



Karen Cinnamon



I'm the Creative Director and owner of London-based design agency, Cinnamon Creative (www.cinnamoncreative.com).

What project in your career have you been most proud of?

I have two - one from the small client, and the other from the big corporate, spectrum. The biggie was redesigning Marks & Spencer's website to a widescreen format to allow for more vibrant landing pages, as well as upgrading the core functionality, usability and design. The new site launched at the end of last year and has since been voted the most user-friendly website of all UK high street brands.

The 2nd was my rebrand in 2005 of Jewish Book Week, London's leading literary festival, which has blossomed into a wonderful collaboration, my work has grown and developed alongside the festival over the last 6 years.

Away from client work, I am super-proud of those personal projects one does for good friends, what can beat working straight from the heart?

How do you let off steam?

Some may know about my penchant for Scrabble which lead Sukima and I

to start the Club's inaugural Scrabble Lounge evening. Additionally I love balancing the hours spent in front of my Mac with physical activities such as kickboxing, yoga and ski-ing. I was called Sporty Spice long before Mel C made a name for herself!

If you could be trapped in a lift with any 3 living people who would they be and why?

Max Azria, the man behind Herve Leger's bandage dresses, to find out how he gets sensible women like me to pay that much for a little frock; Jonathan Ross - simply because I love him; and Anya Hindmarch, to pick her brain about rising to the top in a creative business.

What are you currently working on?

I have several absorbing projects on the go - a nice mix of digital and branding.

I'm working with New Look, the High Street fashion retailer, on Phase 2 of a social media community website for their loyalty scheme, Fashion Rewards. The site features heavily on editorial content, games, forums, and social networking spaces as well as allowing shoppers to check their points and update their account.

I've also just begun work on all the branding and print design work for 'Friends Life' the new brand formed by Axa's UK Life and Pensions business merging with Friend's Provident. Who would have thought it, I have succeeded in mentioning the word, 'pension' in The Hospital Club magazine!

Finally, I am also in the midst of branding a new British name in the luxury swimwear market.

What one thing really annoys you about your industry and how would you change it if you could?

Common to all service industries is one of the biggest challenges in design; namely, how to handle illogical client comments. Some memorable ones I've heard in my time include "I've attached an image of [an absurd picture stolen from a search engine]. Can you just blow it up and make it our logo at the top?" and "It's pretty easy, isn't it?.. after all nowadays it's all done by computers" and my favourite: "my wife didn't like it". Having said that, I am lucky enough to have really super clients, many of whom have become good friends, and in the end I'm usually able to persuade them to my point of view.... so I wouldn't actually change a thing.

Company
Cinnamon Creative

Industry
Design