

Kevin Nomu Langyintuo's Personal Essay

I've spent years trying to understand aesthetic communication — not just how things look, but how they *speak*. I started with what felt like the deep end: fine art, fashion, and film. Work with no brief, no client, no target only expression. I created a large-format lino cut print that now hangs in Skidmore's Wyckoff Center, directed a documentary on Olympic hopeful boxers in Ghana, and launched a clothing brand. These early projects taught me how to turn abstract ideas into tangible forms.

However, the more I moved toward structured, high-stakes visual work like branding, campaigns, and advertising the more I realized something surprising: advertising might be the most misunderstood art form. On paper, it's the simplest. In practice, it's far harder than free expression. You don't design for beauty or provocation, you design for *clarity*, for a message, and for meaning that lands in seconds.

This year, that clarity became my obsession. I collaborated with creatives across disciplines (copywriters, designers, and strategists) to explore how ideas take shape. I apprenticed under Pete Gosselin, CCO of Cape Agency and former ECD at WongDoody, with experience at Wieden+Kennedy and BBDO. His mentorship gave me insight into the cadence of agency life and helped me build a full art direction portfolio while revealing some of the challenges facing the ad industry today.

The piece that confirmed why I want to pursue this path is Adidas' "Hey Jude" [World Cup spot](#). Set to a crowd-sung version of the Beatles' anthem, it lingers on fans, rituals, and Jude Bellingham himself. With masterful restraint, the film guides viewers from quiet melancholy to

belief. It's a symphony of sound, image, and pacing where each part is subtle but essential.

That's what great creative direction does. It orchestrates feeling. And now, technology can help us do it faster, and deeper if we know how to use it with intention.

The realization that great storytelling can be elevated through intentional tech pushed me to take emerging tools seriously. As a VR/AR assistant at Skidmore's Learning Experience Design Studio, I helped professors and students explore immersive storytelling. It was my first opportunity to be immersed in emerging tech directly and I saw technology not just as a tool, but as a medium. It cracked something open. I realized I wasn't afraid of tech. I was ready to grab it by the horns.

That spirit now drives a project I've been laying the groundwork for which started as a way to organize my creative process in terms of managing AI-generated images, layouts, and iterations in a way that made sense to me and my mentors. However, this project revealed a bigger need: a layout-native, intuitive interface for visual creatives to think *with* their canvases and each other — not just after generation.

This line of inquiry is rooted in Recognition Theory, which shaped my philosophy studies. What does it mean to be *seen* when machines now generate the images and language we once labored to create?

At first, I feared AI would flatten taste by reducing creative direction to prompt tuning and aesthetic noise. But I started to see something deeper. AI isn't replacing taste. It's reshaping how we express it. It's letting half-formed ideas escape our heads faster than ever. But that speed revealed a gap: we haven't built the right interface to collaborate with machines.

What I'm designing aims to address this. It centers on layout, iteration, and authorship, not just generation. One of my biggest frustrations was how hard it was to share AI-generated work with mentors. There was no way to mark up a layout or see creative intent — only output. That loss of collaborative authorship is what I want to help solve.

I want to explore how creative teams can think *with* AI, not just after it, and how we can retain agency and intention while gaining speed and visual fluency. ITP is the one place I know will push me to prototype, reframe the question, and ask better ones.

Not just because of its cross-disciplinary culture, but because of its spirit — experimental, ethical, and unapologetically curious. I've seen how tools like Microsoft Publisher, Encarta, and even ClipArt shaped how I played and created as a kid. ITP is where I want to return to that play now with higher stakes and more layered questions.

My proposed ITP project is to develop a prototype for layout-native AI-human collaboration. I want to explore how interface design can preserve authorship, how Recognition Theory might live inside UI, and how teams in advertising, media, or design can ideate together without being flattened into linear prompt chains.

I don't want to be left behind as creativity changes. I want to help shape where it's going. ITP is the only place I know that would push me to build and think deeply, ethically, and experimentally.

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