

Kassandra Huynh is a biodesigner and creative consultant based in the Berlin area with broad experience in nature-inspired sustainable innovation. Her practice is a focused exploration on how the built environment, particularly spatial design, can expand our connection to nature, heritage, and technology. With Vietnamese and Hmong roots (indigenous group in SE Asia), it's important to Kassandra to design for underrepresented social communities like her own.

She's also passionate about design for a proactive and regenerative future. Kassandra designs beautiful objects, visual concepts, virtual experiences, immersive spaces and aesthetic interventions, with capacity for strategic consultancy and creative oversight.

She has been running her own studio practice since 2013 for clients in the fields of design, innovation, sustainability and social impact. In 2020, she co-founded the speculative design collective, Neonature. Kassandra holds a BFA in Furniture Design, a MS in Biomimicry and professional certifications in human-centered design and sustainable innovation. She is engaged as a mentor and educator at the non-profit, start-up and university levels.

EDUCATION

2019 Surface Pattern & Textile Design Continuing Education, Textile Design Lab, Colorado, USA

2018 Biomimicry Professional Certification, Biomimicry 3.8, Montana, USA

A cross-generational, multidisciplinary cohort of 18. Leadership training involved navigating Biomimicry Thinking in product, process and systems challenge space with local partners in the cultural, sustainable and commercial sectors. Field immersions in North and Central America engaged endemic biomes, flora, fauna.

2018 Master of Science in Biomimicry, Arizona State University, Arizona, USA

A cross-disciplinary online program (design, engineering, business, science) with a holistic approach to nature-inspired sustainable innovation (emulate, ethos, reconnect). Projects consisted of individual and industry based collaboration to research and translate biomimetic strategies from scientific literature into the R&D application space.

2017 Advanced Design Thinking Certification, Hasso Plattner Institute - School of Design Thinking, Potsdam, Germany

An international, interdisciplinary client-based program to hone in skills for envisioning and refining human-centered design research: gathering user insights, unmet needs, desires, performance benefits, brand values, business opportunities, macro trends and technology opportunities into strategic user experience stories and solutions.

2016 Cradle to Cradle Product Design Certification, C2C Products Institute, California, USA

Learned to apply Circular Economy Principles and eco-material options for reuse, repair and disassembly.

2014 Circular Design Course, Technical University - Delft, Netherlands

2013 BFA Furniture and Product Design, Minneapolis College of Art & Design, Minnesota, USA

An undergraduate program for building a solid foundation in experimental, handmade, bespoke furniture and product design. Trained in traditional and modern methodologies. Strong emphasis in conceptualization, rapid ideation, and prototyping to effectively communicate designs for private and commercial interior industry.

Introduction to Sustainable Design Course, MCAD - MA in Sustainable Design, Minnesota, USA

Study Abroad, The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Architecture & Conservation, Copenhagen, Denmark

Education in Scandinavian design and architecture, wood craft, local culture and modern influence. Traveled across Denmark, Sweden, and Finland to engage with renown landmarks, studios, companies and manufacturers. Developed Bøje chair design inspired by traditional methods and Scandinavian icon Alvar Aalto's renown steam bent technique.

2012 Study Abroad, Bauhaus University, Weimar, Germany

Education in product and lighting design, origami, graphic & type design. Developed a light for production and exhibition.

2010 Print Making, Ceramics Sculpture and Hmong Cultural Studies, Concordia University, Minnesota, USA

DESIGN PRACTICE

2013-present Studio Kassandra Huynh, bespoke visual concepts, graphics, products and spatial designs

Work includes visual concepts and narratives, creative consultancy, 2D & 3D illustration, graphic design, decorative and experimental objects – spatial, experiential interventions, speculative designs, biodesign, art and trend research.

2016-present Life-Centered Design Consultant, sustainable and social innovation impact strategies

Independent contractor: user-experience design, human-centered design thinking, nature-inspired sustainable design (biophilia, circular economy, biomimicry, traditional ecological design, systems thinking). Strategic coaching, outdoor and remote workshops, design sprints, visioning, field research, journey and systems mapping.

2019-2020 Freelance Surface Pattern & Textile Designer, Pattern Observer Studio, Colorado, USA

2016-2018 Biomimicry Expert & Community Weaver, Biomimicry Germany NGO & Academy, Berlin, Germany

Provided mentoring and consulting to local non-profit organizations and academic institutions to incorporate biodesign principles into their products, processes and systems. Designed and created community events and outreach materials. Also coordinated and facilitated biomimicry education and training during local events to reconnect people to surrounding nature ecologies and their innovative strategies.

2017-2018 Innovation Consultant, phi360, Berlin, Germany & Azul 7 - Minnesota, USA

Facilitated in-person and remote trainings, Biomimicry and Design Thinking design sprints for German businesses. Conducted in-person trainings, sprints, 3-day bootcamps in Biomimicry and Design Thinking for MN organizations.

Clients include organizations and companies in the built environment, innovation, social equity and sustainability sectors, along with:

Honeywell, Herman Miller, 3M, Valeo, Room & Board, DesignFarmBerlin, ASU InnovationSpace, Biomimicry Singapore–BirdLife International, Ask Nature–the Biomimicry Institute, Bahnhofsmission Berlin

SELECT TEACHING, MENTORING AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

2020 - Present

Youth Counsellor, Nature connection and Ecodesign Immersion Camps, Language Farm, Thüringer Wald, Germany

Instructor, seeKicks Entrepreneurship Program, Weißensee-Berlin School of Art & Design, Berlin, Germany

Seasonal mentor and educator in ecological, sustainable design and creative entrepreneurship. Work includes the design and facilitation of project-based guidance for multidisciplinary European teams (undergrad, graduate, start-up entrepreneurs). Remote support given via inspiration inputs, sprints and outdoor workshops for business ecosystem planning and visioning.

Mentor, Biomimicry European Design Challenge, Biomimicry Academy, European Union

Mentor and Coach, DesignFarmBerlin - Design & Tech Accelerator, Weißensee-Berlin School of Art & Design

Mentor and coach in Life-Centered Design, Circular Economy and creative bio-career guidance. Remote work includes the design and facilitation of nature-inspired product, process and systems design workshops. Start-ups receive support with problem scoping, stakeholder and contextual mapping, forecasting material, sustainability, social impacts and potential revenue opportunities.

Invited Lecturer on Biodesign, Sprechenüber - Expert Series, Weißensee-Berlin School of Art & Design, Germany

Speaker and Mentor on Life-Centered Business Ecosystems, New Mindfulness Start-Up Venture Fund, International

Speaker on Technobiophilic Immersive Education, 360ed - Mixed realities Start-up, Singapore, Malaysia

Speaker on Covid Design for Workspaces, Prime Produce Co-Op, Overlap Virtual Event

2019

Speaker on Nature-Inspired Textiles and Surface Pattern Design, Textile Design Lab, Online event

Mentor and Coach on Life-Centered Design, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

2015-2018

Graduate Teaching and Service Assistant, MS-Biomimicry, Arizona State University, USA

Provided online support, correspondence, feedback, and grading of assignments in 4 classes (BMY Essentials, Life's Principles, BMY Thinking, BMY Communicating). Worked with professor Dayna Baumeister in the College of Global Futures.

Speaker and Coach on Design Thinking, Brandenburg School of Regenerative Therapies, Berlin, Germany

Conducted a 1-month Design Thinking bootcamp training and mentoring for PhD students to integrate user research and testing into their respective teachings, dissertations and experiments.

Lecturer and Coach on Biomimicry Thinking, Hasso Plattner Design Thinking School, Potsdam, Germany

Ongoing nature-inspired innovation inputs and 2-day immersion workshops for Masters students at the D-school.

Mentor and Coach on Design Thinking, Communication University of China, Beijing, China

Speaker on Design and Biomimicry Thinking, Fraunhofer-IZM and Einstein Center, Berlin, Germany

Speaker and Facilitator for Biomimicry Germany Symposium, Berlin Science Week, Germany

Mentor on Design and Biomimicry Thinking, Vallejo Youth Catalyst Program, California, USA

SELECT EXHIBITIONS, GRANTS, AWARDS, PRESS

2021-2022

Echino-Home, Hybrid Design Lab, Naples, Italy (Biomimetic Echino Design Group Exhibition: Nov 2021-Feb 2022)

Future Playground - Mangrove City(VR), Climasosco, Switzerland (*Oceans on the Rise* Group Exhibition: Dec-Jan)

Future Playground - Island Resiliency(VR), Broto-Art-Climate-Science Fellowship Recipient (June 2021-July 2022)

Future Facts - Social Media Series, Artist grant – Ministry of Culture, Science & Research, Brandenburg, Germany

Future Skills Textbook: Life-Centered Design Chapter, WeQ Institute, German Edition (Release: August 2021)

2020 *Riverine Eco Retreat*, UNI Architecture Concepts, E-Yearbook 4 (Publication date: 2021)

Editor's Choice: Footprints Eco-Resort, Uni Architecture Biophilic Design Competition

Interview: Climate Change, Covid and the Built Environment, Overlap Sustainability Expert Blog

Future of Food: Geovore, Kara Agora's Speculative Playrooms Virtual Reality Residency, Social VR-MozillaHubs

Future Playground - Future Shire, Artist grant – Ministry of Culture, Science & Research, Brandenburg, Germany

2019 *Biophilic Print Pattern Collection*, Premiere Vision Design Showcase, New York City-New York, USA

2016 *Boje-Chair*, World Furniture Fair, Design Initiative, Atlanta, Georgia, USA

2015 *Boje-Swing Site-Specific Installation*, Functional Forest Exhibition, Domaine de Boisbuchet, Lessac, France

Boje-Stools, Mushroom Prints, Object & Architecture Installation, Prima Materia Exhibition, Domaine de Boisbuchet

2014 *Wingate Fellowship Recipient*, Center for Craft-North Carolina Arts Council, North Carolina, USA

2013 *Neozen-Planter, MCAD Senior Showcase*, Minneapolis College of Art & Design, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

Origami Lighting, Design, Music, Technology Graphic Design, Summaery Exhibition & C-Kellar, Weimar, Germany

Indigenous Fashion and Surface Patterns, Ouroboros Group Exhibition, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

PLI series and sculptures, Guerilla by Design Furniture Group Exhibition, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

Boje-Chair, Furniture Exhibition and Woodcraft Excellence Award, Royal Danish Academy, Copenhagen, Denmark

SKILLS

Languages

English (native)

Hmong (native)

French (proficient C1)

German (conversational B1-B2)

Spanish (basic A1-A2)

Design Tools

Affinity: Photo, Designer, Publisher

Adobe Creative Cloud: Illustrator, Photoshop, Indesign, Premiere Pro, Adobe Aero, Capture, Lightroom

3D Software: Google Sketch Up, Cinema 4D, AutoCAD

Project Management: Slack, Discord, Asana, Click-Up, Trello

Collaboration: Miro, Mural, Google Workspaces, Microsoft

Design Competencies

Bespoke: visual concepts, product design, proof of concept and prototype development, spatial design, 2D & 3D Illustration, graphic design, surface pattern design, 3D fabrication

Creative and Art Direction: color consulting, brand narrative, aesthetics, content optimization, user experience

Design Research: Empathy gathering, user insights, trends, forecasting, mood boards, personas, systems mapping

Facilitation: Ideation, visioning, immersions, outdoor and remote-mixed realities workshop, sprint design and coaching

Soft Skills: empathy, multidisciplinary teamwork, adaptability, experimentation, critical thinking, cultural bridging

CONTACT INFORMATION

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References available upon request