PRESENTING YOUR WORK:
your WEBSITE

By Margo Mars

Margo Mars

Example Site

"I made **www.lief.london** with a standard website builder, and so can you."

FOUNDER OF LIEF
Margo Mars

Your personal website is the best place to showcase work professionally.

My guide aims to help you with some key pointers that will help you decide what is important to YOU and lets YOUR work shine. Feel free to take whatever feels good to you from these tips!

Choosing something that works for you is very personal, but it's good to understand what those that will hire you look for, through some simple do's and don'ts. Know the rules - so you can break them all!

You may have reps presenting work specifically with clients in mind - their reel choices might be a bit 'safe' or too narrow.

You may have Instagram where you show off your voice and get personal.

But your website is where you get to show your vision, your work and your voice.

Design.

Typography, colours, layout - they all should say YOU. Choose a couple of fonts that speak to you, and choose some colours you love. Most website builders give you themes to adapt: these are totally fine, but they SHOULD be adapted.

Simplicity.

Making simple and minimal design choices doesn't mean you'll have to sacrifice your personality, or that you can't build a crazy looking website. You want to make sure that your website is user friendly, and that you guide your audience through it coherently. Clearly section your website into categories and without adding too many of them. The less pages your viewer has to click through, the better. Personality will still show through; in fact, the viewer will see who you are even more clearly. Sometimes, less is more.
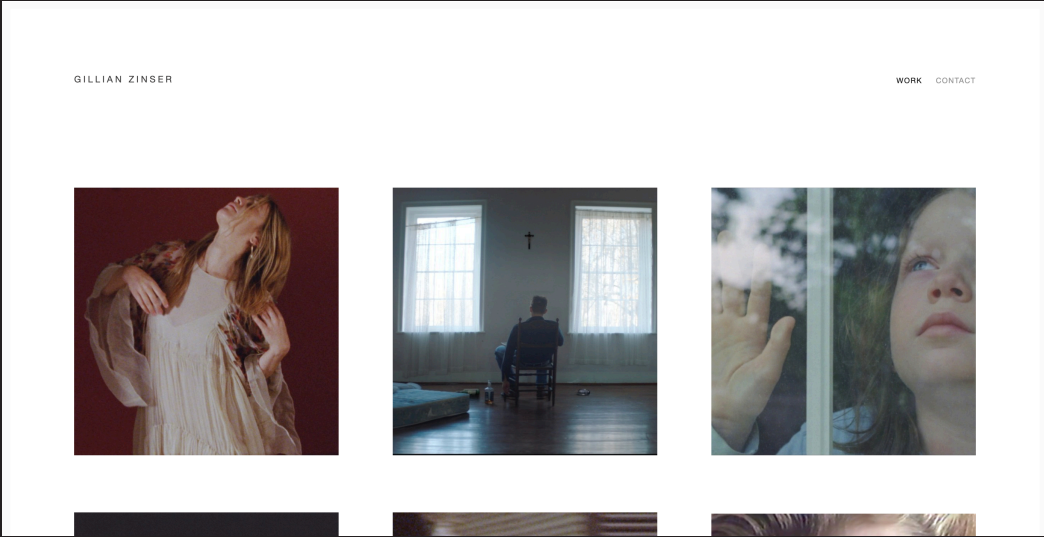
PERSONALITY

HAVE *a style.*

STAND OUT

It's okay if your work is presented simply - the work should speak for itself (if that's your style)

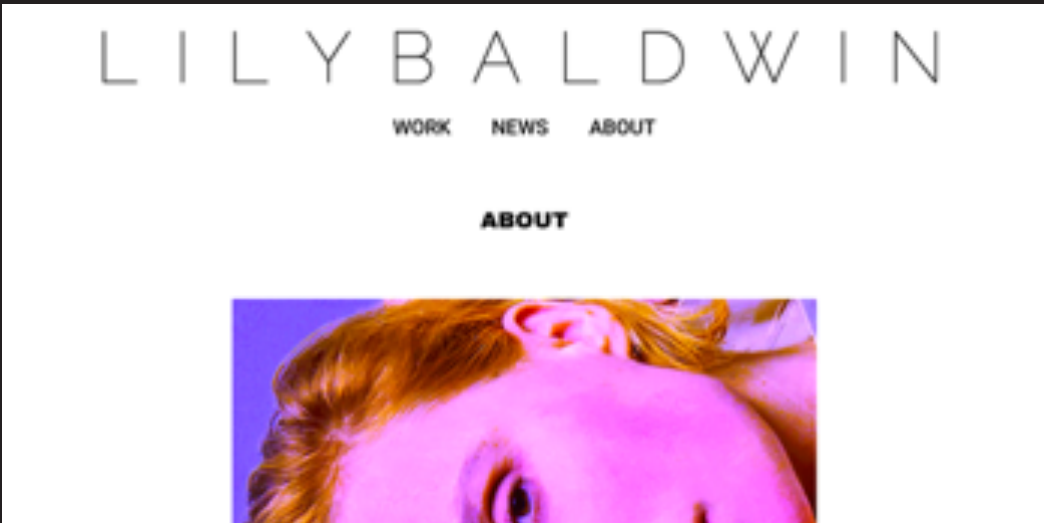But it's important to have a style, whether simple or very designed.

A selection of websites to illustrate possibilities in *design* and *simplicity*.
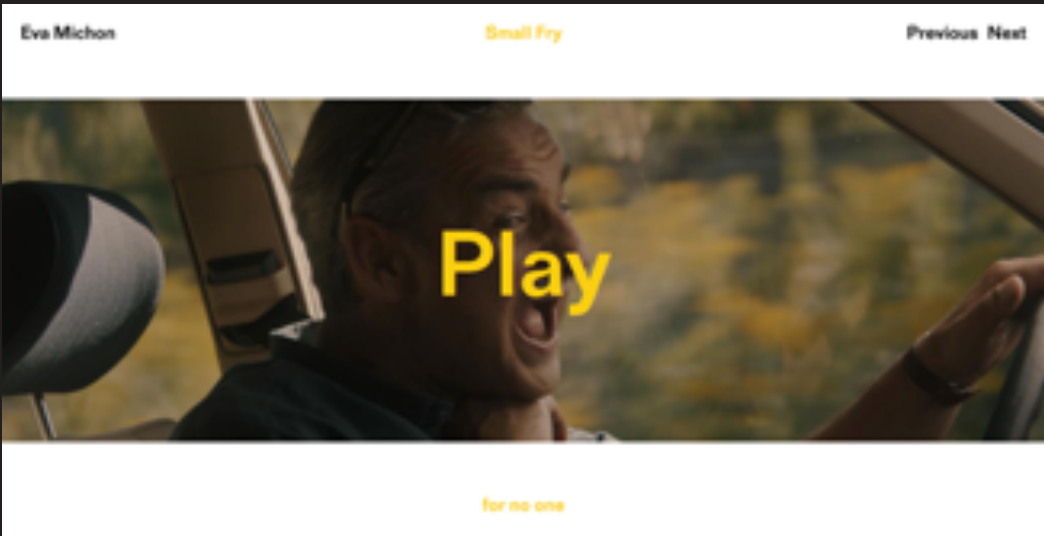
gillianzinser.com

smith-leverock.co.uk

lilybaldwin.com

leonoralonsdale.com

evamichon.com
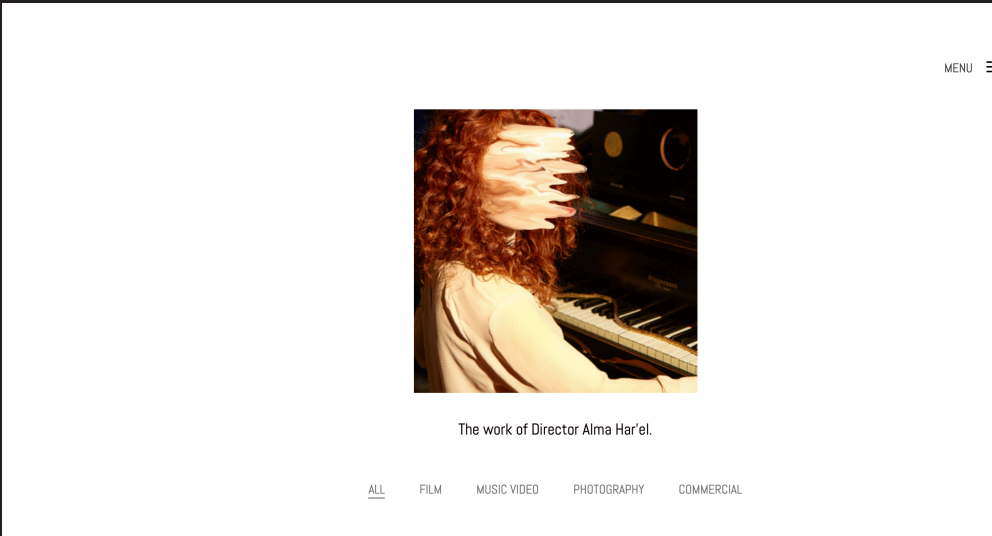
almaharel.com

PLAYING WITH FONTS

My Work

A well-chosen font can really enhance the aesthetic appeal of your site - here are some options for inspiration!

PRESENTING YOUR WORK: **YOUR WEBSITE By Margo Mars**

LILY BALDWIN

FREE
FREE
FREE

LIEF

ELISHA SMITH-LEVEROCK

The defi
destinati
women a
untappe
worldwic

Reel

LEONORA LONSDALE

DIRECTOR

THE

THE

The

Head In The Clouds *by*
CHRISTINE YUAN

THE LITTLE DETAILS

Favicons, tags, meta descriptions, slug.

Look them up. A favicon may be tiny but shows you are creative and you care.

A tag may get you noticed on Google.

A meta description comes up on that google search, and you want that one line to be clearly you. It's your logline.

A slug. It's what you name the page in coding. It's what appears in the browser window. Don't let that be gibberish like testpage2B. Example of a good slug? Go to ABOUT on http://almaharel.com. It doesn't say "http://almaharel.com/about," but it does say "http://almaharel.com/about-her/"

—

Favicon

Alma Harel ✕

—

Metadata

elishasmithleverock
https://smith-leverock.co.uk/ ▾
Elisha Smith-Leverock. Director and Ambassador

—

Slugs

https://lief.london/lily-baldwin

CONTENT

Your Reel

A good director's showreel can be many things - it really depends where you are at in your career.

Do you need to do a montage of all your work?

Or just put your best pieces forward?

You are a
STORY TELLING HERO.

Tell your audience your story through presenting the work.

A montage reel of your work is not a necessity. I find it confusing as it doesn't tell me anything about the stand-alone work. I've found, in my experience, that these montages are only done by those who don't feel like they have enough work to show on its own. This is never true. If you have one fantastically directed piece, you ARE a director, and THAT piece can serve as your reel!

Leave a montage to actors or DOPs - anyone who isn't in the business of telling stories. Use excerpts or trailers if you need shorter versions of your work to give tasters.

Of course, if you want to show some nice 'sizzlers' or a quick montage of what to expect visually - make some GIFs or very short sizzler cuts. But don't call them your showreel.

Dividing the work. As a kind of general rule, I'd put the work in sections if you actually have enough work to separate it - say commercials, music videos, long form, short form.

However, the best showcase of your work may be a combination of all of these, so you can have a reel that showcases the 'best of'.

Selection. Select carefully what you add to your site. This is your showcase, no need to put everything there.

Quality. This is a more technical detail. For some, it will be the first time they see your work - make sure the first time is the best. Use good quality / not too compressed content, both for videos and stills. This also shows that you care. You got this!

Consistency. This is soooo imporant. Title all work, and be consistent. Show the key information easily. Choose a way to title each work, and repeat it all throughout. For instance - CLIENT 'TITLE' GENRE NOTES. Genre notes here refers to details such as 'trailer' or 'excerpt'. Do you want to use Title Case, or ALL CAPS? Pick one, and stick to it!

Be visual. Choose iconic cover images. Carefully select your visuals - a poor quality image will give viewers the impression that you're not sensitive to the look of your work; which is impossible, since you're a director!

CONTENT

Extra.

Don't be afraid to show that extra visual/artistic work you do, even if it is not film. Sometimes, it is this work that will make your audience stop and watch, and can help them understand what's special about you.

Do you have photography? Do you show a Tumblr of moods that you are into?

If you are not that experienced yet, a Tumblr-type page with moods, photography, or likes (like Instagram) can give you a voice when you on have a couple of films to show. However, don't forget to be clear on what is your work.

Be like a train - know where you are going even if you haven't done it yet. And make sure your audience know it too.

News.

I'm always amazed by the amount of news that filmmakers have to share, but how little of it gets highlighted on their websites! If you have regular updates to share, try to keep up a news section. For Lief, I use a BLOG form: https://lief.london/blog. Posts can be short and sweet, but as the section grows over time, I promise it will become a nice archive of key milestones that mark your progress.

Contact.

Linking your website to your social media platforms is another option to show your tone of voice and personality. But it is not necessary and not for everyone.

Make sure that least to have a contact page and a few lines about yourself. After seeing your work, your audience will want to know who you actually are and how to contact you. Again, keep it simple, and with the most necessary information at the top.

Be informative.

Be creative with your bio picture or have none at all. Let it say something about you.

Don't forget to link to Free The Work ;)

WEBSITE BUILDING TOOLS

You can decide to custom build a website with a designer. This is the grown-up stuff, and will be really fun - you'll get exactly what you want, exactly how you want it. Before committing to someone, try building a site using a tool like the options below (most have trial periods), as doing so helps you define exactly what you need.

If you go with a website builder, these are my favs. I'd suggest having a browse and picking what's right for you.

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THE TOP THREE

Fabrik.io

Squarespace

Wix

others

Format: https://www.format.com

Cargo: https://cargo.site

Foliodrop: https://www.foliodrop-welcome.com/

Imcreator: https://www.imcreator.com/

Webflow: https://webflow.com/pricing

Smugmug: https://www.smugmug.com/

LET'S DO IT

01

Put your work on VIMEO. On Vimeo you can choose to 'hide' the work, so viewers have only the website as the main source to check out your work, if you want to be specific what they see and don't see.

02

Subscribe to your fave website builder.

03

Do a paper edit of what you want your website to be. This is really important step. Before you build digitally, it's good to have a template of what you envision. Then find the theme that comes closest.

04

Populate your template.

05

Refine. Play with fonts/ colours, the fun stuff.

06

Check. Check again. Is it really clear? Does it scream ME? Great, let's go!

07

Publish and Promote. Each web builder will have a handy 'help' section to get your site live and published. Once live, be sure to link to it everywhere, on your socials, in your email signature, your Free The Work profile. Lead your audience to your site!

08

Watch the work come in & keep the site up to date.