

Media Information
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The process inventor: Laura Robin.

Interview with Laura Robin, Director of Designworks' Los Angeles Studio.



Munich – December, 2019. Laura Robin is Director of Designworks' Los Angeles Studio. She has worked for Designworks in several areas and leading positions for many years, growing new practices and guiding the convergence of disciplines. With Laura's hybrid background in computational graphics and design strategy, her work has often been at the edge of new process inventions. Laura is a strong driving force behind the role of design as an influencer in future business strategies. Today she leads a team of 50+ creatives and strategists in Newbury Park, California.

As a passionate thinker, before joining Designworks, Laura taught many years at Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, consulting on the Graduate level curriculum in Digital Media Practices. In addition she has won several esteemed design awards.

What is the future of mobility and what is Designworks' role in it?

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Robin: To design for the ‘future of mobility’ is to design for disruption. There is an explosion of new enabling technology, resulting in products and services that have, until now, been the things of dreams. From on-demand air taxis to cargo drones, from 300mph Hyperloop capsules to EV charging services, the degree of change, newness and complexity is ever increasing. Designworks’ role in this space is to architect the systems which support our growing appetites for flexibility, freedom and premium mobility experiences in this dynamic landscape.

With Designworks studios across the globe, what is the specific focus of the Los Angeles studio you represent?

Robin: Designworks Los Angeles Studio leverages its Californian roots – traditionally a place of lifestyle experimentation and openness, the LA area is now at the vanguard of urban mobility innovation. We learn from being at the center of emerging mobility trends and have an active lab culture to prototype the future, with our city as a backdrop.

Where do you see Designworks in the future and what sort of things are you keen to encourage as director of the studio?

Robin: The Designworks of the future is a constant-learning lab. I see a vibrant design culture, fueled by experiments in physical/digital convergence. The need for “natural interfaces” that manage the human relationships with robots, intelligent assistants, or simply dynamic information will only grow. How we maintain our humanity, and design for our senses, our morals and ethics – these will be the important questions for design in the digital age.

What is your design ethos? What sources of inspiration for the field of design should we use more in the future?

Robin: Good design is meaningful. To be meaningful, design considers who it’s for and the context it will be used in. It’s inherently human-centered. Designing for the future places an imperative on foresight. We are working hard on finding the emerging phenomena, attitudes and behaviors to sketch a future context snapshot. While the

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facets of the future shift and change, a constant for good design is the requirement that the solution is emotionally resonant for its recipient.

What makes Designworks unique?

Robin: Designworks is unlike other design agencies because we are a design culture tooled for systems. We have a highly diverse suite of services that can both stand alone or converge for large, multi-disciplinary projects. We architect future visions, and have the skills to bring them to life. Our unique approach of future visioning and back-casting to today's needs ensures we consult our clients in a future-proof and holistic way.

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Designworks

Designworks is the design innovation studio for BMW Group. As an independent studio, Designworks stimulates ambitious visions of the future through practical design strategies and explorations. It pushes future experiences that are as relevant and ambitious as possible.

Designworks is 'the architect of future' – designing for BMW Group and other partners holistic systems that impact and improve the world we live in.

With three global studios, Designworks is a powerful tool supporting the BMW Group to be at the very forefront of design, technology and innovation.

The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility

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services. The BMW Group production network comprises 31 production and assembly facilities in 15 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2018, the BMW Group sold over 2,490,000 passenger vehicles and more than 165,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2018 was € 9.815 billion on revenues amounting to € 97.480 billion. As of 31 December 2018, the BMW Group had a workforce of 134,682 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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