

# L'AUTO SABOTEUR

2018 VCU BRANDCENTER  
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VISIT [FRANTOWNES.COM/2018-VCU-BRANDCENTER](http://FRANTOWNES.COM/2018-VCU-BRANDCENTER)



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WY

STORY  
SO FAR



**MY STORY SO FAR** “IN TWO SHORT, considered paragraphs tell us who are and what you’re good at:”

“L’appel du vide” or ‘Call of the Void’ describes the sudden, inexplicable suicidal urges we may feel when we find ourselves in precarious situations; it can also be synonymous with the temptation to give into complacency in order to avoid uncertainty. Particularly, the uncertainty we feel when we find ourselves on the precipice of something life-changing – and the fear of possibly falling short. It is suggested that this sudden urge we feel to self-sabotage, be it suicide or complacency, is the physical reassurance of our inner psyches’ will to live – or to succeed.

Naturally gifted artist. Exceptional writer. Classic purveyor of style – I could go on. I am also an incredible “self-saboteur.” Self-sabotage can be defined as any self-inflicted behavior that interferes with one’s own long-term goals; included among actions considered to be self-sabotage is procrastination. Of course, I had become familiar with the idea that procrastination is a symptom of a perfectionist’s fear of rejection and/or failure. And while I don’t deny that – it was becoming a tired trope I used to make myself feel better for wasting time. Therefore, I couldn’t accept that lying at the intersection of my overwhelming passions and perfectionist procrastination was simply the fear of failure. Instead, it was my inner-psyche testing my will to succeed. But, despite my self-destructive perfectionist habits, I think I do a pretty good job of rolling all of my passions into one detail-obsessed, aspiring Art Director.

## MY STORY SO FAR “TELL US HOW one place you’ve lived has influenced you:”

WASHINGTON, D.C. – but to be clear, this place didn’t just influence me – it changed me. Granted, it was the only place I’ve ever ‘lived’ besides my hometown. But still, the point remains.

Washington, D.C., to an out-of-town passerby or tourist, in the superficial sense, is incredibly gorgeous. During the day, well-kept Smithsonian gardens – some grandiosely spouting thousands of gallons of water and other more quietly nestled rose gardens – offer asylum from the unique bustle of the District. At night, monuments erected in marble and lime illuminate the skyline, but observed up close, their obscene grandeur and eerie stoicism can seem spellbinding. Despite being carefully planned and constructed over the last two centuries, its meticulously man-made beauty is just as captivating as any natural wonder.

Although beautiful for the obvious reasons, Washington, D.C. still may not seem like a “life-changing” locale. In fact, when I first moved there, I was convinced it was the worst place I could have chosen to attend school. It was unnecessarily noisy, appallingly expensive, and seemingly dirtier than New York City. I could’ve only described it as somewhere between a town built from a Hollywood set and a highway pit stop where people would fall for two or three years as they embarked on their career – not a place anyone would want to call home. Nearly every weekend of my freshman year was spent shuttling down I-95 back to Richmond. From then, I adamantly decided that I would not stay in town even a single day following graduation.

It wasn’t until my second year at Howard University when Washington, D.C. changed seemingly before my eyes. I had gotten a part-time job in Chinatown; and in such a small way, I was exposed to the captivating juxtaposition that is Washington, D.C. I was closely witnessing both the small, intricacies of adult life – its comedies, dramas, and romances – and the changes of the world, both culminating effortlessly within its sixty-nine square mile confines. As hard as I tried to resist and with all her might, Washington, D.C. fought to change me. I was forced to view myself as an independent entity with the power and autonomy to command my life. Washington, D.C. influenced me to want more and to want it solely for myself. That which I was exposed to changed me overnight – and just as quickly my vehement disdain for D.C. and futile attachment to Richmond faded away.

Still, after living here for four years, it isn’t easy to immediately see Washington, D.C. as a spectacular, cataclysmic place. At first glance, the city still doesn’t strike me as a place people would call home or commune with friends or even fall in love – but, perhaps that’s the best quality about D.C. Like an unexpected but determined suitor, she quietly wears us down until we find ourselves head over heels. Somehow, some way, Washington, D.C. possesses something or someone that makes us dreamily sigh, “Home.”

## MY STORY SO FAR “WHAT LED YOU to Brandcenter?”

**September 2013** Freshman year of college begins!

**October 2013** Gets drunk.

**November 2013** Gets drunk.

**December 2013** Gets drunk.

**August 2014** Dumps high school boyfriend – long over due.

**October 2014** Begins working at VIDA Fitness Chinatown in Washington, DC.

**January 2015** Begins taking first design class at Howard University. Meets with Allison Rinaldi, Art Director at RP3 Agency, who mentions the Brandcenter.

**May 2015** Begins training with an Olympic Weightlifting coach.

**October 2015** Attends an INCREDIBLE BigBang concert in Newark, New Jersey. Life. Changing.

**December 2015** Moves into first apartment!

**January 2016** Decides to pledge for family's sorority.

**March 2016** Is officially pinned as a member of the sorority by mother, grandmother, and aunt – allow the real hazing to commence!

**April 2016** Distances self from sorority after suffering several debilitating panic attacks.

**June 2016** Becomes certified as a personal trainer.

**December 2016** Decides to apply for graduate school!

**April 2017** Mentally struggling to make it to graduation.

**May 2017** Mentally struggling to cope having graduated.

**June 2017** Quarter life crisis results in submitting a Peace Corps application to be sent anywhere.

**August 2017** Quarter life crisis application to Peace Corps is accepted. I have three days to decide. I decline.

**November 2017** Quits job as a personal trainer and sullenly moves back to Richmond from Washington, DC.

**April 2018** Finally applying to the VCU Brandcenter.

**MY STORY SO FAR** “TELL US ABOUT a personal failure. Describe what happened and what you did about it. Distill the story into one paragraph.”

I failed to fit in. More accurately, I failed because I neglected my true self for the exclusivity of members-only meetings, flamboyant paraphernalia, and extravagant balls – the quintessential ‘club lady’ lifestyle. During my formative years, I was thoughtfully groomed by the women in my life to join the sorority I believed was destined for. As the spring semester of junior year neared, the opportunity to close in on this trajectory I had been certain about for twenty solid years presented itself – it was pledging season. However, instead of being groomed for idyllic lady-like sorority life, I should have been preparing to follow a warpath. Despite my blissful ignorance of the unspoken “pledge culture” and hundreds of other hopeful women who submitted applications, I was accepted – mostly due to their nepotistic obligation to prioritize generational legacies – and I was thrilled. That is until I realize exactly how deeply ignorant I was. During an icy mid-February, in that dangerously overstuffed car, out in the middle of suburban Maryland, it finally hit me – I knew nothing. And even worse than that, my “line-sisters” were painfully aware of this. Despite my disillusionment of the clichés of “sisterhood,” I persevered as well as I could, but when I finally decided to distance myself from the organization, I was already very broken; I had a slightly fractured relationship with my mother over an experience we were intended to share, a heightened sense of my worsening anxiety disorder, and nightmares about my grandmother morosely informing me that I had “disappointed the family.” However, seeping through the cracks of my broken former-self was the self-aware, unapologetic, confident woman hidden deep inside of me and I was more saturated in the vindication I needed to become her. Seemingly, the expectation of obedience and homogeneity of sorority life had enraged her and I could feel her surging to the forefront – she was awake, I no longer wanted to be quiet, and we were ready for war.

**MY STORY SO FAR** “IN ONE SHORT paragraph convince the person reading your application that you have spent a respectful amount of time researching the track you are applying to and the work people in that track do when they graduate:”

It feels like I've been thinking about this my entire life, I just didn't know it was called "Art Direction." However, it wasn't until one brutal semester of Advertising Copywriting & Design at Howard University that I thought, "This is it." Early on, I wanted to create – everyone around me believed I would pursue fine arts – therefore, I believed so too. But as my vision changed and matured, I developed the fear of being relegated to unfulfilling, vague careers. The societal connotation that this path would lead to insurmountable failures and a lack of marketable skills was enough to strike fear into the heart of my grade-school self, so I sought to find a way to apply art to a "real" career. So, junior year, when I finally happened upon this new world – I dove into research. I found agencies no longer just marrying art and communication but creating, through art, visual narratives to supplement the world around us. The Brandcenter, more so than any other program available, continues to propagate the creation of art to for the experiences we have every day – or create new ones. I want in.

## TRACK SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS UGLY ADVERTISEMENT: ORIGINAL

**TASK:** Find what you consider to be an ugly ad. Re-concept and art direct it. Submit the original ad, your revised ad, and an explanation of the faults of the original ad. Tell us why your version is better.



This particular advertisement is striking, but unsettling because of the lack of facial symmetry. Facial symmetry is important because human beings are shallow creatures and facial symmetry contributes to how attractive we perceive faces to be. Unfortunately, the lack of symmetry to this degree creates the effect that these two women have been mashed together to create Cruella de Vil.

The “Living Donor” series by Aloysius Butler & Clark fails to expand on the touching stories of people who were able to not only save and continue their lives but connect with the people they saved and that saved them.

Now, imagine this advertisement greeting you as soon as the metro doors open at six o'clock in the morning. Yeah...not pretty. This isn't the only one either...this campaign included a mash-up of a sister and brother that came together to create...Shrek.

## TRACK SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS UGLY ADVERTISEMENT: RE-CONCEPT



Although the concept of “Living Donor” was strong, the execution was a failure. Even experimenting with simply separating the two halves to opposite sides seemed to erase the identity of the donor/recipient. Perhaps through more powerful photography and posing/positioning of subjects, a more similar concept of two people somehow becoming one in the same fashion might have been possible.

Through this redesign of the campaign, both the intensity and continuation of life is apparent through the image chosen. There is no distracting lack of facial symmetry which becomes unflattering to the subjects and overshadows the merit of the campaign.

MedStar collateral and advertisement also use the same blocky yellow and blue graphics, which shrouds the subjects in darkness. However, through this glowing yellow and blue graphic, the message becomes instantly more uplifting.

## TRACK SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS SAMPLE ADVERTISEMENTS

**TASK:** Submit five non-returnable ad samples (You can include non-traditional and traditional media) that show your creative ability, conceptual thinking, design sense and dedication to your craft. Samples must be 8.5" X 11" max. Samples should be one or two campaigns or single ads. The ads should not be an extension of an existing campaign. (For example, don't give us your twist on the Old Spice campaign. Instead, submit your original concept.)

Be sure the products you pick have a very clear benefit for the consumer, and then convey the message as clearly and provocatively as possible. Applicants for the art direction track are accepted largely on the basis of the ads submitted for review. You must note the source of the images used in your ad samples (i.e. original photography, Google images, etc.).

TRACK SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS SAMPLE ADVERTISEMENTS



SAVE THE CHILDREN: CHILDHOOD UNAFFECTED

Founded in 1919, Save the Children Fund is a global non-profit aimed towards supporting the needs of children and families facing catastrophic disasters and emergencies. Currently, Save the Children serves children in over 100 countries including the United States of America.

This sample advertisement was created to follow Save the Children's current branding style (bold text backed with white blocking) while promoting the overall goal of Save the Children: protect children from harm, particularly during disasters and emergencies in a clear and simplistic way.

TRACK SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS SAMPLE ADVERTISEMENTS



TOM'S OF MAINE: KNOW YOUR STUFF

Tom's of Maine was founded with the aim of providing beauty care products free from artificial and processed ingredients. Today, as part of the Colgate-Palmolive company, Tom's of Maine still maintains that all of the ingredients used in their beauty and personal care products are naturally derived.

This sample advertisement "Know Your Stuff" was created to highlight the simplistic and personal identity of Tom's of Maine and their products. To ask a consumer if they were able to visually identify ingredients in a competitor's product by its chemical name is a nod at the superior simplicity of Tom's of Maine's products. Finally, the call to action blurb at the bottom of the ad furthers this by suggesting that throughout the selection of products available at Tom's, consumers will easily be able to identify ingredients.

TRACK SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS SAMPLE ADVERTISEMENTS

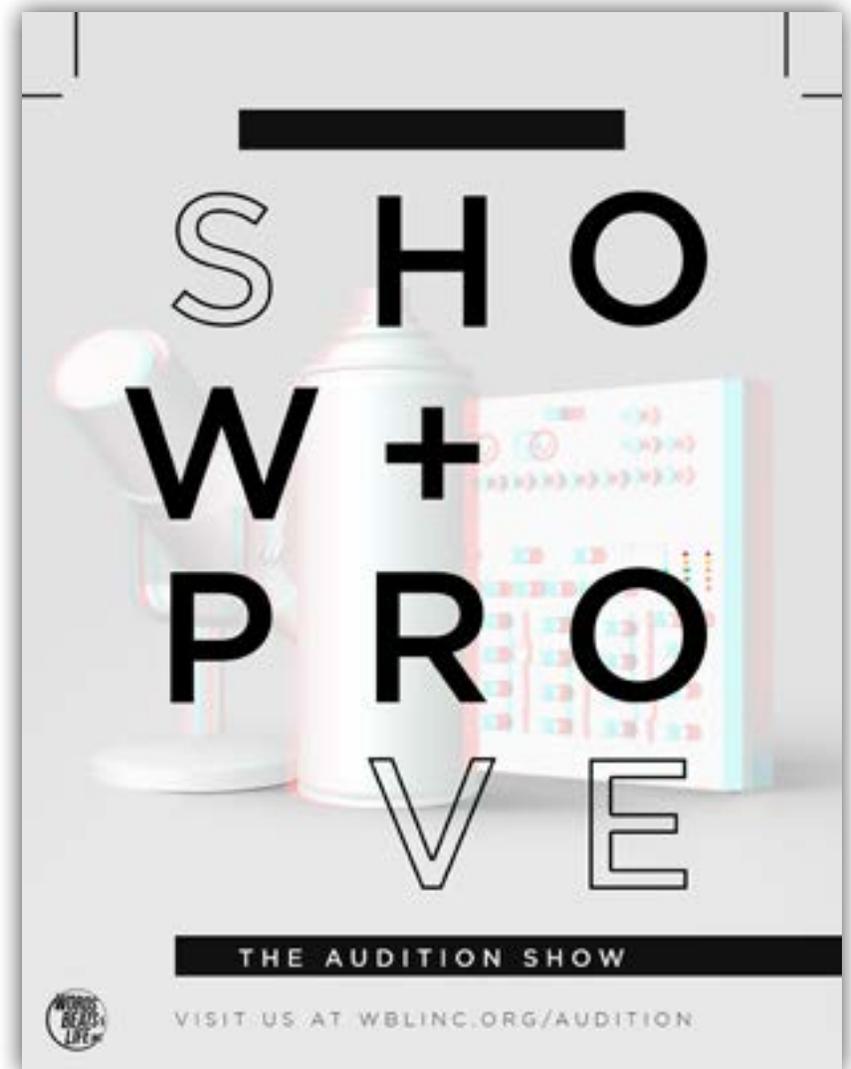


**KATE SPADE: FOR YOU, LOVE KATE**

The Kate Spade brand is all about quirky, cute personality and individualism. This mock advertisement highlights the diversity of a “Kate Spade girl.”

Using a similar headline font to Kate Spade’s iconic Baskerville font, this add gives a softer, flirter vibe -- swapped with Kate Sans font -- the same style of advertisement can become edgy and cool.

## TRACK SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS SAMPLE ADVERTISEMENTS



### WORDS BEATS & LIFE: SHOW & PROVE: THE AUDITION SHOW

Words Beats & Life Inc. is a non-profit in the Washington, DC area created to benefit the community through hip-hop culture. It utilizes five core programs to achieve its mission, including “The Academy” program.

This mock advertisement was created to promote “The Academy,” which offers free 8 to 10-week classes to youth ranging in age from 13 to 23 taught by local “masters.”

While the program is currently free and open to those who apply, the concept was to bring greater awareness about Words Beats & Life Inc. by inviting the DC community to support an “audition show.”

## TRACK SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS SAMPLE ADVERTISEMENTS



### PANDORA MUSIC: EXPERIENCE MUSIC

This sample advertisement is part of a mock campaign entitled “Experience Music.” The aim was to increase Pandora users and sponsors by reestablishing the relevancy of Pandora Internet Radio and its services. Experience Music aimed to highlight the ability of users to become submerged in the Music Genome Project, which helps users discover new, exciting, and inspiring music experiences.

The advertisements highlight the genuine emotions and experiences listeners have when they discover new music and artists through Pandora’s automated music recommendation feature, but also build upon how the right music can change and improve experiences as well as link a group of people.

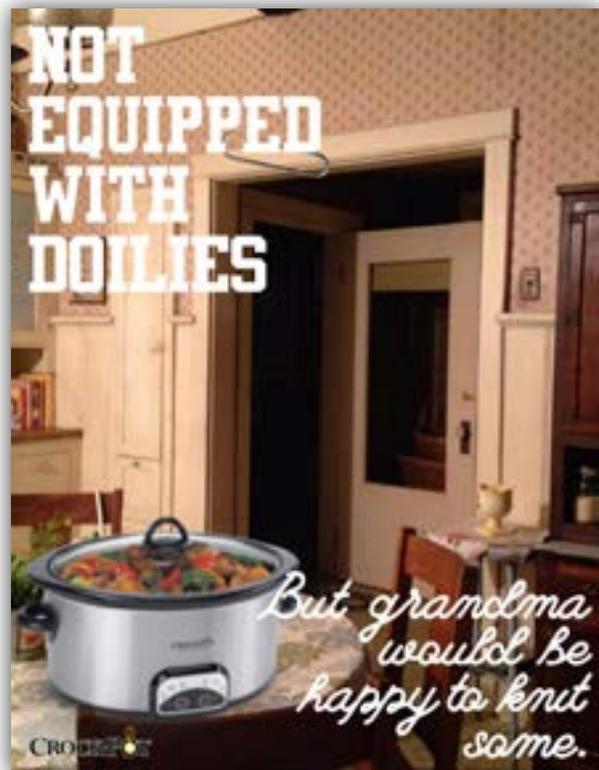
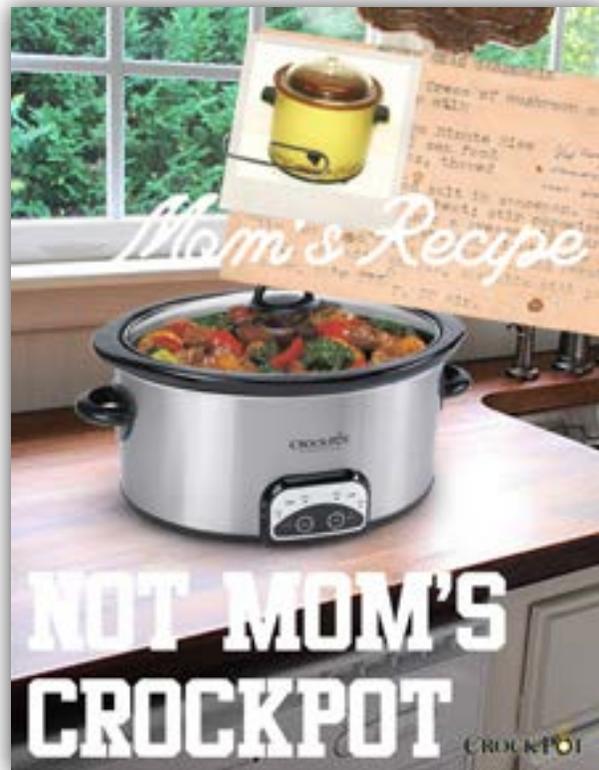
TRACK SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS CROCKPOT: NOT YOUR MOMMA'S CROCKPOT

**TASK:** Develop a campaign for either Patagonia (the brand or a particular product) or Crockpot.

Please include three ads and two additional pieces that are an extension of your campaign (i.e. billboard, digital executions, experiential design, etc.). Become familiar with the company and products. Craft a message that will be relevant, motivating, and creative.



TRACK SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS CROCKPOT: NOT YOUR MOMMA'S CROCKPOT



TRACK SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS CROCKPOT: EXTENSIONS



Two advertisement extensions: a magazine postcard insert and a website banner.