

Maarten van Lieshout

🌐 www.linkedin.com/in/mvlieshout

“Replace fear
with curiosity”

I aim to make every second a learning moment, to grow, to be overwhelmed, and to be amazed. A huge part of this for me is in creating new things and renewing others. I create not just to experiment and inspire others, but also to inspire myself to go further, never sticking with second best. I do this for every project I touch, bar none, poking holes in the status quo and telling stories about it in order to scale ideas by creating ambassadors of those ideas. This is the job of a creative leader: to be a rebel with a cause and to rally others to embrace uncertainty to come up with new solutions. After all, with every change in context we have three options: Flight, Fight, or (re-)create. I choose the latter.

Education

Dutch Language and Literature -
the University of Amsterdam, the
Netherlands

Diploma - French Language and
Literature - Université Paul Valérie,
Montpellier France

Diploma - Graphic Lyceum Design
Academy Amsterdam, the Nether-
lands

Small Business, Haarlem Business
School, the Netherlands

June 16, 2017 - present

Experience

Business Models Inc USA Creative Director BMI global

In 2016 I joined BMI USA. With my expertise in strategy, experience design, and design thinking, I helped to land the biggest projects in the history of BMI and help the office grow from <\$250K to \$2M in revenues in under 18 months. To push ourselves in the way we interact with clients, I globally lead all creative efforts and oversee the teams of designers in our different offices. By working closely with strategy designers and creative teams, I can ensure a high standard in our internal projects and branding, and push the outcomes of our (co-innovation) projects with large global clients.

- Design and run immersive co-innovation projects with big U.S. companies. This includes leading mixed client/BMI teams.
- Help companies to change their (board) meetings from one-directional information dumps into meaningful moments of impact.
- Co-design and execute a change/design thinking curriculum for large corporations, like the largest aerospace manufacturer in the world as well as one of the largest food companies in the US.
- Co-author of the book “Business Model Shifts”. A deep dive into 6 ways to create new value for your customers and learn about what steps need to be taken to make the appropriate shift for your business model.

Business Models Inc Amsterdam, the Netherlands Creative Director BMI global

In 2013 I joined BMI and helped many companies to shift towards a more customer-centric driven organization. I felt it was important to make our workshops with clients more immersive and less tool-driven. I started designing client workshops in such a way that clients dared to go much further in exploring their future. I also used my role as an outlier, to ask the questions no one touched. Building better business only works if you get people to step out of their comfort zone, whether they are employees or C-suite.

- Led our team of global creatives to change the way we would run workshops with clients from preparing the participants all the way to “what about tomorrow”.
- Designed and ran strategic scenario planning and co-innovation workshops for large international organizations and created visual artifacts to facilitate the communication and implementation of their strategy.

July 18, 2013 - April 13, 2017

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Specialties

Co-create strategies for organizations and startups around the real needs of customers.

Design immersive experiences that nudge people out of their comfort zone.

Use strategic storytelling to help organizations to scale their ideas.

Pick up a marker to visually prototype future scenarios of value propositions to validate their desirability with customers.

Coaching startups in their journey from idea to investors pitch.

Design thinker.

Strategic storyteller.

Creating a space where others and myself can get into space. And then connecting it back to earth.

Graphic design and brand design.

Build diverse teams of strategists, number crunchers, and creatives with a shared vision and end goal in mind.

Experience

30x, Amsterdam, the Netherlands Co-Founder

Together with two other people, I co-founded 30x, a disruptive creative agency designed to challenge organizations that lacked the creativity to explore uncharted worlds for new opportunities and to scale their ideas. I brought in my network and my skill to translate anything into an inspiring story. By triggering their curiosity with a sneak peek into what I thought their future could look like, we were able to attract and work with large companies and help them build new value propositions from a creative angle.

- Co-designed and co-authored the bestselling book “Design a Better Business”. Describing the design thinking journey from beginning to end including the desired skills, tools, and mindset.
- Build interactive toolkits around scenario planning and strategic storytelling.
- Designed and successfully scaled global strategies with and for corporates through strategic storytelling workshops.

ULURU/Beagle, Amsterdam, the Netherlands Co-Founder

In 2006 we started ULURU/Beagle as a “candy factory of ideas for corporates”. Large organizations could dream about their future in our theater or we would conceptualize future states for them. With my design and illustration skills, my team and I prototyped and presented futurescapes of their strategy, products, or services, without the restrictions of politics, reality, or other restrictions. My rich renderings, movies, animations, keynotes helped companies dream about tomorrow and see what needed to change.

- Designed, built, and/or visualized conceptual products and services as tangible artifacts of future value propositions of our clients.
- Structured and led internal startups like an online supermarket in the Netherlands of high-end food products for the chef at home.
- Designed and ran inspiration sessions and keynotes for clients.
- Led a team of animators, artists, and designers and interacted with clients to ensure tailor-made inspirational sessions and keynotes.
- Storyboarded and produced a movie for one of the largest technology firms, and cast its employees as actors, to promote a different way of engaging with future clients and relationships.

November 18, 2013 - June 13, 2017

2006 - 2012

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Fun facts

I graduated high school with an all-language curriculum (Ancient Latin, Ancient Greek, English, French, German, Dutch, oh... and Geography).

I speak four languages: English, French, Dutch, and German.

As a child, it took me a while to understand that not everything is a blank canvas to draw on. My parents had to repaint the walls many times.

Before moving to the U.S. and selling my motorcycle, I took it on my version of the Tour de France.

I deliberately use my lack of knowledge to be the one to ask stupid questions. Yet, I do know some things about stuff...

After 3 years living in San Francisco, I rented a big Harley on an adventure through national parks in California, combining “roughing it” with luxury hotel stays.

I’m a marker sniffing hippy and a sticky note fetish. Don’t interpret this the wrong way. I love working visually.

While studying in Amsterdam, I played piano, guitar, traverso, and accordion in a trio, performing theater, and chansons from Brel, Weill, Brecht, Greco et al.

2002 - 2005

Experience

Design agency, Montpellier/Paris, France
Co-Founder, freelancer

While living in France (Montpellier and Paris) I teamed up with a group of designers to form “the alternative design cohort”. We all pushed each other in our designs and solutions. Because of my business education, I was able to bridge the gap for clients between their reality and our design view. Our role as an outlier and my ability to understand our client’s language and culture, I opened the door to large and interesting projects for big well-known brands like Virgin, Fnac, Louis Vuitton, and Esma (visual effects and animation school).

- Created design briefs based on conversations with the client and set up a team to run the actual project.
- Lead designer for higher-brow projects like Louis Vuitton where we were asked to create an underground version of this luxury brand.
- Organized and designed underground theater and museum events for locals.