

# WEBB

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Innovators,  
Disruptors,  
& Entrepreneurs

Webb Alumni Shaping the 21st Century



Those ideas form the crux of Holland's past and current work, and it's what has pushed him to change the status quo. At UX-FLO, he currently is working for a client, Maxon, that makes 3D animation software called Cinema 4D.

Even within design, Holland points out that a multifaceted background is more important than ever for career success—specifically, software programming skills and design talent. “This type of multidisciplinary person is incredibly valuable to corporations, because so few of them exist,” he points out. It's those people—people who can bring diverse skills, abilities and interests to their careers—who are redefining the paradigm for career and personal success. It's a new paradigm, but it's based on an old concept: the concept of the well-rounded individual, a concept that The Webb Schools have been instilling in their students since 1922.

“We are always trying to push the boundaries while paradoxically maintaining a sense of balance. We believe that present and future paradigms are a balance of appropriate crafting of progressive ideas, and sometimes that means maintaining conservative traditions. We really just try to pay *attention* to what will hold real value—this is the key. If we can do this, we will create timeless value in the marketplace, and this type of design will never go out of style.”

Spanning decades, Holland's career blends entrepreneurship, innovation and disruption. That's not atypical in creative, artistic fields, but today, the same fluidity that has characterized the creative fields is just as likely to characterize careers in finance, law, film, and hospitality.

**Crescent Diamond '95** is the producer of *The Heretics*, a documentary tracing the New York feminist art collective that produced *Heresies: A Feminist Publication on Art and Politics*. Director Joan Braderman, who joined the art collective in 1971 as an aspiring filmmaker, charts the group's challenges in terms of gender and power and its history as a microcosm of the feminist movement at that time. The documentary reconnects her with the other 28 group members, including writer/critic Lucy Lippard, architect Susana Torre, filmmaker Su Friedrich, and artists Ida Applebroog, Mary Miss, Miriam Schapiro, and Cecilia Vicuña. *The Heretics* premiered at the MOMA in New York in October 2009 and has subsequently been shown at film festivals around the world. It was nominated as a 2011 Notable Video for Adults by the American Library Association and was part of the Getty Foundation's *Doin' It In Public: Feminism & Art at the Woman's Building* exhibition. *The Heretics* made its national television debut in March 2012.

Diamond is an entrepreneur, too, and has grown accustomed to spending time on the business aspects of the industry—especially the eternal quest for funding—as well as spending

time behind the camera. “It's always a balancing act,” she says, between the creative impulse and business practicalities. “The path, particularly for documentary filmmakers, is coming up with an idea and seeing if there's a market for it.”



*Diamond's work focuses on the margins of America's consciousness, people who aren't typically represented in the media—an interest she traces back to her time at Webb. Diamond came to Webb her junior year, drawn by the school's theater program and theater director Michael Kane, who “transformed and adapted plays in odd ways,” Diamond recalls. “It was inspiring.”*

Perhaps even more inspiring was the high school exchange program in which she participated during her senior year. The exchange program sent her to a Navajo Nation high school in Window Rock, Arizona. “It was a very eye-opening experience for me,” Diamond says. “It was life-changing.”

The program introduced Diamond to the existence of another country within the United States: a marginalized society most people never see. It also gave her the experience of seeing her surroundings from the minority perspective; she was the only white person on campus. And it gave her an introduction to documentary filmmaking. She captured her experience on video, interviewing and recording tribal elders and healers for a project she completed at Webb.

After graduating, Diamond attended Hampshire College in Massachusetts, where her fellow alumni include acclaimed documentary filmmaker Ken Burns. “It was a really great school

for me because it's a very innovative school," Diamond says. It's also where she developed a close friendship with professor and filmmaker Joan Braderman. After Diamond graduated and moved to San Francisco, Braderman invited her to produce *The Heretics*, a documentary examining The Heresies Collective, a feminist art group active from the 1970s to the 1990s. "Historically, women have been left out of art history," Diamond notes. *The Heretics* focuses on women working in the arts, and on "how fun and exciting it was to be doing things that challenged the status quo."

By the end of filming *The Heretics*, Diamond realized she wanted to follow Braderman into teaching, as well as practicing the art of filmmaking. She's currently completing her Cinema MFA at San Francisco State University and teaching in the university's film program. Teachers "change students' perceptions of the world," says Diamond.

She's also continuing to turn the camera's eye on marginalized populations. Her thesis film, *Performing Girl*, tells the story of growing up in Lancaster, California, from the perspective of D'Lo, a transgender Sri Lankan-American writer, director, and artist.

**Entrepreneurialism** is a defining characteristic of the emerging professional workplace. In some fields, that's a new paradigm. In others, the entrepreneurial use of capital is well-established, even though the capital involved isn't money.

Take **Alix Rosenthal '91**. She's built a successful career as an attorney, and she's an entrepreneur, too, but she's working with political capital. An innovator and a disruptor, she's working to reshape the landscape of Democratic politics in San Francisco. The San Francisco Democratic County Central Committee is dominated by an old boys' network, she says, and she wants to bring in the women.

Recently reelected to the committee, she put together an all-woman slate, All Shades of Blue. "There is a very serious divide between progressives and moderates" in the party, she says, which made it difficult to build a slate based not on ideology, but on gender. "It is our tendency to argue with each other."

Nevertheless, Rosenthal sees real value in the prospect of greater female representation on the 24-member committee. "Women simply do get along better than men do," she explains. "We don't fight as much as men do."

Rosenthal traces her interest in politics to her parents and her time at Webb. "I have always loved public service," she says, a love her parents instilled in her. Add to that a love of people and problem-solving and politics was inevitable.



## Hosain Rahman '93

### Jawbone founder and CEO

Hosain Rahman made national and international news last summer. First, it was reported that Jawbone, the maker of cutting-edge headsets, speakers, and other mobile device accessories, won a new round of funding, some \$70 million from J.P. Morgan Asset Management—this after raising \$49 million the previous March.

Second, Rahman, speaking at the TedGlobal conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, announced his company's first "non-audio device," called UP. The device is meant to measure "sleep patterns, eating habits and activity to help people become healthier." UP is described as "wearable, hip and waterproof." The new device is described as a "bold departure" from Jawbone's core mobile accessory business—even bolder than the company's launch last fall of its wireless JAMBOX audio system.

Rahman made CNN Money and *Fortune Magazine's* Ones to Watch list this past January.