



ELIZABETH SALONEN

Born in Canada in 1981, Elizabeth Salonen is an industrial designer producing work in a variety of media that combines the handmade and the mass produced, the traditional and modern, the local and global. 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 in Helsinki.

Relocating to Helsinki in 2005, Salonen founded Mottoform design studio, and has worked on projects for prominent Finnish and international brands. Salonen's work spans product, furniture lighting, textile and graphic design.

Her 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). Among other projects with Suunto, Salonen has collaborated on the design of the M-Series heart rate monitoring fitness watches (2010), and the heart rate Comfort Belt.

In 2008 Salonen launched Helsinki Remade – a collection of hand-screened vintage textiles inspired by Helsinki's Art Nouveau architecture – and in 2011 Helsinki Remade was included in the exhibition, Finland in Cheongju International Craft Biennale in South Korea.

In 2009, Keraplast launched Salonen's first pendant lights, Annabell and Libi, at Habitare 09. The lights were also exhibited at the Straightforward New Finnish Design Event in New York, 2010. More recently, Salonen designed the pendant lights, Lisabell, Kiruna, Luoto and Kopernikus for Keraplast for Habitare 2010 and 2011.

Currently, Salonen is designing textiles for Vallila Interior, a well-known Finnish company specializing in home décor textiles. For 2011, her first collection of prints – Sophia, Briittaa Liisa and Margaret – was based on a romantic theme. The 2012 collection is inspired by her local surroundings and includes Punavuori, Viiskulma, Huvilakatu and Julieta. In addition, Salonen is currently pursuing furniture and houseware designs.

Prior to her work in Finland, Salonen was employed 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 accomplishments at Ford helped create brand visibility with bold use of color, innovative materials, and simple typography 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 everyday things in life – a new ingredient, an artifact, people and their stories. She enjoys designing products for everyday use. "When I'm in a different culture, I see things through a different lens. Everyday rituals can be surprisingly new. I like 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."