

Laura Kohler Intro

Laura Kohler [00:00:00] First of all, welcome. We are so glad to be back. We are so glad to welcome you into your home, which is the Kohler Experience Center. We call it the KEC. Did you know that this is really the flagship of the United States for us? Because this is the first KEC we built anywhere in the world right here in New York City. And we have another one in L.A., but we're so pleased to welcome you home. This is truly an experience center because we have two bathrooms in the back that have showering, advanced toileting, all sorts of different things for you to experience, play with, luxuriate in. So please wander, touch, feel, pull, push. We want you to really be part of this experience center. My great grandfather, who started this company in 1873, would be amazingly proud today. He started this company and his market was farmers. Farm implements came out of his cast iron foundry. So think of that. So today we see all these amazing, beautiful products. And it came out of the first bathtub that he made out of a hog skull there. And he put four legs on it, sold it for 14 chickens and a cow. And it was our first foray into the plumbing business. We are almost 150 years old and but we continue to break new ground each and every day. And early in the 1970s, we created the mission of the company, which was gracious living, to really bring the sense of gracious living to everyone who touches our products and services each and every day. And think about that. We really try to delight the user to try to lift their life. And I think today we have advanced to another philosophy which is believing in better. We believe that our best can always be better for the planet, better for communities and better for people's lives. So everything that we do is a constant iteration, a constant improvement, whether it's our manufacturing footprint, our design footprint, our lifting up of communities, and really our associate experience as well. We're going to be talking about some pretty cool things today. And one of that is this nexus between, I would say, the manufacturing community, the design and architecture community, and how we can combine our skill sets to really lift people's lives. And that would be how do we reduce our impact of the environment in the work that we do together? How do we improve the lives of communities and how do we actually bring a sense of well-being and lift people's hearts, minds, souls, spirits with the work that we do together and things that we can and should do? We know that we have to educate more. We know that we as manufacturers have to bring the why and the what to the design and architecture community so they can help the end user make great selections. We're getting better and better at what we do, really helping this kind of group understand the why and the technology behind all this stuff that you see around you. So with that, what I would like to do is introduce a very special person that's here, Debbie Millman, who many of you probably already know. So I'm not going to explain too much other than she is the host of NYCxDESIGN podcast, The Mic, and she's really good at what she does. I am a podcast listener and and I a little bit of a fan. And in addition though, there she is, a writer, a designer and educator, a brand strategist and an artist. So we are so pleased to have her with us. She's going to be leading three podcast conversations designed for environment design, for wellbeing and design for community. And for the past 17 years, she's also been host of Design Matters, which is the first podcast about design. So I'll let Debbie take it from here.