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Meet Ria Ocampo | Associate Creative Director

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We had the good fortune of connecting with Ria Ocampo and we've shared our conversation below.

Hi Ria, why did you pursue a creative career?

I knew I wanted to do something creative at a very young age. Maybe I watched too much TV, it looked like it could be a fun career and I just had to do something like it. As kids, my brother and I would play with a camcorder and recreate commercials we saw on TV. Fast forward, I ended up taking Marketing Communications in college. I had one class on Copywriting & Art Direction, I did well, won some contests, and got a lot of encouragement to pursue it. I joined my first agency at 22 and I discovered how much more there is to creating ads to sell products. It can shape culture, influence behavior, changing lives for good if you do it right. I think having that kind of influence is exciting.



Alright, so let's move onto what keeps you busy professionally?

I'm essentially an Art Director. Aside from generating advertising campaigns, I'm particularly responsible for what branded work looks like. I could be working on a retinol face cream, then shift to an anti-scam awareness campaign on the next. That's what's interesting about it – it's never always the same. It's also a job that requires me to be an artist of all trades – as if I need to think like a filmmaker one day, a photographer the next, then a graphic designer, content creator, and so on. I travel a lot to go on shoots, especially in Thailand, where it's almost like the production capital in Southeast Asia.

I've always felt a bit insecure that I didn't go to art school and I'm also not a very skilled illustrator, unlike most art directors. I had to prove that my marketing background is an edge that lets me think strategically on the creative side. I had to learn craft on the job by trying to absorb as much as I can from the talented people around me. I try to find inspiration from just about anything – from high art to trash TV, anything can be relevant at some point when you have a breath of industries to work with. It wasn't hard since that was the part of the job I liked – finding stimulating visuals that can spark a reaction or visuals that the audience needs to see right now. Over time, I gained sensibilities to imagery and design. I learned that relying on a feeling, or if it feels right, is a remarkable skill not everyone has and it's not something one could formally train for.



If you had a friend visiting you, what are some of the local spots you'd want to take them around to?

Cruise around the Marina Bay area by bike or longboard. It's a different way to sightsee epic views of Singapore.

Gardens By The Bay is simply beautiful and worth visiting during both day and night. Billie Eilish & Finneas just filmed a private performance there and it was stunning.

Weeknight dining and drinks around Telok Ayer and Amoy streets set in a stretch of traditional shophouses. Lucali Proper Slice is perfect to get you started with a quick bite before drinks but also for a legit NY slice. Always end with dim sum at Swee Choon in Jalan Besar for the perfect way to end a night out.

Some of my other go-to local dining spots are Por kee eating house 1996 at Tiong Bahru, Fook Kin at Killiney Rd, A Noodles Story Tanjong Pagar, Ya Kun Kaya Toast all over Singapore, and pretty much the entire Amoy Street food hawker center.

Special shoutout to Haw Par Villa – I encourage you to google it, or better yet, just go. There's no place like it.



Shoutout is all about shouting out others who you feel deserve additional recognition and exposure. Who would you like to shoutout?

I'd like to make a shoutout to my lockdown gang, Gui Camargos, and Winona Wee. It was quite special to have gone through crazy circumstances together. We've now gone our separate ways, living in different timezones and area codes, but the journey has led us to kill at our jobs today. This is my way of carving our names on a tree and just saying thanks for the unforgettable ride.

Website: [riaocampo.com \(http://riaocampo.com\)](http://riaocampo.com)

Instagram: [riaplease](#)

Linkedin: [https://www.linkedin.com/in/riaocampo/ \(https://www.linkedin.com/in/riaocampo/\)](https://www.linkedin.com/in/riaocampo/)

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