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Nationality German, American

## Mission

As a designer and design educator, I empathize on understanding the true potential of brands, design, and innovation while advocating for empathy on cultural and societal levels. Empowered by many years of consulting for global businesses and teaching for over two decades, I've gained profound insights into the economic and cultural forces driving global businesses and shaping future generations. I advocate for a transformative shift from a market-centric mindset towards a sustainable, human-centered approach, crucial in today's landscape of disruptive change. This transformation requires nurturing empathy, sparking creativity, and fostering collaboration across diverse realms.

My deep-rooted commitment lies in uncovering connections between individuals and companies, driving my explorations across the globe and diverse cultural experiences.

## Education

- 2023 **Hyper Island and The Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies**  
Strategize like a Futurist Course, certificate of completion, online
- 2008-2009 **Harvard Business School, Cambridge**  
Executive Education Program for Leadership Development (PLD)
- 2002 **Columbia University, New York**  
Marketing & Marketing Management Intensive
- 1994-1996 **Royal College of Art, London**  
MA RCA Industrial Design
- 1991-1994 **Hochschule für bildende Künste, Hamburg**  
Bachelor Industrial Design
- 1986-1989 **Apprenticeship in Jewellery & Silversmithing**  
Fachschule für Glas und Schmuck, Kaufbeuren  
Journeyman's certificate

## Professional Practice

- 2019 - **MUCNYC / NYCMUC, New York and Munich**  
The design studio was founded in 2019 in collaboration with the designer Michael Geldmacher. Our collaboration builds on our knowledge, insight and experience in different fields and brings our creative power, international perspective and intercultural education to every design project. MUCNYC strives to create honest, responsible and compelling design solutions for products, systems, and experiences.

- 2010 - **KubaneK Design +, New York and Munich**  
 KubaneK Design is a product design office. We develop meaningful collaborations with clients who are devoted to the integration of design and business. Working with clients, we marry the needs of business and consumers with thoughtful design thinking. We assemble creative teams of highly skilled experts tailored to the need of each project. Our international network enables projects across borders.
- 2000-2010 **Associate Partner, Pentagram Design Inc., London**  
 Worked with partner Daniel Weil on design and brand strategy, market trends and competitive analysis, user research and design development with clients United Airlines, Quam (Group 3G Telecommunication), Benetton and many others. Collaborated with cross functional teams on the client side on a wide range of projects that included all aspects of the design process: R&D, design strategy, material sourcing, overseeing prototyping and manufacturing, project management and client meetings.
- 2004-2005 **Design Consultant, Pier Studio (BMW Group), New York**  
 Carried out a global market trend & competitive analysis comparing different design disciplines in the Advanced Design Studio of BMW. Created creative tools to lead and inspire in-house designers in the Munich BMW headquarters.
- 2000-2000 **Senior Designer, FM Design, London**  
 Led a small team of designers to develop a new office furniture system for Kolleksiyon, from ideation to implementation. Trend study and design concepts for Samsonite.
- 1997-2000 **Senior Designer, Olive 1:1, New York**  
 Worked directly with principal Ayse Birsal to develop RESOLVE, an award winning integrated furniture system for Hermann Miller, from ideation to production. Worked closely with the client, helped with planning, research, engineering, CMF, and marketing. Project stages included: extensive user research and competitive analysis; preparing design intent drawings, presentations materials and overseeing Alpha and Beta testing, prototypes, first batch manufacturing and product introduction during NEOCON, Chicago in 1999. Further clients, see selected projects.
- 1995-1997 **Freelance designer, Sebastian Bergne, Jane Dillon Studio, Rapid Eye Movies, MTV**
- 1992-1994 **Freelance designer, Ulrike Brandt Light Planning, Hamburg**
- 1989-1991 **Jewelry Design Studio, Munich**

## Academia

Teaching provides me with the opportunity to influence and shape future design education and to address the designers' role in today's changing world. As a design educator, I teach the core qualities of the design process: collaboration and communication, a capacity for empathy, the importance of research and the integration of different disciplines, cultures, and genders. I have been honored to initiate many student design teams that bring together learning and commerce in collaboration with industry partners and NGOs including No Kid Hungry, Women for Women International, The Sierra Club, The Swedish House of Form, Target, Riedel Glassworks, Sotheby's, the NYC Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunities, and others. In addition to teaching, projects include curriculum development, securing funding, budgeting, sponsorships, and licensing agreements.

- 2022 - **Senior Lecturer of Management & Organizations, Part Time Faculty**  
**SC Johnson Graduate School of Management and the SC Johnson College of Business**  
Design Thinking, Design and Innovation
- 2020 - 2022 **Visiting Senior Lecturer, Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute, New York**  
**Visiting Senior Lecturer, SC Johnson Graduate School of Management**  
Design Thinking, Design and Innovation
- 2019 – 2021 **Akademie Faber Castell, Germany**  
Advisory, conception, and curriculum development for a new master's program in Creative Direction.
- 2004 - 2019 **Adjunct Assistance Professor, Part Time Lecturer, Part Time Faculty**  
**Parsons School of Design, The New School, New York**  
Product Design; Design & Management; Integrated Design Curriculum; Design Lab, Foundation; Intensive Summer Program Strategic Design Management and Product Design
- 2017- 2018 **The Global Executive Master of Science in Strategic Design & Management, Integrative Studio, Parsons School of Design, Paris**  
The GEM program responds to the major restructuring of developed and emerging economies worldwide incorporating design thinking, service design, and sustainability frameworks. Designed with the flexibility needed for executives with fulltime jobs, this program offers a mix of intensive sessions in Paris, New York, and Shanghai and interactive online sessions. Seminar courses are Strategic Design and Management in New Economies, Designing and Implementing Sustainable Business Models, Managing Creative Projects and Teams, Design Innovation and Leadership, Regulatory and Ethical Contexts, and New Design Firms. The Integrative Studio builds on the culmination of all learning in other courses. Collaborating with a real client, students are exposed to the variety of ways that design functions in business contexts.
- 2017 **Business by Design: Using a Designer's Mindset to Innovate & Lead,**  
**Cornell SC Johnson College of Business**  
A weekend intensive for MBA students to explore the intersection between business and design by answering the following questions: What makes designers so effective at creative problem solving, opportunity finding and innovation? How can businesspeople, social entrepreneurs, and leaders apply design strategies to their work to make it more integrated and collaborative? What can we learn from traditional design skills such as visualization and storytelling? How can we shift from a 20th century, market-based perspective to a more sustainable, human-centered approach appropriate to this century's challenges?

- 2014 **Leeds Munich Global Experience program, Leeds School of Business School, UCB**  
A one-week intensive design challenge, where students worked with a Colorado based start-up company planning to expand their business into Germany. Carrying out intensive field work and learning about Design Thinking in action from several different renowned design organizations in Munich. Students were exposed to the variety of ways that design functions in business contexts and cultural settings.
- 2007 - **Teaching & Workshops** at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York; Konstfack University, Stockholm; Musashino University, Tokyo; University of Art, Craft and Design in Prague; Lund University, School of Industrial Design, Sweden; Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Stuttgart; Central Academy of Art (CAFA) in Beijing, China; Central Saint Martin's, London; University of Technology (UTS), Sydney; Rhode Island School of Design (RISD); FH Joanneum Graz, Austria.
- 2005-2006 **Adjunct Associate Professor, Industrial Design, Pratt Institute, New York**
- 2005 **Instructor, Columbia Business School and Parsons The New School of Design, New York**  
Joint course instructor, "The Design and Marketing of Luxury Products."
- 2002-2004 **Contract Professor, Industrial Design, Free University of Art and Design, Bolzano, Italy**

### **Design Juries**

Juror for the Industrial Design Society of America awards from 2009-2010, the Australian International Design Awards in 2010 and 2018 and the IF 2016 and the 2023 student awards and other design competitions. Ambassador for Good Design Australia since 2020.

### **Publications**

2021 Shaping the Futures by Design, MCBW Creative Book, interview.  
2019 Crystal Clear, Rhode Island School of Design, publication  
2012 Vitamin Green, Phaidon, contributor  
2010 Fast Company Online: The Venice Architecture Biennale, contributor

### **Talks**

2023 The Design Leadership Podcast: This is a Prototype with Douglas Powell  
2021 Munich Creative Business Week (Germany): 'Ready to thrive in a VUCCA World', panelist  
2021 Lund University (Denmark), guest speaker  
2019 Rhode Island School of Design (USA), RISD'ID lecture-series  
2015 Munich Creative Business Week (Germany), speaker  
2012 Lund University (Denmark), guest talk  
2011 Rhode Island School of Design (USA): IDSA Women in Design, guest talk  
2010 Objeto Brasil & FIEPR (Brazil), speaker series

## **Selected Clients & Projects**

### **Studio MUCNYC /MUCNYC**

Our primary focus centers on brand extension, growth strategy, contract furniture, and the exploration of applying sustainable materials and applications.

Miller Knoll (USA)

Steelcase (USA)

Stylex Furniture (USA)

HBF Furniture (USA)

Narbutas (Lithuania)

MDF Italia (Italy)

Fameg (Polen)

Adal (Japan)

Nachtmann (Germany)

Spiegelau (Germany)

### **Studio Kubanek Design +**

Maharam Textiles (USA), POS development

Central Saint Martin (UK), London & Wanted Design NY exhibition design, project management

Sansa Corporation (USA), product development & strategy

Pentagram (UK), Red Tree Documentary by Marina Willer, assistant art director

OSU, Wexner James Cancer Hospital (USA), research and strategic development for patient experience

Riedel Glassworks (Austria), brand development and trade fair exhibition design, Austria

Spiegelau (Germany), brand strategy, product development and art direction

Nachtmann (Germany) brand strategy, product development and art direction, Germany

### **Pentagram Design, London/ New York**

Benetton (Italy), design and implementation of new labeling system

Coca Cola & Cargill (USA), brand strategy & packaging design for new sweetener 'Truvia'

Freudenberg (Germany), corporate design and product development

Quam, Group 3G Telecommunication (Finland/Spain), store design and POS development

United Airlines (USA), brand strategy, market trends & competitive analysis,

product development and design implementation across customer touch points

### **Pier Studio BMW, New York**

Global market trend & competitive analysis

### **FM Design, London**

Kolleksiyon (Turkey), office furniture concept

Samsonite (Belgium), trend forecasting

### **Olive 1:1, New York**

Authentic GmbH (USA), trade fair design

Le Parker Meridien Hotel (New York), room service and room accessories design

Herman Miller Inc., RESOLVE office system, all-inclusive design development