

Raphael Picciarelli

New York, NY
U.S. & international engagements
(917) 209-8443
rpicciarelli@gmail.com

Consulting Profile

Creative transformation leader, strategist, and producer with 12+ years helping leaders turn ambition into creative ideas, strategy, organizations, cultures, brands, and experiences people can see, feel, and act inside. Available for select consulting, advisory, producing, and executive engagements across strategy and engagement leadership; brand and experience leadership; transformation and organizational leadership; creative and producing leadership; and executive partnership. Brings agency rigor from Wolff Olins and SYPartners, executive leadership from Williamstown Theatre Festival, and a producer's instinct for creating the conditions in which courageous people and ideas can flourish. Work spans technology, travel, financial services, culture, membership communities, and mission-driven organizations.

Consulting Focus

- Strategy & Engagement Lead — Opportunity framing, positioning, narrative, executive alignment, multidisciplinary direction, and end-to-end engagement ownership.
- Brand & Experience Lead — Brand positioning, audience relevance, experience strategy, creative direction, and the lived expression of a proposition.
- Transformation Partner — Organizational direction, culture, capabilities, ways of working, and the tools and experiences teams can use.
- Creative & Producing Lead — Concept development, programming, collaborators, partnerships, budgets, production, and public experience.
- Executive Leadership & Advisory — Institutional direction, executive advising, facilitation, team and capability building, resource alignment, and change carried through execution.

Core Skills

Creative Strategy ▪ Brand Positioning & Narrative ▪ Audience & Experience Strategy ▪ Organizational Transformation ▪ Executive & Stakeholder Alignment ▪ Engagement Leadership ▪ Creative Direction ▪ Facilitation & Convening Design ▪ Cross-Functional Team Leadership ▪ Live & Experiential Production ▪ Creative Producing ▪ Scalable Formats & Playbooks

Professional Experience

Williamstown Theatre Festival

Williamstown, MA & New York, NY

Managing Director, Strategy & Transformation | 2024 – Present

- Led executive strategy and creative direction for a 70-year cultural institution, with a Board-facing remit spanning programming, brand, partnerships, fundraising, audience experience, and organizational strategy.
- Defined the central proposition and institutional narrative that repositioned a traditional seasonal festival as a broader cultural platform.
- Led the reinvention of the 2025 Festival: 100 events across four venues, 15,000+ attendees, 57% year-over-year box-office growth, 40% first-time audiences, and 17M+ digital impressions.
- Built and led the creative and experiential function, aligning programming, brand expression, content, environments, partnerships, press, and audience experience around a coherent public proposition.
- Led a 14-person full-time team and 100+ seasonal staff, creating the collaborative conditions and decision-making structures required to deliver ambitious work at scale.
- Developed repeatable gathering formats, audience journeys, partnership models, and fundraising opportunities designed to extend the reach and life of the institution's work.
- Represented the institution with artists, funders, partners, press, and community stakeholders, translating creative ambition into relationships and resources capable of advancing it.

Independent Consultant & Creative Producer

New York, NY & Los Angeles, CA

Consulting, Advisory & Producing | 2018 – Present

- Maintain a selective independent practice alongside full-time leadership roles, advising agencies, organizations, founders, and creative teams on positioning, narrative, audience relevance, brand strategy, and experience.

- Step into complex engagements as a senior strategic and creative partner—clarifying the central ambition, aligning stakeholders, shaping the direction, and carrying work from early thinking through realization.
- Produce and develop selected work across stage, screen, live experience, and brand; assemble multidisciplinary collaborators and integrate the creative, financial, operational, and audience-facing dimensions of a project. Selected work includes the brand foundation and launch strategy for friend + folk.

Wolff Olins

New York, NY & San Francisco, CA

Brand Transformation Engagement Lead | Associate Engagement Director / Senior Engagement Manager | 2021 – 2024

- Led senior client relationships and complex brand transformation engagements for global organizations across technology, travel, financial services, and culture.
- Partnered with leadership teams to define the central ambition behind a brand, then carried it through positioning, identity, experience, launch, and organizational adoption.
- Directed multidisciplinary teams of up to 10 across strategy, design, writing, experience, production, and partner agencies.
- Selected engagements: Consensys (brand transformation and global activation); MetaMask (brand strategy and product ecosystem); Expedia (brand refresh and global “Explore” experience); Allspring Global Investments and New York Botanical Garden (brand transformations).

SYPartners

New York, NY & San Francisco, CA

Strategy & Transformation Engagement Lead | Program Manager / Program Coordinator | 2018 – 2021

- Led organizational transformation, strategy, and experience engagements for global brands, institutions, and mission-driven organizations.
- Partnered with senior leaders to clarify organizational ambition, align teams around shared purpose, and turn strategy into narratives, behaviors, content, and experiences.
- Designed and facilitated executive convenings, transformation programs, content systems, and live experiences; led cross-functional teams of up to 22.
- Selected transformation engagements: Hilton; PayPal (marketing-organization transformation and global roadshow for 10,000+ participants across four cities); XQ / Emerson Collective; Legal Defense Fund; Schultz Family Foundation; Chopra Global.
- Selected experience and content engagements: Starbucks (“third place” experience across 8,000+ stores); AARP; Chief (leadership-gathering formats supporting growth from approximately 400 to 12,000+ members).

Selected Engagements

Representative work across brand, transformation, experience, and institution-building.

W71 Flagship Festival: Williamstown Theatre Festival (2025)

Rebuilt a legacy seasonal festival as a broader cultural platform: 100 events across four venues, 15,000+ attendees, 40% first-time audiences, 57% year-over-year box-office growth, and 17M+ digital impressions.

Brand & Activation: Consensys via Wolff Olins (2023)

Helped lead the full rebrand of an Ethereum software company, turning a complex technology into a human invitation and extending the proposition into launch platforms and live activations for a global developer community.

Convenings, Brand & Activation: Legal Defense Fund via SYPartners (2021)

Facilitated senior-leadership convenings to shape the organization’s vision and strategy, then helped translate the work into strategic planning, a new identity system, and a national activation campaign.

Leadership Gathering Modules: Chief via SYPartners (2019)

Built repeatable content and facilitation systems for intimate leadership gatherings, supporting growth from approximately 400 to 12,000+ members while preserving connection at scale.

Recognition & Speaking

The New York Times, Opinion contributor ▪ Eames Institute, 2026 Curious 100 ▪ Speaker and educator on brand, creativity, and cultural leadership.

Education

New York University — BFA, Drama | 2010 – 2013