert, America's leading expert on the Savant Syndrome

Based on his previous (psychological) examinations, I didn't see how to go against that. Law-enforcement agents feel similarly stymied. Norm Pitt, a special agent at the Department of Public Safety, says that his agency will no longer target Weisberg. "The courts have spoken," Pitt says. "It would be foolish for us to pursue any investigation" of him. Weisberg remains free, a bookmaker with a license to take bets.

LOUVER: Now, after they found that money, they found the money and took it from your house. Did they know you of the house?
WEISBERG: Yes, they did.
LOUVER: What did you do next?
WEISBERG: What could I do? I ate my supper.
 —Ramsey County District Court, April 19, 2000

Weisberg lives in a corner-lot house that his parents bought half a century ago. He conducts his business in the kitchen, seated at a table that holds a TV set, usually turned to a football or a basketball game; the day's sports pages; sheets of paper listing winners in crooked columns; the remnants of meals past; and a battered telephone. The rest of the house is dark, even during the day, with only the glow of a space heater illuminating a bedroom. Bars cover the window, and a stout two-by-four secures the back door. Most of the furnishings, decorations, and floor coverings remain as they were in the 1950s.

"There is no doubt in my mind that Max knew what he was doing, and that he knew it was wrong... And he tried to do it in a secretive way, which indicated it was wrong."
 —Lawrence Cohen, Chief Judge

JUDGE: Now, I want you to look me in the eyes, Mr. Weisberg, just so you understand and know this: Bookmaking is over unless you choose to go to prison for 15 months. I don't think that our prison system is a place for a sweet and nice man like yourself. But that's where you will go. The first time you make a book and you are brought into court. Mr. Weisberg, you are the person calling the shot as to where you will live for 15 months. It won't be me. It won't be anybody else. It will be yourself making that decision. Do you understand me, sir?
WEISBERG: Yes, I do.
 —Ramsey County District Court, November 10, 1989

In 1966 the police arrested Weisberg on suspicion of sports bookmaking, but the charge was dropped. Seven years later he served four months of Sandstone Federal Prison after he was arrested in a gambling den and he paid several hundred dollars in fines and two other gambling convictions. But his real adventures with the law began on December 4, 1968, when police officers made the first of many searches of Weisberg's house and safe-deposit boxes. Max and Solly lost \$47,000 that day. Nine months later, arrested in the St. Paul Police Department's history, according to the chief of police. Seven years later a judge divided the money among the city, the police, and Weisberg's lawyers.

In June of 1989 Weisberg pleaded guilty to the bookmaking charge stemming from the previous year's raid. He was sentenced to five years' probation and a stayed fifteen-month prison term. The fifteen-year annual police search turned up \$4,500 and more betting slips. This time Weisberg had a new lawyer, Ron Menzies, who requested a jury trial and developed a new defense strategy: documenting his client's mental retardation. He presented evidence that Weisberg had spent more than a year in a state institution for the retarded, where the staff measured his IQ at 55 and described his condition as "mental deficiency: minor, cause undiagnosed." Kenneth Perkins, a psychologist, testified that Weisberg's general reasoning and comprehension skills fell within the range of the mentally retarded. Menzies argued that Weisberg was incompetent to know right from wrong. He called Weisberg a Sam Marley-like savant with a miraculous ability to make book. The jury found that Weisberg had indeed taken bets on sporting events, but it acquitted him of bookmaking on the grounds of mental deficiency. Probably no other bookmaker in American legal history has been acquitted on those grounds.

Despite the acquittal, the Ramsey County Attorney's Office used the jury's finding that Weisberg had made book as evidence that he had violated the terms of his probation. After a lower court appeal, Menzies took the matter to the Minnesota Court of Appeals, which determined that Weisberg had not violated his probation, but Weisberg had already served twenty days in the county workhouse, a sentence that District Court Judge Lawrence Cohen had shrilly staggered to include the dates of the Super Bowl and the boys' state high school hockey and basketball tournaments. "There is no doubt in my mind that Max knew what he was doing, and that he knew it was wrong," says Cohen, who is now the chief judge on the county bench. And he tried to do it in a secretive way, which indicated it was wrong."

The county's continuing pursuit of an elderly and mentally disabled man outraged many in the Twin Cities, including Kenneth Perkins. Perkins had measured Weisberg's IQ in the low 70s but had found that Weisberg had remarkable mathematical skills. "My position all along has been that Max was not incompetent or capable of understanding what was going on," Perkins says. "He firmly believed that he was doing absolutely nothing wrong. He believed that taking bets was just as legal as what goes on in Las Vegas or the Minnesota lottery." In Perkins's opinion, Weisberg should be left

This layout is from Design Concepts with the task of using only one single color.

Project: Self-Protrait



First Edit



Second Edit



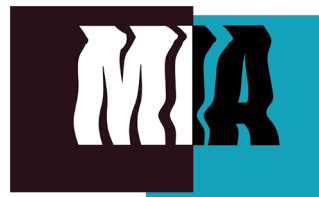
Final Edit

Thank you for taking the time to review my work. If you need more information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Again, thank you again for the opportunity and I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

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