

JOSE CALDERON

CREATIVE & PRODUCTION LEADER | DIRECTOR | DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Creative and production leader with 20+ years of experience building and leading enterprise video, photography, studio and content-production capabilities for global brands. More than a decade at Principal Financial Group leading visual standards, multidisciplinary creative teams, production operations, studio technology and national/global storytelling across executive communications, brand campaigns, broadcast, digital and social. Player-coach combining creative leadership with hands-on expertise in directing, cinematography, lighting, editing and photography.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Creative Leadership & Visual Strategy | In-House Studio Leadership | Team Leadership & Mentorship | Brand Standards & Governance | Executive Communications | Enterprise Storytelling | Creative Operations | Production Management | Budgeting & Resource Planning | Agency, Vendor & Freelancer Management | Global Production | Social & Channel-Native Content | Rights, Licensing & Asset Management | Adobe Creative Cloud | AI-Enabled Creative Workflows | Studio Technology & Production Infrastructure

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Principal Financial Group | Director of Photography / Studio & Production Leadership | 04/2014 - 10/2025

Des Moines, IA

- Built and led the enterprise video and photography capability supporting national and global brand campaigns, executive communications, branded documentary, events and multi-channel content across broadcast, digital and social.
- Defined the enterprise visual language and authored the studio brand look book governing location selection, lighting, photography, color, stock-footage standards and animation across internal teams, agencies and freelance partners.
- Led and mentored a multidisciplinary creative team of producers, editors and designers; hired and directed freelance crews and specialists around project needs while maintaining creative quality, accountability and brand consistency.
- Presented creative strategy, production roadmaps, budgets and resource plans to senior leaders and cross-functional partners; translated business and communication objectives into visual approaches and executable production plans.
- Directed end-to-end production operations including creative development, pre-production, storyboarding, directing, cinematography, post-production, scheduling, travel logistics, vendors, equipment packages and delivery for multi-day and multi-week productions.
- Managed studio and production infrastructure including equipment selection and purchasing, lifecycle planning, camera/lighting/grip systems, production workstations, storage and server infrastructure, and networking supporting large-media production and post workflows.
- Built production and review workflows using enterprise project-management and cloud-review tools; adopted AI-assisted creative workflows to improve speed, consistency and internal production capacity.
- Navigated brand, legal and compliance review for work reaching executive, national and global audiences in a highly regulated financial-services environment.
- Expanded internal capability and reduced reliance on outside agencies and freelancers; representative results include 745 unique headshots in one year, a conference image gallery exceeding 27,000 views, and workflow changes that reduced turnaround time by roughly 30%.

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

DigitalJose Creative Services | Founder | Creative Production Director | 01/2008 - Present

Waukee, IA

- Lead a boutique creative practice delivering video, photography and branded storytelling for enterprise, nonprofit, civic and commercial clients.
- Partner directly with executives, marketers and communications teams to translate objectives into concepts, production plans and finished content.
- Own complete project lifecycles including creative development, budgeting, crew selection, directing, cinematography, photography, editing, color, licensing and final delivery.

Richter Studios | Cinematographer / Director of Photography | 02/2013 - 03/2014

Chicago, IL

- Served as Director of Photography on commercial and corporate productions for national and international clients, leading visual execution from pre-production through production and post.

Hy-Vee via Sundog Studios / Mittera | Photographer & Videographer | 01/2005 - 01/2008

Iowa

- Produced high-volume commercial photography and video supporting weekly retail advertising across print and digital channels.
- Directed product and lifestyle shoots and supported expansion of Hy-Vee's in-house video capability during the transition to a larger production facility.

LEADERSHIP, SERVICE & RECOGNITION

- DMACC Advisory Board Member, Film & Video Production (2017-Present) and Photography (2022-Present): advise on curriculum, equipment, emerging technology, workforce readiness and professional production standards.
- Judge, American Advertising Awards: Akron chapter (2025) and Black Hills chapter (2026).
- Upper Midwest Regional Emmy Award, Public Content / Community Affairs (2014).

EDUCATION

B.A., Graphic Communications, Iowa Wesleyan College

Certification, Audio Engineering, SAE Institute

Additional study: Fine Arts / Cello Performance, Truman State University and Southeastern Community College

SELECTED TOOLS & TECHNICAL

Adobe Creative Cloud (Premiere Pro, After Effects, Photoshop, Lightroom) | Frame.io | Wrike | Adobe Firefly | Runway | Higgsfield | ElevenLabs | Google Gemini | Filmsupply | Artlist | Motion Array | Getty Images | Production workstations | Shared storage | Servers | Networking