

DEB KAPLAN TONG

Human Centered Design Researcher | Leverage Empathetic Insights for Innovative Client Experience

Summary

- **People-Centered Research and Design:** Understand needs and motivations of people and communities. Synthesize human-centered insights, research, and visual design into creative solutions. Skilled inquiry focused on asking the right questions and analyzing existing systems. Use comprehension of global trends and how they affect human motivations.
- **Strategic Problem Solving:** Integrate patterns and information, human, visual, and global, to design imaginative solutions. Find and frame new project opportunities. Define and resolve critical challenges individually and in team setting. Provide detailed process mapping of complex systems.
- **Story Telling and Visual Communication:** Employ empathetic listening for collaborative results. Create tools to support understanding, assimilation, and translation of insights. Integrate research and patterns into effective presentations.
- **Team Leadership:** Guide and influence team members with expertise and eloquence. Adapt to different work environments, projects, and multi-disciplinary groups. Collaborate with stakeholders to support strategic business purposes.

Accomplishments

- Created color design role for kids' tees business, including structure, process, tools, and design (over 130 styles per season). Owned design projects amongst numerous other business partners, leading to sales over \$50M, with color breadth expansion recognized as key driver in 33%+ sales for one season.
- Led consumer / trend research for tees and apparel businesses, resulting in product bookings over 223K units and global sales over \$100M.
- Increased sales over 40% by conducting consumer, market, and product research in multiple cities (domestic and international), leading to better understanding of consumers' needs, and creation of trend right product.
- Created vision for brand launch of basketball socks for all 30 NBA teams, collaborating with NBA and multi-disciplinary design, product creation, and merchandising teams.
- Founded apparel line and led design, production, sourcing, marketing, and sales. Sold product in numerous NYC boutiques and select boutiques internationally. Brand garnered press in publications such as WeAr, Frankie, and Lucky Magazines. Nominated as best new designer finalist by Daily Candy.

Experience

- **Nike, Beaverton, OR 2014 - 2021**
Color Researcher+Designer- Global Kids Tees and Apparel 2017 - 2021
Conducted research for consumer experience and product development with multiple populations, nationally and internationally. Effectively presented research findings to large audiences of key stakeholders. Created role of color design in tee's- managing calendar, process and product creation. Led salability discussions with strategic business partners to sell in trend right product every season.

Contact

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Expertise

Research
Concept Testing
Journey Mapping
Focus Groups
User Persona's
Strategic Planning
Project Management
Process Improvement
Product Launch
Trend Research/Forecasting
Graphic Design
Information Design
Visual Presentation Creation

Education & Professional Development

Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA)
Integrated Design,
Parsons School of Design,
New York, NY
Chase Honors Society

Select Nike-sponsored Trainings

Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace, Gallup Strengths Finders, Adobe Creative Cloud Continuing Education

NIKE (Continued)

- **Color Research+Designer, Global Socks 2014 - 2017**

Led discussions with NBA and strategic business stakeholders as primary color partner for brand product launch. Interviewed basketball consumers and created journey maps/personna's to understand needs. Conducted research for consumer and product with multiple populations, nationally and internationally. Effectively presented research findings to large audiences of key stakeholders.

- **Print and Pattern Designer, Swimwear 2013**

Designed and developed textile prints and color for men's, women's, and kids' swimwear. Evaluated market trends to ensure print story salability. Collaborated with cross-functional team of merchandisers, developers, designers, and product managers.

- **FREELANCE PRINT AND PATTERN DESIGNER AND ILLUSTRATOR, Portland, OR 2012 - 2014**

Ran freelance business working with multiple clients (5 Points Graphics, Isoude, Kroger, Laundry Studio) to create graphics for women's and kids' apparel lines.

- **JOAN SHERMAN ARTS, New York, NY 2010 - 2012**

Textile Designer

Created textile repeats and colorways for home goods using artists' original paintings. Managed fabric library and worked closely with fabric printers to ensure textile quality.

- **DEATH BY DRONE, Brooklyn, NY 2008 - 2010**

Founder / Owner of Women's Apparel Business

Designed, sold, marketed, and produced apparel line. Garnered sales and press both nationally and internationally.

- **DRU NY SHOES, New York, NY 2006 - 2008**

Design Assistant and Shipping Manager

Helped founding designer with shoe design, created promotional materials, and worked at sales events. Managed inventory and all product shipments. Worked closely with warehouses and FedEx.

Software and Tools

Adobe: Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign

Collaboration: Miro

Microsoft: Excel, Word, Sharepoint, Powerpoint

Apple: Keynote, Pages

Google: Sheets, Slides, Drive, Calendar

Community Participation

Volunteer Positions:

Portland Audubon Society-

select events and sales

Raphael House Portland-

holiday gift set-up

With Love Portland-

holiday gift set-up

About Me

I am a collaborator and connector who loves to observe, empathize and help. I pride myself on being able to strike up a meaningful conversation and find connection anywhere in the world, with anyone. The more different from me the better. My upbringing in the New York City area gave me the base of finding comfort in diversity. I also find great value in stillness and feel calmest on the yoga mat or in the forest. My top 3 meaningful words- Wonder
Empathy
Equality