

MICHELLE CHRISTENSEN

VICE PRESIDENT, GLOBAL DESIGN – KARMA AUTOMOTIVE

Michelle Christensen became the auto industry's first female to lead the development of a supercar when she directed the 2017 remodel of the iconic Acura NSX, the second-generation hybrid supercar that was named "Performance Car of the Year" by Road & Track.

Christensen attended ArtCenter College of Design, where she was able to blend her love of art, design, and cars. On grad night, she received an offer from the Honda design team, where she ultimately helped create the vehicle that set the tone for the Acura brand and dictated the design ethos for the rest of the lineup.

Following 18 years of automotive design, product development and brand building, Christensen joined Karma the end of last year as vice president, global design. In addition to Acura, her prior stops included the GM Advanced Design Studio and Nissan Design America, where she was senior manager, leading design for the Infiniti QX60 Monograph show car. Her creativity and designs – which she refers to as "visual language" – have led to numerous honors, including being named to the *Motor Trend* "Power List," the *Advertising Age* "Creativity 50" and receiving the *Marie Claire* "Women on Top" award.

In April 2023, Marques McCammon was named president of Karma and assigned the task of producing a corporate rebirth to drive the SoCal auto company in a new direction. He says new short-term and long-term plans have been developed with Christensen at the strategic core.

"Michelle's work at Acura was groundbreaking," he says, "where the design concept served as a physical manifestation of the brand. At Karma, that's the kind of brand we are building, with Michelle and her team doing much more than design."

Christensen Quotes:

"I love the challenge at Karma. It's vital for our vehicle designs to be expressive and display personality."

"We went back to Acura's performance roots, pulled the best aspects of the original NSX and produced a product that became the brand halo. My assignment is very similar at Karma, which is already a beautiful product. We are tapping into what makes the vehicle special, turning up the volume on those specifics and distinguishing our vehicles as America's ultra-luxury brand."

"The auto industry needs more women – especially their unique voice, perspectives and talent."