



# Michael Dargie

Writer · Brand strategist · Speaker

cSPACE Marda Loop · 1721 29th Avenue SW, Studio 415  
Calgary, Alberta T2T 6T7 · Canada

[michaeldargie.com](http://michaeldargie.com)

[inquiries@MichaelDargie.com](mailto:inquiries@MichaelDargie.com)

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§ press kit

## Press kit, in pieces.

*Bios, photos, books, talks, and recent media coverage. Take what you need. Quote freely, attribute kindly. Photo credit: Ben Laird (studio portraits).*

Updated April 25, 2026 · Web version (canonical): [michaeldargie.com/press](http://michaeldargie.com/press)

01 //

## Bios

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*Five lengths, in case you need to pick one. The "services-forward" version is the right pick for agency directories and freelance listings. The long bio is for features and back-of-book.*

### One-line

~16 words

Michael Dargie — writer, brand strategist, founder of Make More Creative. Author of BrandJitsu™ (Dundurn Press).

### Short

~50 words

Michael Dargie is the author of BrandJitsu™ (Dundurn Press) and the founder of Make More Creative, a Canadian creative-intelligence agency. His forthcoming books include PitchJitsu™: Opening Minds and Wallets and the literary memoir Bubbles & Blood. He writes and speaks about creativity, work, and the strange side of a life built sideways.

### Services-forward

~52 words

Calgary-based freelance writer and creative director with twenty-plus years of agency experience. Brand strategy, editorial, long-form writing, creative direction, AI-integrated content, event hosting, and speaking. Author of BrandJitsu™ (Dundurn Press), with PitchJitsu™ on the way. Host of the RebelRebel Podcast. Available for projects, retainers, and workshops.

## Medium

~125 words

Michael Dargie is a Calgary-based writer, speaker, and founder of Make More Creative, a creative-intelligence agency he has run for more than twenty years. His first book, *BrandJitsu™: Move Your Brand From ‘Meh’ To Memorable* (Dundurn Press), distilled a decade of client work into a practical methodology for finding the truth about what you do and saying it out loud. He is at work on the follow-up, *PitchJitsu™: Opening Minds and Wallets*, and a literary memoir titled *Bubbles & Blood*. Michael has hosted more than 250 episodes of the RebelRebel Podcast, mentored with Calgary Economic Development, and speaks regularly on brand strategy, pitching, AI in creative work, and the art of the sideways career.

## Long

~307 words

I taught myself to program at ten on a TRS-80 Colour Computer because I wanted to make pictures and music out of nothing. My mom was laying out newspaper pages on PageMaker in the next room. My dad told me stories about riding motorcycles across Africa in another life, and every Easter morning he'd disappear into the Bow River valley before dawn so my sister and I could spend the day hunting down clues hidden in eagle's nests, beaver lodges, and the edges of cliffs.

Adventure has been the given, not the exception.

I've been saying yes to things ever since. Saying yes is how I became Canada's youngest motorcycle instructor and provincial examiner, ran the Canadian Death Race twice, performed and directed at Loose Moose Theatre, owned a jiu-jitsu school, hosted more than 250 episodes of the RebelRebel Podcast, co-wrote a one-act play an adjudicator once called "the perfect little play," certified as an advanced scuba diver, and accidentally founded a creative agency that's still running twenty years later.

*BrandJitsu™: Move Your Brand From ‘Meh’ To Memorable* (Dundurn Press) was a labour of love that took about a decade. It's the methodology I developed at Make More Creative over twenty-plus years of helping founders, startups, and stubborn legacy brands find the truth about who they are. I'm at work on the follow-up, *PitchJitsu™: Opening Minds and Wallets*, and a literary memoir called *Bubbles & Blood* about learning to breathe underwater and, eventually, to stop being afraid of the dark parts of the ocean.

I call my approach flashing sideways — going deep into one craft, wide into everything next to it — and I've made a career out of it. I live between Calgary and Vancouver Island with my partner Jennifer, two cats, five motorcycles, and an evolving opinion about where octopuses rank in the hierarchy of earthly creatures.

## Books

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### **BrandJitsu™**

*Move Your Brand From ‘Meh’ To Memorable.*

A practical guide to the discipline of building a brand that actually sticks — written for founders, marketers, and creatives who want to stop chasing trends and start leaving a mark.

Dundurn Press · 2025 · Available now

[michaeldargie.com/books/brandjitsu](https://michaeldargie.com/books/brandjitsu)

### **Bubbles & Blood**

*A Memoir Mostly Underwater.*

A literary memoir, in progress — on water, work, family, and the slow art of noticing what you almost didn't.

In progress

[michaeldargie.com/books/bubbles-and-blood](https://michaeldargie.com/books/bubbles-and-blood)

### **PitchJitsu™**

*Opening Minds and Wallets.*

The follow-up to BrandJitsu™. You get three minutes and forty-four seconds to open a room's mind — and its wallet. Here's how to use every one of them.

Coming 2027

[michaeldargie.com/books/pitchjitsu](https://michaeldargie.com/books/pitchjitsu)

### **Dean Shield Series**

*Pacific Northwest crime fiction, mostly wet.*

A wet ensemble and a long memory. Vancouver Island is the character; the ocean is the crime scene.

In progress

[michaeldargie.com/books/dean-shield-series](https://michaeldargie.com/books/dean-shield-series)

## Ventures & platforms

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### **Make More Creative**

Founder, CEO

Canadian creative-intelligence agency. Brand, editorial, and AI-integrated content for founders and stubborn legacy brands.

[makemorecreative.com](https://makemorecreative.com)

### **plan.makemorecreative.com**

Founder, Make More Creative

Your complete sales, marketing, and export plan in minutes — an AI-powered strategy generator with competitive analysis, budget recommendations, and a 12-month action plan.

[plan.makemorecreative.com](https://plan.makemorecreative.com)

### **export.makemorecreative.com**

Founder, Make More Creative

Get Your Brand Travel Ready — a course preparing your brand for new-market expansion, powered by real-time AI research tailored to your industry.

[export.makemorecreative.com](https://export.makemorecreative.com)

### **techKitchen.ai**

Co-Founder

.techKitchen™ is a technology incubator exploring how people and businesses can use AI to make their world more interesting — and occasionally more profitable.

[techkitchen.ai](https://techkitchen.ai)

### **theKitchen**

Co-Founder

Healthy eating, made deliciously easy. AI-powered recipes built around your health goals, your pantry, and your taste buds.

[app.thekitchen.ai](https://app.thekitchen.ai)

### **no5writer.ai**

Founder, .techKitchen incubator

Where stories find their structure. No 5 Writer™ combines expert editorial coaching with genre-specific structural frameworks — guiding your story from first draft to final page.

[no5writer.ai](https://no5writer.ai)

### **ducksmith.ai**

Founder, .techKitchen incubator

A ridiculous duck simulator. Raise your flock, forge unbreakable bonds, and defend Featherhollow from the shadows that circle beyond the fence.

[ducksmith.ai](https://ducksmith.ai)

### **niceCortex.ai**

Co-founder

Neural Intelligence for Connected Ecosystems. An intelligent workspace combining a powerful editor, structured databases, and a coordinated team of AI agents.

[nicedcortex.ai](https://nicedcortex.ai)

## **FitNut.ai**

Founder

AI-powered fitness platform.

[fitnut.ai](https://fitnut.ai)

## **The RebelRebel Podcast**

Creator, Producer, Host

Two-hundred-and-fifty-plus episodes spent finding the creative rebels and entrepreneurs making their dreams come true.

[rebelrebelpodcast.com](https://rebelrebelpodcast.com)

04 //

# Active talks

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*Keynotes, workshops, and lunch-and-learns. Formats from thirty-minute keynote to half-day workshop. The full speaking archive lives at [michaeldargie.com/speaking](https://michaeldargie.com/speaking).*

## **Adventures in International Branding**

Brand DNA is the easy part — what dies on impact is the cultural translation. Canada is 0.48% of the world's population with ~450 cultures of its own, and then there are the other 7,500 cultures and 7,000+ languages your brand has to cross into. Practical lessons from twenty years of helping Canadian brands cross borders without losing themselves: study the culture, customize the message, and use local experts (plural).

## **AI Quick Wins for Business and Life**

A working tour of what AI is actually good at — built around the five flavours (generative, agentic, perceptive, cognitive, adaptive) and the three levels of using it: ask things, automate workflows, build with it. Walks through the real internal apps Make More Creative has shipped on AI rails, plus a working prompt-engineering reference that turns "I tried ChatGPT once" into "AI runs part of my business."

## **To Bot Or Not To Bot**

*BrandJitsu™ × AI workshop*

A workshop on whether your brand needs a bot — and if it does, how to build one that sounds like you. Part one sequences your brand DNA, voice, and ideal-customer avatar so the AI has something specific to work with. Part two is a working tour of fifteen prompting techniques plus how to ship a custom GPT that translates your story into fifty-plus languages without losing the brand.

## **From Idea to !ndigo**

*The (Accidentally) Epic Journey of Publishing a Book*

The candid story of how a planned Great Canadian Novel became a brand book instead, and Michael's fine with how that turned out. Landing an agent, levelling up the deal, surviving the editing trenches, and ending up on the shelves at Indigo, Chapters, Coles, Barnes & Noble. Plus the part nobody tells you: how authors market their book without losing their soul.



## **From Desk to Deep End**

*also delivered as Flash Sideways*

It's not always a flashback or a flash-forward — sometimes you need to flash sideways. A talk on non-linear careers built on a single engine: curiosity, not five-year plans. Position yourself next to decisions before you're qualified to make them; get a lot of what you want at the cost of a question; lead, follow, or get out of the way; go deep in your craft and sideways into everything next to it.

## **The Fine Art of Getting Sh\*t Done**

Less productivity theatre, more honest accounting. Why 91% of resolution-makers fail by Quitter's Day and what the other 9% do differently — habit loops you can rewire, target fixation you can use on purpose, and the "do one more than you think you can" principle Michael learned earning two black belts and running the Canadian Death Race twice.

## **BrandJitsu™: Move Your Brand From 'Meh' To Memorable**

*the world's cheesiest metaphor — a brand is an iceberg*

Most teams burn their hours above the waterline — logos, slogans, taglines — but the work that actually moves a brand from meh to memorable happens down where the angler fish and narwhals live. The keynote walks through that descent: codifying vision, values, and purpose to sequence your Brand DNA, then establishing the Brand Personality that makes it recognisable in the wild.

## **Building a Better Brand Story**

*lessons from Loose Moose Theatre*

Seven ingredients to a memorable brand story, taken from improv and Loose Moose Theatre — start positive, be obvious, embrace truth, build a platform, move the plot forward, find the tilt. Five considerations to apply them. Real-world campaign examples (My Viva Plan, Life by Mary, B2B manufacturing) showing how thesis / antithesis / synthesis turns a forgettable brand into one people remember and repeat.

## **Find, Shape, and Share Your Story**

*BrandJitsu™ workshop · half-day*

A four-hour workshop for founders, entrepreneurs, and senior leaders who need clarity around their brand's purpose, personality, and positioning. Not slogans — the core story at the heart of the business. Through guided exercises, discussion, and real-world examples, participants leave with a focused brand narrative they can use across strategy, marketing, sales, and internal communication.

## **PitchJitsu™: Opening Minds and Wallets**

The audience already wants to open their wallet for you — they're looking for the next big thing. You just need to open their mind first, with a memorable story. PitchJitsu™ is about the unglamorous half of pitch craft: preparation deeper than the deck, knowing what your audience actually wants before you walk in, and how to work an audience without performing at one.

## Give Your Story a Job

Dogs need jobs. So does your story. A working talk that uses live stagecraft to show how attention, timing, and restraint turn information into action. Twenty minutes. Five short stories. Five tools you keep. The same craft that holds a theatre can hold a boardroom, a regulator, or a room full of skeptics.

## The Creative Life

*for student audiences*

Michael speaks to students of all ages about creativity, curiosity, and the many different paths learning can take. Tailored to the age of the audience, the talk encourages students to stay curious, develop their voice, and trust that success doesn't follow just one path — even when their strengths don't look like everyone else's.

05 //

## Selected writing

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*A small selection from the archive. The full set lives at [michaeldargie.com/articles](https://michaeldargie.com/articles).*

### Midnight Miracle at Miracle Beach · Essay

[michaeldargie.com/articles/essays/midnight-miracle-at-miracle-beach](https://michaeldargie.com/articles/essays/midnight-miracle-at-miracle-beach)

### Wish You Were Here · Essay

[michaeldargie.com/articles/essays/wish-you-were-here](https://michaeldargie.com/articles/essays/wish-you-were-here)

### Accidental Starlord · Essay

[michaeldargie.com/articles/essays/accidental-starlord](https://michaeldargie.com/articles/essays/accidental-starlord)

### Adventures in Boracay · Five-part series

[michaeldargie.com/articles/adventures](https://michaeldargie.com/articles/adventures)

### Camp Covid · Eight-part serialised novella

[michaeldargie.com/articles/camp-covid](https://michaeldargie.com/articles/camp-covid)

### Of Gravity and Lampshades · Essay

[michaeldargie.com/articles/essays/of-gravity-and-lampshades](https://michaeldargie.com/articles/essays/of-gravity-and-lampshades)

### The Adventures of Hunch Nut · Essay

[michaeldargie.com/articles/essays/the-adventures-of-hunch-nut](https://michaeldargie.com/articles/essays/the-adventures-of-hunch-nut)

06 //

## Media & coverage

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### Podcasts

Shed Talk with Kevin Halliday — Episode 97 · 2025

#### ***Fueling Entrepreneurs — Founder, Author & Host Michael Dargie***

How podcasting and brand strategy fuel an entrepreneurial voice — Make More Creative, BrandJitsu™, and the long arc of RebelRebel.

// [YouTube](#)

// [iHeart](#)

Post Shift Podcast with Shawn Soole — #211 · 2026

## ***Post Shift Podcast LIVE! with Michael Dargie, BrandJitsu™***

A deep-dive on how brands are built, the philosophy behind BrandJitsu™, and practical applications for hospitality operators and founders.

// [YouTube](#)

// [Episode page](#)

Suits & Sneakers: Leadership Unfiltered · 2024

## ***Brand Jitsu Your Team with Michael Dargie***

A leadership-focused interview on BrandJitsu™ principles, storytelling, and how leaders build memorable teams and cultures.

// [Wave](#)

// [Apple Podcasts](#)

Better Human Dads · 2026

## ***Better Human Dads: Tell your kids you love them***

A short feature on being an intentional dad and saying the quiet parts out loud.

// [YouTube](#)

## **News & features**

CBC News — Calgary · 2021

### ***Inside the isolation hotel: Blogger writes about his experience and finds an unlikely friend in a desk lamp***

Reporting on the Camp Covid serial, written from inside Canada's mandatory quarantine hotel programme.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/covid-blog-hotel-self-isolation-1.5887574>

Global News — Calgary · 2021

### ***'Sign me up!' Calgary man staying in self-isolation hotel room calls it 'kind of fun'***

TV news segment featuring Michael's mid-quarantine dispatch, including the now-infamous desk lamp named Brad.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/7597681/calgary-coronavirus-self-isolation-hotel-experience/>

cSPACE Marda Loop · 2023

### ***MAKE MORE CREATIVE — The Dynamic Michael Dargie***

A profile of Michael and the agency, written for cSPACE's creative-community series.

<https://cspacemardaloop.com/cspace-creative-community/make-more-creative-dargie/>

# Headshots

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Studio portraits by Ben Laird, cleared for editorial press use. Each card has a hi-res original (8–10 MB) and a small web-ready variant. Please credit the photograph to Ben Laird; email [inquiries@MichaelDargie.com](mailto:inquiries@MichaelDargie.com) for commercial licensing.



## Vest, smiling

*Author bio, formal portrait, book-page profile.*

↓ [Hi-res JPG · 9.5 MB](#)

↓ [Lo-res JPG · 272 KB](#)



## Vest, glasses in hand

*Editorial features, magazine profiles, op-ed bylines.*

↓ [Hi-res JPG · 10 MB](#)

↓ [Lo-res JPG · 268 KB](#)



## RebelRebel tee, hands in pockets

*Podcast guest cards, lifestyle, RebelRebel coverage.*

↓ [Hi-res JPG · 8.7 MB](#)

↓ [Lo-res JPG · 132 KB](#)



## RebelRebel tee, arms crossed (1:1)

*Podcast cover art, social, square placements.*

↓ [Hi-res JPG · 10 MB · 1:1](#)

↓ [Mid-res JPG · 1.9 MB · 1:1](#)

↓ [Lo-res JPG · 112 KB · 1:1](#)

↓ [Hi-res JPG · 9.1 MB · full body](#)

## On the road

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Author-on-tour and book-launch photos for features, profiles, and event listings. Cleared for editorial use with credit; book-launch and tour photographs by Make More Creative.



### **Indigo bookstore — Canadian Authors display**

BrandJitsu™ on the Canadian Authors table at Indigo. Tour press, retail coverage, Canadian-authors features.

↓ [IMG 1130.jpg](#)

**BrandJitsu™ book launch — keynote** · Speaking, keynote, event listing.

↓ [mike\\_book\\_launch-26.jpg](#)

**Book signing, BrandJitsu™ launch** · Author profile, book press.

↓ [mike\\_book\\_launch-15.jpg](#)

**Baker's Books — Canadian Book Tour** · Tour coverage, indie bookstore press.

↓ [IMG\\_1471.jpg](#)

**BrandJitsu™ tour bike — the Next Page** · Tour coverage, motorcycle/literary mash-ups.

↓ [IMG\\_1791.jpg](#)

**Keynote with the BrandJitsu™ banner** · Speaker bio, keynote profile.

↓ [mike\\_book\\_launch-24.jpg](#)

**100+ signed copies for the Distinguished Gentleman's Ride** · Author personality, charity tie-ins, book press.

↓ [IMG\\_1844.jpg](#)

**Writer at rest** · Lifestyle, memoir/Bubbles & Blood press.

↓ [IMG\\_3687.jpg](#)

**On the road** · Lifestyle, adventure-leaning profiles.

↓ [IMG\\_0877.jpg](#)

**Helvetica weather** · Designer/creative-industry coverage.

↓ [IMG\\_1184.jpg](#)

# Contact

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## General & speaking

[inquiries@MichaelDargie.com](mailto:inquiries@MichaelDargie.com)

*Press inquiries, speaking, freelance, signed copies.*

## Book rights

**Sam Hiyate** · The Rights Factory

## Agency

Make More Creative

*Brand strategy, editorial, AI-integrated content.*

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## Studio

cSPACE Marda Loop

1721 29th Avenue SW, Studio 415

Calgary, Alberta T2T 6T7

## Elsewhere

- [Make More Creative](#)
- [RebelRebel Podcast](#)
- [BrandJitsu™ Book](#)

## Member of

- [The Writers' Union of Canada](#)
  - [Writers' Guild of Alberta](#)
  - [Alexandra Writers' Centre Society](#)
  - [Canadian Freelance Union \(Unifor Local 2040\)](#)
  - [Canadian Association of Stand-Up, Sketch & Improv Comedians](#)
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