

#BehindtheMask with... Debbie Turner, design director at Digita Liquorice

 By Jessica Tennant

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This week, we go behind the mask with Debbie Turner, design director at Digita Liquorice.

As this forms part of our Women's Month content feature, Turner shared a quote by British historian Thomas Carlyle, who once said:

“ *The merit of originality is not novelty; it is sincerity.* ”

This is her message to fellow women in business this Women's Month, as she aspires to create beautiful design work that is sincere.



Debbie Turner, design director at Digita Liquorice

1. So, tell us, what's really behind your mask (literally and/or figuratively speaking).

I am currently the design director at Digita Liquorice, with 11 years of experience in the industry. I love working for a company where ideas and people matter and where those things together change the world we live in. My objective has been to create beautiful design work that is both simple and sincere. In each of my creative projects I endeavour to create something unique utilising good design principles. Aesthetics have always been very important to me and I believe that my strong sense of visual style strengthens the work that I do.

2. Where are you locked down?

In my flat in Vredehoek, Cape Town.

3. How are you finding working from home or physical distancing at the office / how has your way of working changed?

I'm loving a more flexible approach to work. I feel like I am much more productive working from home. However, I do miss my team.

4. Describe a typical workday, if such a thing exists.

I feel like creativity thrives with routine and not chaos. Typically I will wake up and first thing make a cup of coffee, then I go for a cold morning swim in Camps Bay tidal pool (and another coffee). I start my day at 8:30am with a stand up with my designers. Then on any given day I could be working on a new creative concept, designing an app or doing a new brand CI. I love to stay inspired throughout the day, whether that is reading a new article on *Medium* or *Fast Company*, or looking at new projects on Behance. I am working across many different projects so my day can sometimes be quite fragmented, but it is always interesting.

“ If I have time to learn a new skill, then that's a good day. ”

5. How do you maintain a good rapport with your teammates/clients?

I am constantly on video calls, Skype, Slack or Microsoft Teams, and try to meet for lunches, etc., now that Level 2 is more open with restrictions.

6. How do you socialise these days?

I am a foodie, so I love going to restaurants with friends. Yay for Level 2. Now I am able to meet friends at restaurants. I love being out in nature, so go for walks with friends on the prom or in Newlands forest.

7. What do you do to keep fit/healthy and/or sane (physically/mentally)?

I swim in the sea every single day and I feel like that keeps me happy and healthy. I am a Christian and I feel like my faith and my relationship with God has kept me sane during this crazy time.

8. What new apps would we find if we scrolled through your phone?

Zara app, Scribbling (a reading app), 3D Match (a game I am addicted to) and I love Hue (of course a match hues game - a designer's dream). Also Duolingo (I'm learning French and Italian) and lastly Codecademy, an app that teaches you to code.

9. Share your favourite Covid-19/lockdown-related meme/gif with us.



Molly Lambert
@mollylambert



rich people in March: we're all in this
together
rich people in August: we're all in
MYKONOS!

10. What is the first thing you plan to do when the lockdown lifts?

Travel. Travel. Travel.

11. Describe your career and if/how the pandemic/lockdown has affected its course.

I think the lockdown has given me the space to focus on what really matters in life. I have been able to learn and improve my design skills and manage my time so that I have the space to think and concentrate.

12. Any companies/brands that you feel have responded particularly well to the crisis and/or Covid-19-related campaigns that stand out to you, and why?

I think that the Nike and Apple ads really stood out for me. They used the limitations of shooting in a pandemic to their advantage and came out with some beautiful work. It just goes to show that a brilliant campaign does not depend on a crazy expensive shoot on location. Invision is a company I have always admired. They used a work-from-home approach way before it was a thing and, therefore, didn't even need to adapt when forced lockdowns hit.

13. What are you working on right now?

A design direction for a really exciting kids game/hygiene initiative, a corporate identity for a bank and a couple of really exciting projects for our food brands.

14. What does the 'new normal' look like to you?

“ I think we can't go back to how the world was before, as hard as it is, the pandemic has forced us to be more honest and confront things in our lives that don't make sense. Ultimately, life is too short to go back to 'boring'. ”

15. What are some of the buzzwords floating around at the moment, and some of the catchphrases you utter yourself?

'Unprecedented'. I hate buzz.

16. What advice would you give to other industry folk during this time?

Diversify your skillset. Be open. Keep learning.

Follow Turner on [Behance](#) and [Dribbble](#).

*Interviewed by [Jessica Tennant](#).

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