Laura Gao

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STAFF PRODUCT DESIGNER | DESIGN MANAGER | FOUNDING PRODUCT DESIGNER

Product design leader with 8+ years building 0-to-1 products, scaling design systems, and leading cross-functional teams across retail media, consumer technology, health, and education.

Experience

Koddi | Design Manager and Lead Designer 2024 – Present
San Francisco, CA

- Lead four designers on three teams for a retail media platform across three teams, including three hires.
- Designed Reservations, an advertising product reaching $20M in spend in 2026; increased campaign-creation success from 61% to 87% and shortened integration from months to weeks.
- Created Katalyst, Koddi's first design system, and integrated it with AI-enabled prototyping workflows to cut design time while keeping work production-ready.

Black Moon Studios | Founder and Product Designer 2020 – 2024
San Francisco, CA

- Delivered 0-to-1 product design, brand identity, and end-to-end prototypes for 50+ clients, including NPR, Asia Society of Texas, and Southern Poverty Law Center.
- As founding designer for M3 and Retainit, designed mobile and web products, partnered with NIH researchers on clinical usability testing, and beta-tested an education MVP with a 300K+ user platform.

Twitter | Product Manager, Abuse and Safety; Growth Machine Learning 2018 – 2020
San Francisco, CA

- One of two PMs for a 40-engineer team; led roadmap planning and launched moderation tools that reduced impressions on 60% of toxic replies.
- Shipped 10 growth features, including Breaking News updates and new-follower UI cards, adding 4.5M daily active users.

Amazon | Data Analyst, Recommended Ads 2017 – 2017
Seattle, WA

- Investigated 1.5M unattributed ad transactions using SQL and R; translated findings into Tableau reporting for leadership.

Education

University of Pennsylvania, The Wharton School | 3.7 GPA, magna cum laude
B.S. Statistics and Information Decisions, Product Design concentration

Skills

Product Design: Product strategy, 0-to-1 product development, design systems, interaction design, prototyping, user research, usability testing, design engineering

Leadership: People management, hiring, mentoring, cross-functional leadership, roadmap planning, stakeholder management

Tools: Figma, Claude Code, Codex, Cursor, HTML/CSS, SQL, R, Tableau

Additional Interests

Adjunct Professor at the California College of the Arts

Author & illustrator of two award-winning graphic novels (Messy Roots, Kirby's Lessons for Falling in Love)

Founding organizer of Pride in Panels Queer Comics Festival; 100+ artists and 2500+ attendees annually