SHONA NEARY

Senior Creative Director & Strategist, Product Builder, and GTM Lead

Creative Consultant since 2016 | Founder and CTO of Countercult
Based between the U.S. and Europe | U.S. citizen | EU resident
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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

I take complex ideas and turn them into finished products, spaces and digital systems. Across creative culture, technology, business and global markets, I connect positioning and product strategy to customer experience and production, drawing on client work in venture-backed technology, global retail and cultural institutions. Through Countercult, I build artist-led, open-source infrastructure; I moved from hands-on product UX/UI into its CTO role and used AI to build and engineer its front-end and back-end systems.

CORE SKILLS

Creative leadership: Company proposition, positioning, go-to-market, cross-functional direction and cross-border market entry.

Product strategy and architecture: Product UX/UI, software, roadmap, technical architecture, privacy and consent by design.

Spatial and experience design: AI-assisted exploration, Blender, Rhino, experiential retail, wayfinding and environmental graphics.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Countercult & Countercult Studios | Founder, Creative Director & Product Builder | CTO at Countercult

November 2023 to present | Full-time founder work since mid-2024

- Lead product strategy and management from roadmap and architecture through UX/UI, open-source software, data, APIs and cross-functional engineering. Also own creative direction, identity, brand, marketing and go-to-market.
- Connected the public Network, protected member Exchange, paid Studios and a business-owned, brief-linked Fund as distinct parts of one artist-founded technology ecosystem.
- Developed the local economic-development model to connect cultural capacity with commissions, procurement, partnerships and local or visitor spending; expanded the practice through Countercult Studios in 2026.

VC-backed startup | Berlin

Creative and brand leadership | CMO remit | 2022 to 2024

- Joined at inception with CMO remit from day one. Led product UX/UI and cross-functional engineering direction while owning brand, website, marketing, go-to-market, retail and production.
- Developed company positioning and investor presentations with the CEO; the work helped the company raise millions in venture funding, and I joined investor meetings.
- Translated the product and brand into a flagship retail experience through AI-assisted exploration, Blender and Rhino spatial design, floor-plan development, and leadership across engineering, hardware and build teams.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE & SELECTED WORK

Independent Creative Consultant

2016 to present | NYC, Dublin, Berlin and Madrid

- Continued independent work across brand strategy, product, digital experience, experiential retail and spatial design alongside founder and full-time roles.
- Fendi and Versace: store-concept renderings and direction for a mall and Miami flagship.
- Tommy Hilfiger: led in-real-life touchpoints for each seasonal rollout; prepared CEO and board approval decks, then developed production mechanicals for a U.S. retail system.
- MoMA: worked across the MoMA Museum Store and SoHo Design Store in New York City, with design work for Japan; partner pitches, production and installation.
- Ann Taylor / P.A.V.E.: creative director from concept through manufacturer handoff; developed the concept and mood boards, designed the cashwrap in Blender, 3D-printed the prototype and worked directly with manufacturers. Won the bid; presented at GlobalShop in Las Vegas.
- Sunday Natural: shaped in-person retail positioning through product-placement strategy, mood boards and fixture concepts; tested budgets, materials, lighting and product hierarchy across two 2026 launches, then helped carry selected designs through production and installation in Berlin and Hamburg.

Artist-led spatial and cultural work

THE FLOOR | Whole Festival | 2026

- THE FLOOR is my artist-owned brand, concept and cultural programme in the property sector, bringing a Berlin residency, home, studio, project room, hospitality, curation and public programme together.
- Co-created Whole Festival’s Beach Stage with lead creative director Eva Garland, carrying the work through creative direction, design, production and on-site installation. I also painted approximately 40% of the stage using my short-form drawing approach.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE AND TOOLS

Additional client and cultural work: Lidl, The New York Times DealBook and New York Fashion Week.

Agency collaborations: Social Chain (Berlin; freelance Art Director, NDA-protected client work), MAVRIX (Dublin, virtual production) and LDJ Productions (New York).

AI-assisted systems engineering and prototyping: Used AI to build and engineer Countercult’s front-end and back-end systems, develop product prototypes and explore creative and spatial directions.

Product strategy and architecture: Product UX/UI, software and data systems; led engineering direction, with privacy and consent by design.

EDUCATION AND LANGUAGES

BFA, Experience Design (2018) and AAS, Fine Arts (2016), Fashion Institute of Technology. Two Rural Hackers residencies in Spain (2025), and co-created Border Fanzine with Sende.

Languages: English (native), German (near-fluent) and Spanish (conversational).

AVAILABILITY

Available for fractional, embedded, fixed-term or project work as a Creative Director, Art Director, Creative Strategist, Head of Creative or Creative Consultant. Remote preferred; available to travel when the client covers costs.

Sketchy Shona is my parallel artist practice in original art, curation and cultural projects.