



ELIZABETH SALONEN

Elizabeth Salonen was born in Ontario, Canada in 1981. Salonen's design studies include a degree in Industrial Design from the College for Creative Studies in Detroit, and a term of study at the Aalto University School of Art and Design, Helsinki.

Relocating to Helsinki in 2005, Salonen founded Mottoform, a design consultancy, and has worked on projects for prominent Finnish and international brands. Salonen's work ranges from sport to tableware, furniture to footwear, graphic to fashion. Recent work includes the design of Suunto Lumi – the first women-specific outdoor sports watch, which received both a Red Dot Design Award (2008), and an iF Design Award (2009). In 2008 Salonen launched Helsinki Remade – a collection of hand-screened vintage textiles inspired by Helsinki's Art Nouveau architecture. Salonen's pendant lights, Annabell and Libi were launched by Keraplaat at Habitare 09, and exhibited at the Straightforward New Finnish Design Event in New York during the Meatpacking District Design Week '10. More recently, Salonen collaborated with Suunto on the design of the new M-Series, a range of heart-rate monitoring fitness watches. Salonen also designed four new pendant lights for Keraplast for Habitare '10.

Prior to this, Salonen worked at Ford Motor Company where she worked as an advanced color and material designer on concept vehicles, and on brand strategy and consumer trends. Her work with Ford helped create brand visibility with bold use of color, innovative materials, and playful graphics as applied to the interior of the SYNUS vehicle, exhibited at the 2005 North American International Auto Show.

Growing up with a Finnish father and a designer mother, Salonen was surrounded by Finnish culture and design classics. Nordic influences in her work can be seen with iconic forms, bold color, graphics, and a desire to push the limits with materials and manufacturing processes.

For Salonen, inspiration comes from the small things in everyday life – a new ingredient, an artifact, people and their stories, water, motion. She enjoys designing products that people need and use everyday. "When I'm in a different country, a different culture, I observe things through a different lens. Everyday rituals can be surprisingly new. I often try to recreate that feeling in my designs – to give the product a personality, a surprise, or a new perspective." As to the future, "the sustainable, environmental aspect of design needs to be addressed in order to preserve the ecological future of this planet."

From mass production to limited edition, Salonen will be designing watches one day and hand-screening graphics on vintage textiles the next. "We're flexible, inventive and resourceful."