



PROJECT
Badass Lady Creatives;
www.baladycreatives.com

PRINCIPAL
Melanie Richards,
Charleston, SC;
www.melanie-richards.com

FOUNDED
2013

PHILOSOPHY
"Be good to people by balancing responsibility to my clients, their customers and my own ethical sensibilities. Designers have a lot of sway over culture; we should feel responsible for how our work changes what it means to be a human in the 21st century."



DESIGNER SPOTLIGHT MELANIE RICHARDS



Melanie Richards didn't start with a goal of becoming Badass-in-Chief, but it's a mantle she now carries with pride. Richards, senior web designer at Charleston, SC-based Fuzzco, sought to remedy the dearth of female representation in the field—on blogs, speaker rosters and in leadership positions—by developing a one-stop-shop for the myriad talented women in the creative industry. Enter Badass Lady Creatives, an online platform aimed to celebrate and boost support for females asserting themselves in the industry.

"There had been a few recent gender-based controversies in the design industry," Richards says. "I was more concerned about how the community conducts itself on a regular basis. Our industry is richer when a greater variety of people share the limelight. Supporting my fellow women seemed [like] a good place to start." Richards began with a Pinterest directory of women in the design, illustration and typography fields.

From there, the initiative launched a Twitter account, a weekly blog post on designworklife.com and a full-fledged site (www.baladycreatives.com) with a directory, blog and nomination form to suggest a "badass" lady to be recognized. The best part? It's gaining traction. "I'm optimistic it'll put an end to the unfortunate 'I don't know any talented female designers/illustrators/anything' sentiment [from conference organizers and design writers seeking talent], because there are no excuses now," says Tuesday Bassen, directory member. Though the project debuted just last year, there's already expansion on the horizon.

"I'm focusing on making it even more useful for agencies looking to hire, or young designers seeking new heroes," Richards says. "I'd like to start sub-projects that are more communal, requiring collaboration or mentorship. I want to help make our industry more inclusive because we can always do better." **HOW**