

EPISODE 001

PROJECT POPEYES

IN CONVERSATION WITH

JB Hartford, Jones Knowles Ritchie

AND

David Fernandes, Popeyes and Restaurant Brands International Inc.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to The Follow-up, a weekly podcast that goes in depth into projects recently reviewed on Brand New featuring conversations with the designers, and sometimes their clients, uncovering the context, background and design decisions behind the work.

BRYONY GOMEZ-PALACIO

Hi, this is Bryony Gomez-Palacio and welcome to episode 1 of The Follow-up. Today we are following up on Popeyes, the fast-food chain taking not just America but the world, by storm with their immensely popular fried Chicken Sandwich and crispy, delicious, New Orleans-style menu. The project, designed by the New York office of Jones Knowles Ritchie, was posted on Brand New on June 1. You can pull it up on your browser at bit.ly/bnpodcast001 that is B I T dot L Y slash bnpodcast001.

Today we are joined by JB Hartford, Creative Director at Jones Knowles Ritchie and their client, David Fernandes, Director of Global Brand Marketing at Popeyes and parent company Restaurant Brands International Inc. In this conversation we go deeper into many subjects like Popeyes' goal of global expansion and how that informed many design decisions including the introduction of a new icon. We also go in detail into the development of a new brand pattern full of texture and character. And we uncover the secret ingredient that made this design work: Joy.

Now, let's listen in as Armin follows up with JB and David.

ARMIN VIT Thank you, JB and David for being here today, let's get right to it with the first question. How did the relationship between JKR and Popeyes start?

DAVID FERNANDES We started this project around almost two years ago in 2018. We were always excited about JKR's track record of, you know, great work and great clients, you know, secretly I always admired their work from, you know, Bud Light and Duncan. Um, and we were off on the sidelines kind of admiring their work and we really came to them, looking for the right kind of partner, the one that was really going to kind of see the potential in this brand as much as we did because back in 2018, I think Popeyes was still America's kind of best kept secret is what we like to say internally. And this was all before Chicken Sandwich and all that, and we really needed the right partner to help us kind of take this brand to the next level—'cause our aspirations is to make it a globally iconic brand at the end of the day.

ARMIN And how did you first come across JKR's work? You mentioned Bud Light, but that was like a few years ago. So how did you first get to know them, about them?

DAVID Yeah, I mean, for me looking at the awards that are given out in the design world JKR is a name that is often at the top of, of these, uh, judges lists. So that's always caught my attention, but at the same time, we have a lot of people internally at our organization that we're familiar with JKR's work and were asking us to speak to them.

ARMIN So JB, how about you when, so, uh, did you receive an email...?

JB HARTFORD Yeah, I think that David had mentioned earlier that, um, they kind of walked into our office asking to work with us and, um, I think we're quite blessed at JKR to be able to work with some American icons that might need a little bit of revitalization, a little bit of new breakfast, um, something a little bit more energetic to not only keep the history of the brand alive, but in bringing in new consumers, get people to notice them and bring in, um, a new audience. So Popeyes an American

icon. I'm from the South. I grew up with it. It is, um, vibrant and soulful. There's a joy to it. Um, we had an opportunity to take the icons that they have now and revitalize them and then build them new assets that hopefully will last for the next hundred years and inspire the next generation of designers when they walk into their room and their door with an opportunity like this.

ARMIN And so David, when you, um, when you first started the project where you, that you have a very clear idea of why you wanted to have in the end or was that informed from that initial meeting with JKR and thinking, oh, this could be much more, or this could go in a different way once that relationship started.

DAVID Yeah. I think we, we walked in there with a really clear idea of what we wanted. We weren't sure if we were going to be able to get it all at once and at the speed we needed it and what really was driving that is that for us, we've always had really big aspirations for this brand to take it globally. And our research was often telling us that while people, especially in the US love our products, you know, we have a, a cult following, the brand experience lagged behind the food. And we saw this gap as a big opportunity to elevate the brand experience, to match the quality of our food. So that's really kind of where this all started is that by changing the brand experience, we needed to start with that, you know, that DNA, which is the visual identity, the brand strategy that goes behind all that. And that's what we had in mind to start.

But I remember distinctly I walked into JKR, we showed them a slide with like pen things beyond that visual identity that we needed to overhaul things like uniforms, packaging, restaurant image—and I think that was really appealing to JKR to see like the, uh, the breadth of work that, you know, we were going to bring to the table beyond just one project.

ARMIN Yeah. So JB, when you first, when you saw those, uh, first slides in that,

uh, uh, meeting, what, what was your first impression? Was it like, where did you see the full potential from the beginning? Were you, uh, scared a little bit of, uh, the task at hand?

JB Never scared. I think this is a designer's dream, right? Uh, iconic brand walks in and says every touch point counts and that's quite important because then you realize that they understand the breadth brands can take in our world, in our minds, um, so when, what David's saying is it's not just a logo and an icon and a pattern, it's everything from where the brand shows up to the uniform, the digital platforms, the social platforms, the store experience, the swag that we get to create. And, um, so never scared of a project like that. Uh, everyone should be jealous of a project like this.

ARMIN Well, I think, uh, the whole design industry is jealous. So you are correct, but I, I think I, I would be scared, I think there's always something I've never, I mean, when not on our own that's UnderConsideration, but when I used to work at Pentagram, whenever there was a high profile, ah, client engagement, there was a little bit of a scary feeling, like I better not screw this off [JB laughs] in any way in a significant way, because there's always that, that a, that chance that might happen. Uh, but yeah, no, so it's good too that you go in a no holds barred, no fear, uh, at least, uh, you know, uh... At the beginning, was, did any fear set in, um, afterwards at some point?

JB No, I think what set in is once the Chicken Sandwich drops, the pressure really, you really felt the pressure to make sure you were delivering something that lived up to the product hype, right? So what David said is this food is delicious and flavorful and colorful. That we would better deliver that from an identity perspective, because otherwise we would fail. But hopefully I feel like we have delivered.

ARMIN So David, did you know, before, I mean, I'm guessing yes, but did you know, going into this, that the Chicken Sandwich was going to drop during the process? And was that part of the brief, say like, hey, this is going to come and we expect this to be, you know, have a sort of an

impact.

DAVID The, the Chicken Sandwich lead time, you know, this was a project that was two years in the making same with our own visual identity project, so at the very initial stages, like I knew there was a Chicken Sandwich coming. I had not tried it myself, we had not tested it, I had no idea that it was going to be the success it was going to be. So really the, the starting point was that we have this global expansion times and we want it to take this brand to the next level so that we can, um, achieve our goals of bringing this brand to markets all over the world. So, you know, at that time we were just talking about Brazil, but, you know, we've since then moved to Spain, to the Philippines, to China and having a new visual identity, something with fresh energy momentum to get to the brand was, was essential to sell it in, you know, and continue to bring it to new markets in the future.

ARMIN Right. And, uh, so you mentioned, uh, that you wanted, uh, someone that could take on the challenge, on the speed, uh, but it sounds like, you know, speed is relative. 'Cause this has been, you know, this was two years in the making, so, uh, can you talk us a little bit about the, kind of like the timeframe and what was driving that, you know, relative speed in your industry?

DAVID Yeah. So I think we, when we started, we want it to kind of do a little touch and go with, JKR not, uh, it wasn't the exact, you know, full on overhaul. So, uh, the first project we worked on with them was actually trying to solve an issue we were having in our first new international market opening for Brazil, which was essentially, uh, when you bring our, our logo, our brand to a new restaurant there in the market where no one's ever heard of Popeyes no one's ever seen Popeyes they had no idea what we served. You know, that we're a brand that is a, uh, an arbor of great fried chicken. And we really wanted to, to make that come across. So that's kind of where the first variation of the chicken icon came to life was actually a solve for this issue in Brazil. Um, but we loved it so much that we always knew that it was going to make

its way into the visual identity in some way, shape or form. But at that time it was just a, you know, an initial view for Brazil.

ARMIN That's interesting because I was going to ask about the chicken icon. So I think we'll jump on to that, just to keep on that subject. Um, because it seems that, uh, you know, compared... like a logo change, we sort of expect that. And in a way, the logo evolution wasn't that drastic, it kept some of the same bounciness, the same kind of like white structure, but then all of a sudden there's this, uh, you know, uh, very charming, endearing chicken icon that is, um, in a way all over the place, you know, it's on Instagram, it's at the bottom of the, of the website it's on the ordering system. Uh, so was there any hesitation to introduce that, uh, you know, at least, uh, once you tested it out for Brazil to bring that into the American market?

JB She, that icon is one of our favorite things about the system. Like David said, he tested us out to see if we could make that icon for the global expansion and her popularity down there really spread this enthusiasm and joy through the brands. We wanted to make sure that she stood at the center of our brands. She became that clear icon of what we're known for, which is chicken. Um, it is a quick icon that people understand, but that movement that dynamism and her, uh, her involvement with everything in the brand was the thing that we needed to push. And we got buy in on, right. It's one thing to have some things stoic in, in solid, but it's another thing that can move, and build, and grow with the brand.

So, we really love that we take our food seriously, but with, with her and our icon, we're able to have a little bit of fun, and a little bit of vibrancy, and joy. She's dynamic she's throughout our whole visual identity. Like you says, she's causing a little bit of mischief, right? So she's into music, she's into a marinade, she's into the delivery system. We put wheels on her, we put her in a bag, we put her on a serving tray. Uh, we put her in a trophy... and I think it's that unexpected joy

that we talk a lot about Popeyes owning. And she is an icon that really brings that to life.

ARMIN Now, uh, like in my mind, I keep referring to the icon as it, but you're very, like, you're very purposely, uh, calling, uh, it, Her, uh, and She. Does, does she have a name internally that you refer to or, or is that like, uh, out of the, or are you going to plead the Fifth on that one?

JB I might have to plead the Fifth on—

DAVID She does have a name...

ARMIN Ok, that's all we need to know.

DAVID She has a name, but it's internal right now. We're not at liberty yet to say what her name is.

ARMIN Makes sense. Is there a plan to eventually reveal that?

DAVID I wouldn't say we were going to make a big deal about like revealing the name, I think it's more that if questions are asked or we need to refer to Her at something, we we, she does have a name that we already use internally, it's just, we want to make sure it's protected.

ARMIN And that's wonderful. I think that you always find all these strange names to brand icons that you, um, that you had no idea that existed, but they just because they existed internally, and then some, someone at some point, someone like, I should put that in a, in a press release or somewhere like, oh, that's what that's called. Okay. Uh, so yeah, we'll, uh, we'll keep our eyes out for, uh, for, uh, the naming of the chicken.

DAVID And exactly as you described, that's what happened, you know, I, I referred to Her as something internally, and then it's just taken off and everyone calls her that and the official name, whether I meant it to be or not.

ARMIN That's wonderful. And it's funny because because then you can create a whole lore about how the name came to be and what it means,

and, uh, and build like a lot of, uh, backstory behind the name, but ah, but it's interesting that, yeah, just like, yeah, that's the name that came to mind when I saw Her, I saw Her and it stuck. Um, so, um, in terms of the logo, um, how did that process go? Was it from the, from the beginning, was it like little baby steps? Like we don't want to revolution or were you given more? Uh, and this is more of a question for JB, I guess, where you're giving him more free reign to explore whatever, and then you were reigned back in, or how did that go?

JB It's, it's one of the toughest things as a designer, when you have this iconic logo that resonates with so many people's hearts and, um, stories around their kitchen table with their family. And then, um, we're in the middle of a redesign. And what we needed to do is we needed to step back and say, where are we going to take this brand? And one of the things we wanted to do was, uh, grow the brand up, have the visual identity, actually look and stand for the quality of food. And when you look at the old logo, beautiful logo, quirky cartoony, the O's looked like their eggs. You know, it's a lot of characters, so you don't want to lose that character, but the brief is to modernize and make the brand relevant. So, um, we don't want to lose the iconicity of it.

So we worked with, um, a very dear friend of ours. His name is Ian Brignell, he is a world renowned typographer who's known for doing iconic wordmarks for other American icons, Budweiser, Burger King, Hershey's, Harvard. So he, Ian's an amazing partner, and what we did was we made sure that we kept the quirkiness in there, but then brought in a little bit of the elevated sophistication and the premium-ness we were looking for. So the baseline is now all even, um, the orange is very bright and vibrant, but there's a little bit of quirk. Uppercase, lowercase, you get a little bit of like the serifs coming off of the P's... And I think that through the partnership and actually, um, the openness for change from RBI and from the Popeyes team got us to a place where I think that we've made a new timeless, wordmark and icon that elevated the brand to the place that we wanted to take it.

ARMIN Yeah. Because I think one thing that's interesting is that something that I mentioned in the review of that, you know, for most people, for most consumers, like the change, no one's going to go like, Oh my God, they changed the Popeyes logo. For most people, the essence of the logo is still there. And I think that, you know, for, at a point where you're not looking to reinvent the brand or re-, you know, introduce a whole new menu, like, it makes a lot of sense to just go with something that modernizes, that makes the implementation of it at large scale, a lot easier, but still retain some of that, uh, you know, that, uh, what makes it recognizable.

DAVID Yeah. If I would add something it's that we didn't take this decision lightly. So we did do a lot of research to make sure, you know, there were no major risks for the change, especially as you were alluding to, you know, people don't want to think that the food is changing or they're, you know, the brand has changed with them if they're a loyal fan. And it was important for our research to show that maybe our loyal fans don't absolutely love the change, but they're not opposed to it. And at the same time, we found that our new logo, our new visual identity, was particularly attractive to people who don't frequent Popeyes often. And that's where a brand that's trying to grow for a brand that wants to reach new people, that was really important for us. So we kind of hit that sweet spot of being okay for our loyal fans, but really attractive to new people that we want to bring into our restaurants.

ARMIN Yeah. I think that's interesting when you think about the old logo, like, even though it wasn't a crazy logo, like the previous logo, the one from 10 years ago, like that one was out there. I think that hinted at something like you're either going to love this or hate it—like there wasn't a middle point. And then the last logo sort of, um, what's a segway into bigger, into making it feel less, you know, alien in a way or less, uh, intimidating, or that you had to buy into a certain, you know, quote unquote flavor. But I think this just really opened us up to, like, there was no, there's no visual hints that, you know, this could be a

wild ride you're about to get into when you try our fried chicken. Like, it seems more tempered to a general, a bigger audience.

DAVID Exactly. And a global one at that.

JB Which I think, if I can add to that, it might be a good seg- segway to talk about the pattern and how we ended up with the pattern, because like you said, we matured, we cleaned up maybe lost or not lost, but matured our logo. And one of our design principles was to make sure that we're balancing those bold graphics with a human touch. And that's where the pattern kind of, uh, was born from. And it was absolutely fun doing that pattern. It was, um, joyful. We keep saying that word, but it really was. And what's amazing is we have someone, um, on my design staff, his name is JP. He was, uh, raised in New Orleans. This is a once again a brand that was always at his kitchen table and this opportunity for him to draw and design these icons was a dream come true, 'cause he remembers walking the streets of New Orleans, understanding the flavor, the color, the kind of naivety of outsider art and the vibrancy of, um, all the graphics on the restaurants.

And so that's where the style came from, because if we didn't have that pattern, we would just be with a bold orange and white brands. But bringing in that pattern made sure that we balance that human touch with the bull graphics. It was, it's a celebration, right? Of the party that, um, Popeyes brings to you. Each one of those icons brings alive either food, or flavor... the language... there's some puns in there that are hilarious. Um, you know, Popeyes is known for Louisiana. Their Fleur De Lies is everywhere and that was on their old pack. But now our Fleur De Lies is made from a piece of fish and two shrimps, like that's hilarious, right? And drumsticks are actually used as drumsticks on a drum to evoke the music of New Orleans. And, um, Creole has a big... has teeth like an alligator in it. And if you look at all like the fun discovery elements, that's, speaks to that flavor, that the food brings also, the mixture of the combination, um, the magic that's

in all of, uh, the ingredients coming together is the same thing that's coming out in into life through that pattern.

And, um, you would think that it would have been difficult to, to align on what all of those meant, I think that it is a true design challenge to be able to get clarity of message in a small drawn image. And probably the only thing that we really struggled with was the 12-hour-marinate, but that's just a hard concept to get any way. Um, but it's in there. And, um, I think that we're really proud about the unapologetic use of it as well. Right? So it's on, um, our uniforms, it's in our packaging, it's on the Chicken Sandwich wrap it's, um, in our photography and it's on our menus, it's in their digital menus. It's it's uh, it's... I just go back to how I answered, you know, the question is it's fun. Right? So balancing that boldness of our logo and our wordmark with the hand drawn elements of our pattern.

ARMIN Yeah. That's—as you were, as you were talking about it, I was imagining, you know, the Popeyes logo, like, uh, kinda like the more straight man, or the straight person in this skit, you know, it's kinda like the chicken breast, or just the chicken thigh, or the chicken leg, like it's the core of the thing, but then you're putting all the spices, all the goodness through the pattern. And literally, you know, I don't know if it's because we were talking about the pattern or I was thinking about the chicken, but I just started salivating.

JB You're hungry.

ARMIN Yeah, you know, and like, I'm p—because I'm picturing the pattern as you were talking about it. And it's just funny how the pattern takes on the same crispness and flakiness of the picture of the chicken on top of it, it really works on, uh, on multiple levels, um, and kinda like a very instinctual and it just like appeals to your, um, you know, palette in a way that is sort of strange. Uh, but I'll stop rhapsodizing about, you know...

JB I might, I might, I might use in the future that our, our aligned work is in

representation of the chicken crust on our fried chicken. So I'll take that. I'll make sure I credit you though. I promise.

ARMIN Sounds good. Um, well, were there any, um, any things that were left on the cutting room floor for being too silly, too obscure, or was it just like, uh, you know, once you started, it was hard to put a stop to it just because it was so free and so joyful?

DAVID Man, I'm trying to think back, I don't think there was anything that was so outlandish that we just had to remove it. A lot of it was like things that we evolved that we liked, but you know, needed to adjust a little bit. But, um, I, I mean, going back to what you were saying JB, is something that I particularly loved about this pattern was those, the Easter Eggs that you, you know, you brought to the table, whether it's the drum sticks playing the drums—with the drums—or the fish, I call it the Fish De Lies... there's some, there's just so many points of discovery there that I think, you know, ultimately for me, what was important, it was that this packaging, uh, exudes joy, but also brings a smile to people's faces when, when, you know, they, they take the time to look at it because as JB said earlier, um, we, you know, are very design led when we think about how we approach our visual, our visual identity, our brand identity, and at the end of the day, um, every touch point counts, you know, every touch point sends a message to our guests about our brand. So we really, uh, those, those are the things I appreciate the most, those, those details, those moments of discovery.

ARMIN And this might be a touchy subject, and we don't have to get about the pro you know, the, you know, comparing one to the other, but, uh, the kind of like the hand drawn, uh, approach to the illustration, I think in the realms of fast food and chicken, I think, you know, one of the first things that I thought that came to mind was like, oh, the Chick-Fill-A, uh, in more chicken, uh, kinda like the splattery painted splattery hand drawn approach that they had. And like, I don't think people are going to confuse it, but was there any hesitation to go in that direction

and perhaps, you know, invite that sort of criticism from someone on Twitter.

DAVID At the end of the day, we were always benchmarking against the competition. So when you know, the first time we saw these, these hand drawn elements, you know, we did think, hey, you know, Chick-Fill-A that does have a, you know, uh, a hand drawn style of font, but I think, you know, for them it's more of a, you know, a campaign, you know, it's, it's about a few cows trying to convince people that they should eat more chicken, right? But for us, we're looking at this as, you know, this is bringing a lot more story colors, substance to our brand, because for example, the hand drawn pattern does say something about how we prepare our food by hand know with a lot of love and care, you know, there's a lot of attention to detail, it's written in a way that's, it's, it's fun, it's joyous. And it says a lot about where we come from. So, so that's, what's really important for me is that ultimately this is, it's all I think we can all agree that, you know, biting into fried chicken, you know, just makes you feel amazing no matter what else is going on in the world right now. And this pattern, this joy that's exuded coming from there really speaks to that.

ARMIN I almost imagined that little elements from the illustration are almost like, you know, waiting for a spinoff of their own, like, you know, everything like you could take one thing out of there and just make a t-shirt just for the one, you know, for the Fleur De Lies with the shrimp and the fish, you know, those things can take on a life on their own. And it's funny because you never know when something will strike a chord with someone, um, that's someone, might one day, might point something out and then that takes off. So I think it's interesting that, you know, there's a room for exploration in that one brand component.

DAVID Yeah, and I can tell you that some of the icons, um, have made it onto really cool t-shirts. I'm going to send you one Armin, of—

ARMIN Nice!

ARMIN —one like the chicken with like the sunglasses for example, is like this really cool shirt—we call it World Famous Chicken, it's like a celebrity chicken shirt. And it's a really cool, cool look to put on with under a blazer. [Laughter]

ARMIN [Laughter] Sounds great, I can't wait for it. Um, so in terms of the, you know, like speaking with things like that, like swag that's coming, what does the rollout look like? Because it's ah, you know, like even with the, when I show the project on Brand New, the packaging is still a render and like I'm dying to see that like a real photo of the thing with the shadow, you know, with like real light hitting it.

DAVID For us the, the key thing is that, you know, we could just turn on a switch and go put it in all our communications on digital social media, you know, overnight. But for us, we really wanted one of the most important touch points, the one that's very physical, it's very intimate with our guests is packaging. We wanted that to make its way and make a big presence in our restaurants. Um, before we, you know, really went all out with a rollout. So, you know, if we go back to last year, um, after we signed off on, you know, this, this visual identity, we got started on the packaging first and foremost, because that's a really long lead time type of, uh, implementation. Um, once that made it into the restaurants was towards the end of last year. We've kind of flipped the switch on all other touch points. So if you look at our website today, you look at our social media pages, the packaging and the restaurants, um, our new restaurant image around the world, the visual identity has been there. It's just that we wanted to start with the packaging first.

ARMIN And so speaking about the restaurant image around the world, I think both me and all the people in the comments were like, Oh my God, that Shanghai store. That is crazy. Good-looking uh, what, so what sort of the process behind the design of that store and, you know, when can we expect, if at all, to see some of those elements coming to the US market?

DAVID Yeah. So I think the first thing to keep in mind is that the Shanghai store is one of three just awesome designs we've come out with in the last 12 months. So coinciding with this whole visual identity overhaul in parallel, we were working on new restaurant image at the same time, you know, and marrying those two as well. And, uh, Shanghai was the most recent, uh, opening, which, um, I presume you saw in the news, and, um, it's probably the more premium of the group, but at the same time, we're really excited about our new US restaurant image, which you can see, like on my screen here, our European image, so we essentially have three different ones and the Shanghai one, again, being the more premium one, looks fantastic. I absolutely can't wait to visit it. I haven't been to it myself. Um, unfortunately cause of Corona. But I think the fans of—we have in China have already really sounded quite appealing because you look at the lines, they are down the street, you know, 400 people deep. Popeyes had quite a successful opening in China and it's very encouraging, uh, for the future of the market there.

ARMIN Yeah, definitely. And so speaking of the popularity, uh, not just in China, but in the US how do you prep? How do you set up the brand to expand and keep that same element of surprise?

DAVID Yeah. So I think I'm going to take a quote that actually JKR taught me, like when we first started this project, it was, I think it was, um, Oscar Wilde. We said like, right, "Be yourself, you know, everyone else is already taken". So we always have to stay true to who we are, no matter how big we get, how far we expand around the world. You know, at the end of the day, we, you know, we are a brand that was born out of Louisiana. Our origin story influences everything we do as a brand, as you've seen with our visual identity, from our menu to our communications, all the food that we put out to the world is always has a little bit of a Louisiana flare or inspiration. So that's really, the key for me is, um, you know, being a great brand has to start with a great product foundation.

DAVID So even before Chicken Sandwich and all the hype, you know, we've always had fantastic food, maybe people just didn't know. Um, and I think the sandwich has changed the game for us because it's allowed us to, to put Popeyes into people's hands that have never had it before, who maybe had never ventured out or tried it, but now not only are they trying our Chicken Sandwich, but they're discovering all the other great menu items we have, and it's really just changed the game for us. Um, and we're really excited about where this brand can go now that we're kind of firing on all cylinders. You know, we've always had this great product foundation, but we've elevated our brand experience to meet that. And I think the sky's the limit for this brand globally. And I, and like I said, at the beginning, I want this to be a globally iconic brand, and I think JKR has helped us get to the, to the starting point for that. And now let's see where it goes.

ARMIN Yeah. Great. I think there's a really strong foundation here to build on. Um, and so JB, are you, is JKR still involved in pushing this forward or is it now up to Popeyes to take it to, to the finish line?

JB Well, I think like David said, it's been a two year relationship from process with us just for this one project. And I mean, you're very familiar with how long it takes for the world to see the work that's been happening behind the curtains. And Jake Harris is still continuing on our relationship with Popeyes. It has passed onto another creative team that David is working with, ah, super talented, we've been doing a lot of, um, in-store photography. We've done it behind the scenes, uh, food prep, photo shoot, and we have done some merchandising work for them. So it's quite exciting that we've finished this one project that we're talking about now, but the relationship continues. And David, I have to say that my heart fluttered a little bit, when you spoke to the Oscar Wilde quote, because I really feel that this has been you and your team have been such a great collaborators and team members that it's, uh, it's a beautiful relationship that we continue to build., and we continue to grow just beyond this one thing you're seeing right here. So hopefully we could be doing another one of these, um, in the

next year we're, we're talking about the next big thing that we're doing with Popeyes.

ARMIN It sounded like a match made in fried chicken heaven.

JB [Laughter] I love that.

ARMIN Yeah. So I think on that note, uh, those are all the questions that I had. I think we've touched on a lot of great subjects and I think it's been great to hear about just the, kinda like the energy and the, uh, you know, the one word that I didn't expect to hear today and not for any reason in particular, but the joy, you know, I think that is very, that comes across, you know, I hadn't thought about it when I wrote their review, but I think now that you mentioned it, there, there is an evident sense of joy, not just in the graphic, but in the product. I think that's been the most interesting part of this conversation. Just like listening to the joy behind the, uh, kinda like the engine that made the brand happen.

JB To that point. You know, Popeyes is a combination of blend of many things. It's vibrant, it's colorful, it's flavorful, and all of that brings joy to you. So, um, I'm glad that we got to talk to you today about this. So you got to see a little bit of an inside peek, into the minds behind the great work that we did together.

DAVID Yeah. Thanks so much for having it was a, this was fun. I really appreciated being able to, to kind of collaborate with, with you JB on this call and, and, you know, talk about all the amazing work that has come out in the last year. It's just, it's exciting to just look back and see where we, where we were, and you know, where we are right now. And yeah, one of my favorite things to do is just to go on Instagram and look at like the tag photos of our brand and see, you know, how Instagram worthy this visual identity has become, and people just embracing it and posing with our packaging and our, and our brand.

It's just, it's such a, it's such a, such a great gift to, to have this and for, for our brand today.

ARMIN Well, uh, JB and David, thank you so much for, uh, joining me in Brand New's inaugural, The Follow-up podcast, and I know where I'm having dinner tonight. Thank you so much.

JB Thank you.

DAVID Thanks everyone.

BRYONY Flavor. Joy. Texture. A drawing of a chicken sitting inside 12-hour-marinate. That was some wonderful insight into how this design came to be and how the great relationship between JKR and Popeyes resulted in a fun and exciting new brand for them.

A big thank you once again to JB and David and to you for being one of the first subscribers to the Follow-up. Today, thanks for listening. Until next time, we'll be here, we hope you'll be there.