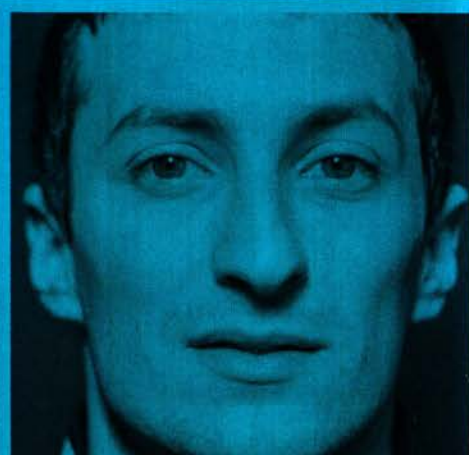


the Improper *Bostonian*



The Leader Board

Who inspires Boston's movers and shakers? Ten local talents making a mark in their fields tell us who influenced them along the way.

BY THE IMPROPER STAFF





Denise Korn

You can find Denise Korn's touch all over town. Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, Korn Design is a brand strategy and design firm focused on hospitality, lifestyle and culture projects in Boston and across the country. Locally, principal Korn and partner Javier Cortés have helped shape the look of everything from the logo for Boston Ballet and posters for the Huntington Theatre Company to the Hotel Commonwealth's recent renovations, the Eddy luxury apartments in Eastie and the Pru's current repositioning and rebranding. One such project Korn was particularly excited about was opening the Envoy Hotel in the Seaport in spring of 2015. "I think because it's kind of this convergence of huge demand for an independent, exciting hospitality product in the Boston market and this whole migration of creative industry and innovation moving down to the Seaport," she explains. "We named it the Envoy very, very purposefully, because it's a beacon of what lies ahead."

As for what lies ahead for Korn Design, Korn says she's excited about working on the residences at the forthcoming One Dalton, which is set to be the highest residential tower in New England. "The architecture is very respectful of the context, and it really just puts Boston on the map," Korn says. "It's going to be a huge marker and have a huge impact, in a beautiful way, on the skyline here." She's also made a major impact through her 14-year-old nonprofit, Youth Design, which provides urban teens with mentorships, training and paid summer jobs in design. "I don't like to call it a nonprofit. I really think it's a platform for change, and I really wish we could tap into these incredible points of view more, these visionaries who are unfettered by all the stuff we're held back by," Korn says. "I learn a lot from them and from the teachers who are leading these urban high schools. I find it to be very inspirational, and I take it with me into my day job."

Who Influenced You?

"My dad. He's a first-generation immigrant from Eastern Europe. He taught me how to be scrappy, inventive and fearless. I think what they'd call him now is disruptive. [Laughs] ... He's a pretty well known orthodontist—he worked on Newbury Street for decades. He was this holistic guy who didn't really believe in surgery; he was always thinking outside the box. But I always felt like he was a frustrated architect or something. When you're an immigrant kid, and you're a first-generation college-goer, you're expected to become a doctor or a lawyer, so he did that. But he probably could have been an architect."