

biography

Maria was born and raised in a small village on the west coast of Sweden. After entering Chalmers, the University of Arch in Gothenburg, 1989, Maria continued her studies at NTNU, Trondheim, Norway. After four years of Architecture studies with a solid, clean and contextual Scandinavian approach, Maria strived to achieve a more experimental and conceptual experience and therefore became a guest student at the masters program at Sci-Arc in Los Angeles 1993. Back in Norway she then finalized her thesis, with a Master of Architecture, from NTNU, Trondheim, Norway 1995.

In 1998 she deepened her cross-disciplinary interest by taking the postgraduate course Art+Architecture, theme Speed, at The Royal Academy of Arts, KKH Art and Architecture, Stockholm, Sweden.

After the academic years abroad she started to practice architecture in her native capital, Stockholm 1995. After first starting in a corporate firm, Tengbom Architecture, and working on one building for almost 3 years, followed by work at the cross-disciplinary architectural office, Zeilon & Partners for 5 years, Maria established her own practice, Urban Identities AB, in 2003. With 11 years of experience in Stockholm, early 2006 Maria relocated to New York City, where she still resides, parallel with keeping the Swedish platform in Stockholm as well as on the westcoast of Sweden.

Her work during the Swedish years span from urban design to architecture and interior design, from customized furniture to complex multi program buildings. Maria worked on several residential projects, incl. a 7500 sqft residence in Portugal, and with several international high-end clients such as Ogilvy, Novartis, Semcon, Casino Cosmopol, SAS Euroshop, Absolut Vodka, Nina Ricci and Volvo Car Corporation (VCC). For VCC Maria had a creative directive role, guiding and project managing the brand platform of spatial experience for global trade shows, retails merchandise and office spaces for several years. Within this work Maria was in charge of the process of relocating Volvo Cars North America's headquarter from New York to their new headquarter in Irvine, CA.

Parallel with practicing architecture Maria was teaching architecture in Stockholm, at KTH, The Royal Academy of Technology, Faculty of Architecture. While teaching and within her practice Maria organized lectures and fieldtrips to several places, incl. Los Angeles, New York, Tokyo, Japan, Holland, Spain, Portugal Brazil, Berlin, London etc. Meeting with different architectural offices and exploring different ideas, cultures, trends and thoughts has further enriched Maria's view of our global arena and its regional building typologies, materials and traditions.

While selecting a new platform in New York, she found the design agency The Apartment, where she continued to explore narrative and thoughtful architecture and design in new challenging ways as an integral part of a holistic approach. After two years of executing spaces for new successful brands in the city, such as Yelo and Swich, as well as working with real estate developers, she set up her own practice, Maria Larsson, Inc., in New York, early 2008.

Projects within Maria's NY practice includes a restaurant in Aspen, Social, residential interiors and in progress you find ongoing work for Yelo as well as other spas. Maria is also still actively practicing architecture in Sweden and other countries often through a close network of collaborations. Among these new projects is ongoing work for a tower extension south of Stockholm, and a new residence in Dubai.

Beyond the practical world Maria continues her academic interest with dialogs and participations in seminars, lectures and reviews within the schools and professional platforms in New York and Stockholm.