

Anne Lise Kjaer Interview Brief - Media: Alem Magazine

Questions:

1. **Analysing the new trends is very interesting. Can you tell us about your career? How did you decide working in this field?**

To make a long story short: I started my career as a fashion designer in the 80ties. My career began in the trends forecasting business in the early 90ties – via my native Denmark, Paris and Hamburg – I eventually moved to London where I developed kjaer global's unique philosophy and method further. It almost doesn't feel like a job. It's more like a lifestyle; something you do because you simply love it. I decided to work with trends as fashion give me a good introduction in the 80ties. I then realised that this way of working with trends could work for all industries. My first client for my Global Influences Trend book was BMW and today I work with some of the biggest brands in the world like Ikea, iittala, Toyota, Sony and Nokia.

2. **Which cities can be considered as the trend setter cities around the world? Are trends always in the hands of some specific cities?**

Maybe firstly we should define trends. A trend is a general tendency, movement, or direction. It can apply to current fashion or society or simply indicate a tendency or movement toward something or in a particular direction. Most street trends starts in the big cities but they are often short lived. The fashion cities of the world are often London, Paris, New York, Berlin and Copenhagen. However I think that we will see more and more new trend scenes emerging. If you look at technology trends they mostly come out of Silicon Valley.

3. **What will you talk about at the brand conference in Istanbul? Have you attended the previous conferences before in Istanbul? What do you think of this organisation?**

The future is not some place we go – we create the future. To map out future strategies we must understand the mindsets and values of the people we want to address. The future is about vision.

*I see a future whose first priority will be **Sustainability** and **Ethics**. Clearly **Empathic Leadership** is showing us the way ahead. To lead you must first connect with people – only then can you create a vision with a meaningful message for your customer. You can distil the 21st Century's drivers into one key phrase: "**Empathy** and **Emotional Connection**".*

Unfortunately I haven't attended MARKA before but I am very honoured to participate this year as I have so much about this inspiring event.

4. **Can you tell us about your customers, who are they and what are you doing for them?**

Kjaer specialises in future trends and their impact on tomorrow's consumer behaviour and needs. We manages a wide range of client briefs, from corporate presentations to customised trends research. We are renowned for communicating concepts in a stimulating and engaging format so everyone can understand what we are talking about.

Case study 1: Toyota

A far-reaching consumer trends management project defining a range of consumer 'types' in Europe 2015-2020. Extensive research and scientific analysis of lifestyles, aspirations, ethical and social attitudes was set alongside a 'wishlist' of design features to be incorporated into transport and lifestyles of the future. A blueprint of future consumer mindsets the report and subsequent presentation set out a road map for innovation and market intelligence.

Case study 2: Nokia

This major global project devised narratives and innovative visuals to incorporate and translate data culled from 70,000 consumers in 16 emerging and developed markets into a

navigable and inspiring visual format. As well as bringing consumers to life, the goal was to set out a 'common language' to strengthen product design, marketing, branding and client communication.

Further I consulted on and run Horizon Scanning Projects for the UK Government this year. Most recently with the MCA, Maritime Coastguard Agency on their Horizon Scanning project 2025+ forecasting and generating scenarios as well as testing the ground for new policies. Our expertise is bridging the creative and intellectual process – shaping the strategy and core concepts that are driving businesses, organisations and interest groups.

5. They call you as a futurist, do you see yourself so? What is the job you are actually doing?

I am a visionary and a conceptual thinker who imagine the future in order to create it. I guess I see myself more like a future narrator – someone who are a future story teller. I simply deliver an intelligent and inspiring outlook on the future. 'The future is not some place we go but one we create'!

6. The new century has full of new jobs like yours. Do you think is this an effect of knowledge's becoming the most important tool?

We are entering a new age where whole brain or holistic thinking is key. Unfortunately many futurist talk about all the trends you can find on the internet by yourself – but they never tell you how to process them and turn them into meaningful knowledge. We all know about the trends but without tool like a trends Atlas it's impossible to navigate the complexity of tomorrow.

7. As an expert, can you give us some pre-information about new consumer behaviours? What has changed so far? What trends are “in” at the moment?

*I guess you will have to come and see my presentation – it's not that simple to distil the future into two lines. But in general I see the world like this: The key society trend today s indicates a polarised society made up of **Hunters** and **Gatherers** – the 'me' and the 'we' people. Drivers shaping brands in the future are:*

Empowerment – Become an empowerment brand: inspire, inform and educate

Interaction – Foster exchange of ideas to enable personal interaction

Ethics – Practise Sustainability by doing, be transparent and have sound ethics

Meaning – Create emotional connection and experiences to connect to people

8. What should directors of the companies be careful about in order not to be called as old fashioned? Do you think that sort of old fashioned companies will pay in the future for becoming old fashioned? How?

The most successful brands of the future will be those who 'think from the outside-in' but 'feel from the inside-out'. Creating a successful future will mean that brands must become more people-centric, demonstrating empathy for the cultures they serve and respect for the context in which they exist.

9. How do you follow the trends yourself?

I always follow my intuition and common sense - this is the very best recipe for success. On a personal level I try to be more aware about how to protect the environment, I consume less generally and don't just talk about things I also try practice sustainability. This is big but if we all try our best we are heading in the right direction.

How and from where should the leaders of companies follow the new trends? (I think I answered this above in number 8.)