Ena Yang

Seattle, WA 310.961.8899
linkedin.com/in/ena-yang-ai enayang@gmail.com

Global Retail Experiential Design Executive

Build human-centered, AI-forward design studios and retail experiences that connect brand strategy, craft, operational rigor, and measurable business outcomes

Global design executive with progressive experience leading flagship retail, concept innovation, and high-performing design studios across North America, Europe, and Asia. Known for transforming underperforming teams into high-accountability creative organizations, scaling complex retail programs, and building operating systems that improve speed, quality, and decision clarity. Bring strong cross-functional partnership across real estate, construction, operations, external agencies, and vendor teams to deliver impactful brand experience. Advance AI-forward creative operations and design leadership through executive development in artificial intelligence, business impact, and human capability. Areas of Expertise:

- **Retail and Experiential Design**
- **Concept Innovation and Format Systems**
- **Executive Stakeholder Alignment**
- **Visual Storytelling and Executive Presentations**
- **Studio Leadership and Talent Development**
- **Design Operations, Governance and QA**
- **Agency, Vendor and External Partner Direction**
- **AI-Enabled Creative Operations**

Professional Experience

ENAIA STUDIO, Seattle, WA 06/2026 - Present

Founder / Principal, AI-Enabled Design Advisory
Advise companies on how AI can strengthen design leadership, creative operations, and enterprise retail development by reducing administrative friction and improving access to knowledge, standards, and decision support.

- Developed advisory frameworks for retail design and store development teams, translating fragmented project inputs into clearer workflows for intake, design standards support, risk visibility, knowledge management, and workflow optimization.
- Created operating concepts for AI-assisted design administration, standards checking, project scoping, and renovation intelligence, helping define how creative teams can improve speed, clarity, and consistency without compromising human judgment or craft.
- Built thought leadership around intelligence augmentation for creative teams, focusing on using AI to reduce repetitive administrative work and create more space for strategy, exploration, and design excellence.

STARBUCKS COFFEE COMPANY, Seattle, WA 01/2017 - 12/2025

Director, Store Design - West Zone (WA, OR, CA, HI, AK) **12/2022 - 12/2025**
Led 45 internal designers, 30 external partners, and $850M annual capital oversight across 4K+ stores. Directed design excellence, operations, culture, and cross-functional delivery across regional studios.

- Transformed California Design Studio from fragmented, low-accountability environment into high-performing “A-Team,” raising on-time delivery from 65% to 95%, reducing rework, and rebuilding creative standards across LACC, SoCal, NorCal, and Hawaii.
- Rebuilt studio operating model through clearer roles, weekly milestone dashboards, QA gates, decision rights, design critique cadence, workload balancing, and vendor accountability, improving speed, quality, and cross-functional alignment with real estate, construction, and operations teams.
- Delivered 103-store LA Uplift sprint, earning SVP Design recognition for quality and execution, and receiving feature in internal communications as example of accelerated design delivery and regional transformation.
- Directed heritage and flagship renewal work, including Pike Place First Store and UV Main heritage cafe, supporting Back to Starbucks brand reset and reaffirming Starbucks history, craft, and community connection.
- Strengthened PNW home-market design consistency and earned expanded remit into SoCal and Hawaii based on executive trust in transformation leadership and studio performance.
- Mentored and elevated design talent across studios, supporting promotions, cross-studio mobility, stronger leadership readiness, and more accountable creative culture.

Senior Designer - Global Growth Concepts **01/2020 - 12/2022**

Played pivotal role within Global Growth Concepts Studio at heart of brand; translated core brand principles and strategy into customer experiences across physical and digital environments and contributed to global design charters defining next-generation store experiences and brand direction worldwide.

- Established blueprint for Starbucks PickUp, leading design of test and pilot stores and overseeing execution of first 50 rollout locations across North America, creating foundational platform for international implementation, including China.
- Developed Real Estate Briefs, Design Taxonomy, and Design Guidelines, and led training sessions across North America Store Development teams, accelerating program scaling across design, construction, and real estate.
- Delivered coast-to-coast impact as senior design leader in high-profile partnerships (including Amazon Go + PickUp pilot and Empire State Reserve flagship in New York), establishing benchmarks in frictionless commerce and experiential retail that continue to shape global strategy.

Design Manager - Licensed Store Design **01/2017 - 12/2019**

Managed licensed format design across airports, cruise ships, and big-box retail environments to deliver brand consistency with schedule, cost, and operational alignment.

- Built and deployed scalable kit-of-parts kiosk and cafe packages across licensed environments, accelerating approvals and enabling first openings within 9 months of kickoff.
- Developed custom high-throughput store solutions for top-volume licensed locations, improving food / beverage flow and enabling future innovation including Mobile Order & Pay, digital menu, and nitro.
- Designed alternate format concepts, including airport mobile-only pickup, grab-and-go kiosks, and differentiated cruise ship cafe models, tailoring to specific licensee business needs.

GILMORE GROUP, New York, NY 01/2008 - 01/2015

Design Director

Led multidisciplinary teams translating brand strategy and business objectives into physical and digital customer touchpoints for Fortune 500 clients across the US and global markets.

- Rebranded 700+ Sovereign Bank branches as Santander, creating scalable experience standards and rollout governance for consistent customer touchpoints nationwide.
- Directed Johnson & Johnson workplace branding, content planning, and program curation across Shanghai, Texas, and New Jersey, translating culture and brand narratives into physical and digital experiences.
- Spearheaded Hawker 4000 private jet interior strategy and prototype, translating luxury positioning into a mobility experience while balancing journey, materiality, safety, quality, and certification.

KANNER ARCHITECTS, Los Angeles, CA 09/2003 - 11/2007

Project Manager / Lead Design Architect

Led design and project delivery across luxury residential, boutique retail, flagship, and branded environments, combining high-design craft with strategic brand expression for fashion, lifestyle, and private clients.

- Led PUMA flagship and shop-in-shop rollout across 26 domestic and international locations (including flagships in Chicago, Georgetown, Santa Monica, Vancouver, and Antwerp plus shop-in-shop locations across US, Europe, and Asia), supporting consistent global brand expression across varied market formats.
- Served as lead designer for Quiksilver / ROXY Times Square and Anne Geddes Flagship at Downtown Disney, translating brand identity into high-visibility retail experiences.
- Led design for luxury residential projects including Sunset + Vine Tower and Hollywood condominium developments, overseeing concept, design development, and consultant coordination.

Education and Executive Development

- MIT Sloan Executive - Navigating AI: Driving Business Impact and Developing Human Capability Certification, 11/2025 - 05/2026
- Google Cloud - Generative AI Leader Certification, 10/2025
- DeepLearning.AI - AI for Everyone Certification, 09/2025
- **Master of Fine Arts (MFA)**, Interior Design, Pratt Institute, New York, NY
- Interior Design Diploma, LaSalle College, Montreal, QC
- **Bachelor of Music (BM)**, Flute Performance, McGill University, Montreal, QC

Languages

- Fluent in English and Korean