

THE THEN – NOW SHOW

Jane Atfield
Sebastian Bergne
Adam Brinkworth
Konstantin Grcic
Thomas Heatherwick
Victoria Jessen-Pike
David Keech
Wakako Kishimoto
Tom Lloyd
Kevin McCullagh
Corin Mellor
Peter Naumann
Ben Panayi
Luke Pearson
Sonya Winner

INTRODUCTION

In the late 80s and early 90s, we used to hold a yearly Graduate Show in our London showroom. I would spend the summer months on the road visiting end of year graduate shows at over 50 design colleges around the country. My aim was to find the most interesting and innovative works by young graduates and offer them a platform to show their designs.

These exhibitions became known as the annual Aram Designs Graduate Show. The works I selected to exhibit were a multi-disciplinary collection: Products, Fashion, Industrial, Furniture, Graphics, Hats and Shoes.

These exhibitions were aimed primarily at INDUSTRY. Therefore, the timing and location of these exhibitions was important. They were held in September, after the summer holidays and lasting over 3 weeks and located in central London, thus easily reachable by senior management executives. We had the enthusiastic support and encouragement both from the DTI and the CBI, although there was no financial support.

It was some years after establishing Aram Designs that I became aware that there was very little in the UK in the way of support for emerging designers and that there was a real gap between designers and manufacturers. The motivation for the graduate shows was to bridge that gap and create a platform to engage in dialogue between the young generation of designers and manufacturers.

These graduate shows were a non-commercial exercise, whose *raison d'être* was to provide support for young designers and to show their ideas at a crucial stage in their development. There was no charge made either to the graduates or to the colleges for participation.

Quite a few graduates whose work I showed then are now established and respected names in the design industry. Partly because of this, I thought it might be

interesting to show their graduate designs alongside some of their recent work. And The THEN-NOW Show is the result.

Mounting this exhibition and presenting the works of these designers again after two decades gives me a lot of pleasure and satisfaction – their progress and development is fascinating.

I hope that you will enjoy this exhibition and the young designers visiting will be encouraged, energised and inspired by this show.

I thank all the participants for their patience, help and cooperation in mounting this exhibition.

ZEEV ARAM



JANE ATFIELD

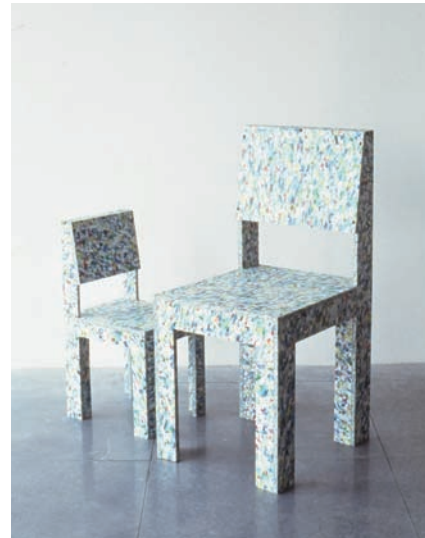
Tutor at London Metropolitan University

I remember as a student searching for a vehicle that would take me beyond the formal, functional, industrial and commercial emphasis that seemed to dictate furniture design. With Victor Papanek's 'Design for the Real World' ringing in my ears, I wanted to engage directly with problems around me, connecting to issues that affected people and the way we live. The re-use of waste, in particular post-consumer domestic rubbish from community recycling schemes provided an opportunity to tackle environmental issues.

For over 10 years I swam in an early recycling world, setting up Made of Waste, an agency to develop and promote recycled materials, to architects and designers. I often tried the materials out initially using archetypal furniture designs, including the RCP2 chair from recycled plastic bottles.

Sixteen years later the Great Ormond Street Hospital project, commissioned by PACE aimed to humanise the new Octav Botner building for children and their families. The project grew from staff and patient workshops, creating and exploring ideas. The resulting graphic illustrations over six floors drew inspiration from word spirals, the natural world and domestic/architectural features. These ranged from the display of musical instruments (chemotherapy rooms) to the sea migration of lobsters (operating theatres) to anatomical drawings (ultrasound) to urban animals (connecting corridors) encouraging interaction and a distraction from clinical procedures.

Enhancing children's lives through design (currently in relation to play in urban settings and access to nature) is an ongoing interest, combined with rethinking roles within the process of design. Prioritising design for the greatest social benefit using direct economic/political/ecological engagement seems now more than ever the way forward. A commitment to a non-consumer design culture embracing lifestyle changes, DIY projects, local activism, social enterprises, systemic solutions, biomimicry and Intermediate Technology (inspired by developing countries) all provide possible routes and areas to explore creatively.



Recycled Plastic Chairs, 1992



Great Ormond Street Hospital Project, 2007- 8



SEBASTIAN BERGNE

Designer and Founder of Sebastian Bergne Ltd.



My first contact with Zeev Aram was back in 1990. I had just graduated from the RCA and was asked to participate in a show of work by design graduates. It felt like both a great opportunity and a privilege as there were very few graduate shows back then. It was exciting for me to be involved, not least because I was exposed to the work of many of my contemporaries that I didn't know.

After that show, I launched my industrial design studio and have since worked all over the world with clients such as MUJI, Authentics, Tefal, ENO and Vitra designing household products and furniture. Most of my work is of a commercial nature, so when in 2008 Daniel Charny and Zeev Aram challenged me to design speculative and most importantly, experimental projects I was really excited to do so. The result was the exhibition, CRU. A solo show of design around the theme of wine. It was great to have the freedom to experiment on a theme close to my heart, rather than reacting to a client's brief. I had just returned to London after spending 7 years in Bologna, and the exhibition was a marker for a fresh start.

Zeev Aram and The Aram Gallery's encouragement and promotion of new design is something very special. I think the THEN – NOW exhibition will be a great opportunity to celebrate this support and commitment.



Glassware, 1990



Natura Cookware Range for Tefal, 2010



ADAM BRINKWORTH

Founder of Brinkworth

Adam graduated from Wolverhampton University in 1988 with a BA First Class Honours in Furniture Design before completing an MA in Furniture Design at the RCA. After leaving the RCA, he first shared a studio with German designer Konstantin Grcic and later with furniture designer Michael Marriott before founding the eponymously named interior architecture practice, Brinkworth, in 1990.

One of the company's early major projects was designing retail spaces for Karen Millen, initially with Adam making the furniture and building the retail outlets personally, one shop at a time. In the early ninety's, Brinkworth expanded, developing a multi-disciplinary portfolio including bars, restaurants, exhibition spaces, events and music festivals, designed for clients such as Heineken, Venture 3 and LBi and, in 1998, company director Kevin Brennan joined the team bringing architectural expertise and further broadening the company's repertoire. A third company director David Hurren joined in 2008 and his background in graphic design and digital media enabled Brinkworth to offer a comprehensive, holistic approach to design, incorporating interior architecture and branding.

Brinkworth's award winning portfolio shows a diverse range of international projects, including clients such as Nike, All Saints, Tinello, Twentytwentyone, The Loft, Converse, Foot Patrol, Supreme, Casio and The Science Museum. Adam remains at the creative heart of the Brinkworth, working closely with the forty-strong team, guiding the development of concepts within the company and ensuring it retains the ethos of a creative design collective.

Adam has served as a judge at several design awards including D&AD, Vitra Blueprint and NAS. He is regularly featured in both the design and national media and has spoken on retail design for both BBC Radio Four's 'Shop Talk' and for the Open University's BBC2 programme. He is currently an external examiner for Kingston University.



Lounge Chair & Stool, 1990



Sterling Chair, 2011



KONSTANTIN GRIC

Founder of Konstantin Grcic Industrial Design

I remember how liberating it was to design my first piece of furniture for a real client, for real production, just after leaving the RCA in 1990. It was a pair of small wooden tables I made for SCP Ltd., Tom Tom and Tam Tam. I guess everything started back then with these particular tables – the joy of making prototypes and working closely with manufacturers, entrepreneurs, engineers and craftsmen. Today, 20 years later, I would say I have the same passion for the same working process even though many of the circumstances have changed. The companies are now bigger, there's more technology, more complexity, maybe more problems.

In a strange way I'd say that, back then, I would have projected quite a different future in 20 years time. I would have assumed my life and work to be more progressive. Looking at where I am now, it seems not that far detached from where I started! So rather than bringing the big change, I feel that the past 20 years have added much more depth and richness to my thinking and life experience. And in a way this is so much more than I could have ever imagined.



Briol Chairs, 1990



Chair_One, 2004



THOMAS HEATHERWICK

Director Heatherwick Studio



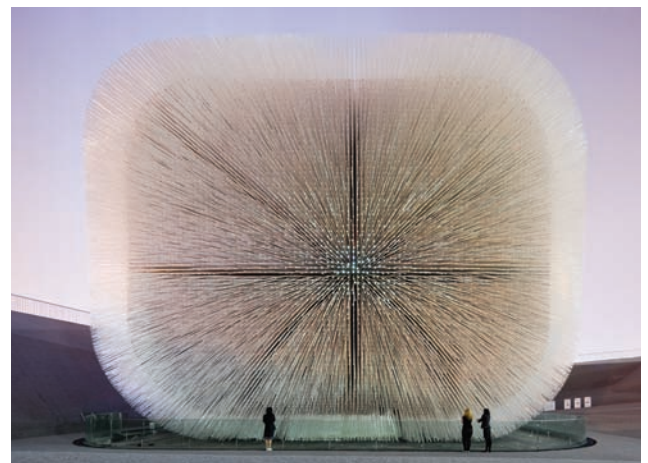
Eighteen years since the Aram show have gone too quickly. Sounds a long time, and as if I might have a lot to pontificate about but it still feels as if the studio I started is just getting going; as if the beginning bit hasn't stopped.

The best bit has been the shift from a 'me' as an individual designer person, to an 'us' as a studio, and a bigger shared endeavour. Colleges of design don't seem to prepare design students for the 'us' part. The 'being a studio' part, rather than just a person, is the ongoing, perpetual project filling the gaps between all the other design projects we do. Time has allowed me to build up a network of fantastic people I rely on, and who somehow in turn rely on me.

One thing we never try to do is consider ourselves experts at anything. We don't avoid challenges or difficulties we're not used to. Advice? I suppose, beware of becoming an expert...



Metal Thrones, 1991



UK Pavilion, Shanghai Expo, 2010



VICTORIA JESSEN-PIKE

Designer at DRDH Architects



With an art school education in furniture design, I have primarily worked in architectural settings throughout my twenty year career. Much of this time has been within the practice David Chipperfield Architects (1995 to 2007).

Although this background is compatible to the concerns of an architect, I didn't have a long-established wish to become one and never made any conscious decision to work as one. It was more a procession of small events that led to a career embedded into the working practice of architecture. Perhaps it was the realisation early on – that rather than the more singular, the more individual effort required of a furniture designer – I enjoyed and thrived upon the collaborative effort and teamwork that is inherent and necessary to make buildings.

When I left the Royal College of Art in 1990 I went to work for Norman Foster & Partners. My first tasks were to design the café tables, the VIP suites and the detention facilities at Stansted Airport. At the same time, Aram produced the Ghost chair I had designed at college. A chair designed by David Chipperfield was launched at the same event as the Ghost chair and this was the occasion that I first met David.

I have spent the years since designing and coordinating building projects, from homes and small boutique shops to The Bryant Park Hotel in New York. Working on museums and cultural buildings has been a particular pleasure – where I have been fortunate to collaborate with and to learn from very committed clients in adjacent industries: curators, collectors, filmmakers, conductors, academics and anthropologists.

Since 2009 I have worked with DRDH Architects, designing a new concert hall and library in Bodø, Norway, to be completed in 2014.



Ghost Chair, 1990



The Hepworth, Wakefield, David Chipperfield Architects.
Opening 2011



DAVID KEECH
Director Keechdesign



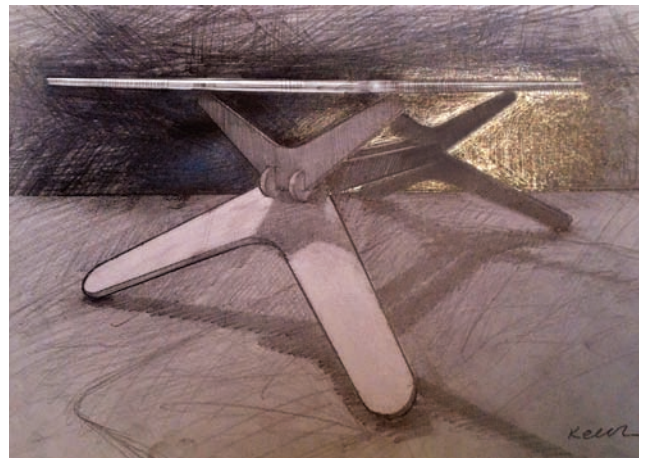
The 'Then' piece was created in 1989 and was known as *The Jazz Musician's Side Table*. It grew out of a process of improvisation. Collected material (mostly from bins), carefully crafted self-made elements, and drawing (as a design tool) all combined to create the whole. Components were assembled, dismantled, re-worked, re-assembled with both Charlie Parker and Eduardo Paolozzi providing the inspiration. Sculpture or industrial design? I was passionate about them both and still am now.

The 'Now' work sees me as managing director of a design company. The end product is perhaps different; concerned with commercial value, deadlines, explicit briefs. More industrial design than sculpture? For me, one cannot exist without the other. The underlying process is still the same and is always concerned with assembly, rhythm and balance. I still collect, observe, construct, dismantle and re-work, whether it be objects, ideas or techniques.

It struck me that if I were to go even further back than 1989, to the beginning, the image would be of a child constantly drawing, and making plastic models of aircraft. I can't see that much has changed.



Junk Lamp for Mingus, 1989



Coffee Table, 2011



WAKAKO KISHIMOTO

Creative Director & Co-Founder
with Mark Eley of Eley Kishimoto

20 years seems like just yesterday but I guess any past is just a collection of a few or many yesterdays. If becoming wiser and acquiring the ability to analyze a bigger picture from a distance is one of the bonuses of getting older, I haven't been rewarded with one yet. I may be no cleverer than a hamster that races in a wheel, not realizing it's running the same track a million times over.

Obsessed or even blinkered by the process of creating regardless of the significance of what it might be – there was nothing, then, there is something – I run in the wheel of making things sometimes without knowing the worldly purpose of it.

However, as a result of this a large amount of products have come into existence taking visual and tangible forms that reach outside of my hamster cage. This is my humble achievement of the past 20 years, now I need to work on becoming a wise one.



Pop Out Tableau Dress, 1990



"Behind The Scene" Wave Hem Dress, 2010



KEVIN MCCULLAGH

Founder of Plan

THEN: Kevin designed the mini-cooker in his final year on the Design for Industry course at Newcastle Polytechnic (now Northumbria University). He aimed to give it more culinary credibility than its contemporaries in the category, while appealing to both young 'bedsitters' and the elderly.

After graduating in 1991, Kevin practised as a product designer and design manager. Then, fascinated by the decisions that were made before a design brief was even written, he moved into the emerging field of design strategy.

In 1998 this took him to Seymourpowell as Director of the newly-formed Foresight team. In 2005 he set up Plan, the first consultancy in Europe to focus solely on product design strategy.

NOW: Over the years, Kevin's clients have included some of the world's biggest brands, such as Unilever, Ford, Mars, Nokia, Samsung, Yamaha, HP, Lenovo, Orange, O2, Psion and Shell. Samsung has called Plan 'the best in the world that we have worked with' and Orange has said 'nobody does design strategy and analysis better than them.'

Kevin is also a well-known commentator on design, having curated and spoken at many international conferences. For example, he was conference director of Intersections 07, which debated the current transformation of design, and in 2010 he spoke at the Design Management Institute Conference in London. He is a regular columnist for Core77 and also writes for Blueprint and the DMI Management Review.

However, once a designer, always a designer and, inspired by the imminent arrival of his first child, Kevin returned to the drawing board. The Bureau, a collaboration with Richard Shed, solved the problem of what to do with the previous contents of his son's new room. The result is an elegant piece of furniture that sits discreetly in a main living space.



Mini-Cooker, 1991



Bureau, 2010



CORIN MELLOR

Creative Director David Mellor Design



Having my Market Stall design chosen for exhibition by Zeev Aram in 1988 was a tremendous boost so early on in my career. I have stayed mainly in product design, with a few diversions into architecture and interiors. I took over as Creative Director of David Mellor Design in succession to my father in 2009.

I feel it is important in today's diverse design climate to keep a strict sense of purpose. All my designs for David Mellor are functional and modern. Close attention to detail, techniques and materials gives them their individuality.

I am showing a selection of my recent developments in china, glass and stainless steel. And – since we have our own cutlery factory in Derbyshire – I shall be introducing my first design for cutlery later in the year.



Market Stall, 1988



Black Handled Knives, 2007



PETER NAUMANN

Founder of Naumann Design & Professor at
Munich University of Applied Sciences

I love unusual and unique objects. Design is just the perfect job to create such things myself. Any task fascinates me as there is the chance to push boundaries. To start my own business right after college was quite a risk. But it was just the right time and I had the chance to work on many mind-blowing projects together with fantastic people. My clients are located in different countries and I am still learning from different cultures. Design is so much more about life than just about aesthetics. If I can touch someone's heart with my work I am happy.

Nevertheless Design is constantly changing and the business is tough. Meanwhile we have a global challenge and it is an honor to assist my students to develop their talent and their skills. We will face significant changes regarding our environment and design should be part of the solution and not of the problem.

Anyway there are ups and downs. My secret is my beloved family.



ANAX Single Seater Helicopter, 1991



HOREX Six-Cylinder Motorcycle, 2010



BEN PANAYI

Associate Lecturer, Central St Martins

Over the twenty years I have worked on a freelance basis. The exhibition of the toy at Zeev Aram's and at the Design Museum opened many doors as it differentiated me from other graduates.

I have tried many things, beginning with working for large high profile consultancies. I have evolved my skills and experience to working on my own designs for production under licence, to working for manufacturers offering consultancy.

A lot of the projects have been just to explore and rough out the idea; used as barometer, as an orientation of where the project could go, or with the intention of just exhibiting and publishing the findings (Nordic Wood Federation).

At the moment I spend half my week working for the Product Design course at the London Institute and the other half working for clients and my own ideas – this works for me at the moment.

There are many ways to play the game. Be flexible, try everything offered and enjoy the journey.



Child's Toy – Bissell, 1990



Out of the Woods, 2007

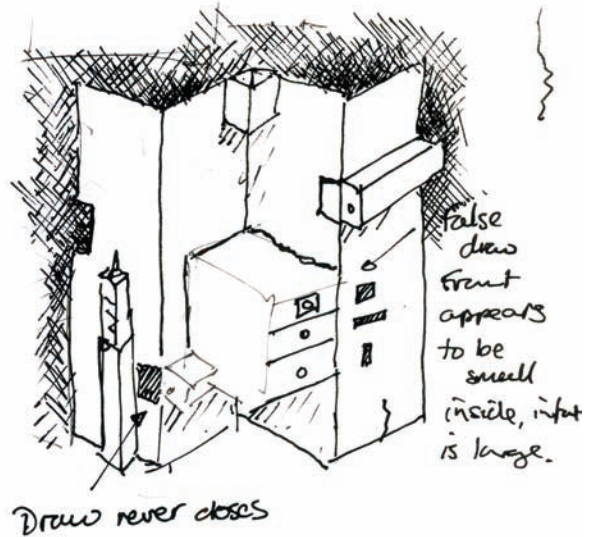


LUKE PEARSON
Co-Founder with Tom Lloyd
of PearsonLloyd

In the 23 years since making this piece so much has changed. I feel Design is now such a common word, often misused and strangely devalued. This graduation piece is also very representative of how different the influences on students are today.

Aesthetic inspiration came mainly from books and spanned a hundred years or more as there were far fewer design magazines, no web, no blogs, very few shows, no TopShop, fewer 'design' stores, and no Easy Jet. As a result my references were more historical, although my passion, was and still is, very much about technology and the future. Trends moved comparatively very slowly. I feel people tended to spend longer looking at fewer chosen areas. Perhaps in some ways this was myopic or singular, whereas today trends are often merged or flitter along like a series of interconnected sparks via the Internet, with no particular home or owner. The Internet has allowed a kind of constant global stream of consciousness morphing, fusing and diverging ideas and details almost instantly without conclusion. This speed is exacerbated by the fact that reality is now not about the physical but the imagined. Objects are often defined by computer imagery alone, devoid of craft or physicality via the ubiquitous rendering, done overnight in a bedroom, often never going beyond this unproven state.

Ironically computer aided design was exactly what I needed at the time of designing this piece which was worked out with a calculator, pencil and rubber, laboriously programmed by me, in an early computer package, before going off to the very first laser cutting machines in the UK. Looking at this piece I still can't quite believe it all fitted together without errors. Now I could draw everything in 3D and virtually press 'send to print' and know that all the parts would slot together on opening the package, which may well be produced in days, somewhere in the far East!



Room Divider Storage Unit, 1990

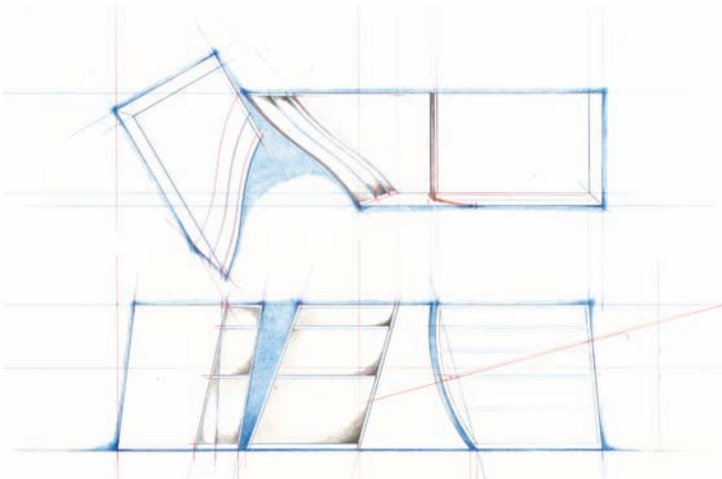


Cobi Chair, 2008
PearsonLloyd



TOM LLOYD

Co-Founder with Luke Pearson
of PearsonLloyd



Fruit IV Cabinet, 1991



Modus Chair, 2010
PearsonLloyd

Through its three interconnected elements, Fruit IV explores the relationship between architecture, objects and space. Reflecting some of Baudrillard's thinking that 'things' are enriched and informed by their relationship to other 'things', and that spaces are enriched and informed by the things that inhabit them, the tension between object and environment is a theme that has always been close to my personal practice. Following my degree in Furniture at Trent Polytechnic, my education continued when I switched to an Industrial Design Masters under Daniel Weil at the RCA. A second period with Daniel at Pentagram laid the foundations for the formation of PearsonLloyd with Luke in 1997.

At its inception, Luke and I were explicit in wanting to test the tensions between craft and mass production, product and furniture, culture and the market, and we have been fortunate enough to develop a thriving studio, which allows us to do just that. Whether in the realms of transport, workplaces, or city-spaces, design research at PearsonLloyd into the dialogue between people, place and object also continues to occupy a central role in all that we do. In the creation of a simple timber chair or a highly complex task product, there is a kind of magical craft that weaves together function, market, price, brief, client, culture and history – It has taken 20 years to understand just the basics of this process and I hope there is plenty more learning to do in the next 20.



SONYA WINNER

Founder of Sonya Winner Contemporary
Rugs and Modern Photography

The THEN: Over the past twenty years I have worked within a number of different creative fields believing once you have developed an eye for design this can be applied to different media.

I graduated with a BA in Graphic Design and after a year working in a large design consultancy formed my own small graphic design studio SWDA. Clients included New Labour, Credit Suisse and RICS, UCL Hospital, The Bescht Tellers, Woods of Windsor, Music for The World etc.

After my daughters were born I moved into book publishing which suited my life as a young mother. Creating ideas for books and selling them to publishers was exciting. At this time I also discovered the joys of digital photography. I set up a studio 'Modern Photography' specializing in spontaneous natural portraits of children. I love this work and have built up a strong and loyal customer base over the last 8 years.

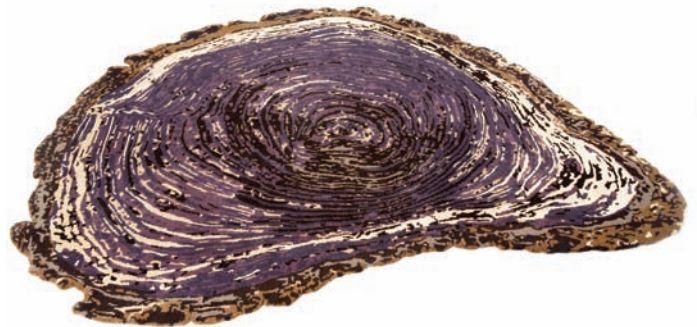
THE BEGINNING OF NOW: In 2005 Aram invited me to participate in their Aram 40 rug exhibition. As soon as I saw the vibrant colours of my design translated into thick wool pile and felt the difference it made to a room I was bitten by the rug bug!

The press picked up on this first rug (Kaleidoscope) and I was thrilled when it was short listed for The Elle Deco Awards. Shortly after this I fell from a horse breaking my back. It was unclear if I could continue working as a photographer but fortunately rug commissions arrived, so from my hospital bed I started to design rugs. Back to full mobility, I have developed rug designing into a business and my rugs are made to order viewable at www.sonyawinner.com. I continue to work as a portrait photographer.

Being a designer has hugely enriched my life. Having the opportunity to create things I love is a wonderful gift. I still feel the process of design gives the same sense of satisfaction NOW as it did THEN – over 20 years ago.



The Official British Rain Coat, 1989



Tree Trunk, 2010

The THEN–NOW Show

The THEN–NOW Show is an exhibition I anticipate will be a busy one. Not only because of the breadth of designers participating, nor the strength of the work shown, but because of what this exhibition stands for.

The exhibition takes its lead from the Aram Design's Graduate Shows that Ze'ev Aram, Director of The Aram Gallery, put on between 1988 and 1992. The intention for these shows, much like what The Aram Gallery does today, was to create an environment in which the exchange of ideas about design could take place. Then, the exchange was through conversation; the selected students were invited to explain their design motivations to industry and visitors. Now, the exchange is more visual; the objects do the talking.

Through its exhibition program The Aram Gallery presents a snapshot of current design thinking: a sneaky peek at the processes, materials and reasoning behind why a designer produces a certain design. For our young design audience this is an invaluable insight into the design process. So much so that tutors of design frequently bring their students to the gallery, using our exhibitors' work as first hand tools to exemplify techniques and ideas, as well as to challenge and inspire.

The THEN–NOW Show however, goes one step further in communicating the design process. It reveals not just a snapshot of what is happening NOW, but how it has evolved from the THEN. The strength of this comparative presentation is that it defines a context in which the work should be read, and in so doing, makes clear the growth from one piece to another.

Whilst these comparisons alone are revealing, reading the accompanying statements by each exhibitor is even more so. Each participant has written a short text reflecting on their experiences in the last two decades; something they wanted to be read whilst we

look at their work. Some are descriptive, some witty, some anecdotal, but each undeniably facilitates our understanding of the works shown.

With its clear focus on how designers think and work, The Aram Gallery presents The THEN–NOW Show as a unique inquiry in our ongoing quest to both unravel and promote understanding of the design process. Showing work by fifteen designers and spanning two decades, this exhibition provides us with our most notable case study yet.

In the course of planning this show, whilst liaising with each designer through countless visits, telephone calls and emails (!), we have spoken about the great boost they felt after being selected to exhibit in such a prominent show and at such an early stage of their career. It is our hope that this exhibition succeeds in transmitting some of that same passion for design to our audience. It is also worth mentioning that the enormous success these designers have achieved will no doubt also serve to inspire and encourage emerging design talents and young design students alike.

ELLIE PARKE

The Aram Gallery is an independently curated space that promotes and encourages understanding of contemporary design. We do this by presenting experimental and new work, with a special interest in the work of designers and artists in their early careers.

Director Zeev Aram
Acting Curator Ellie Parke

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Mon – Sat 10 – 6 (Thurs until 7)