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Course: Product design

Word count: 2364

What is the role of the designer/maker in the 21st century and how might this role change in the next 10 years? Discuss your ideas with reference to two of the practitioners or thinkers discussed in your lecture strand.

The role of designers and makers in the 21 century has evolved significantly since the 20th century as technology has grown massively and the environment now has a massive factor within the designs. A designer's role in 21st century is to be innovative and solve problems as their role is to find solutions to some of the world's most challenging designs. Human centred design is now playing a massive part in design as designers are working closer with the users to enable their experience with the product is better. The role of a designer is very much limited to one designer as now designers are constantly collaborating to enable to get the best possible design. Some designers rely on technology to help get the best designs they can, whereas some do not use technology at all and rely on traditional ways of making products and furniture. Two of the 21st century's leading designers and makers within product and furniture design are Bethan Gray and James Dyson. I have chosen to investigate the two designers as I feel their roles are dominant within design and will change dramatically from what they are now to what they will be in 10 years' time.

Bethan Gray is a Welsh Designer that was born in Cardiff. Gray was born to a Scottish father and Welsh mother although some of her ancestors coming from a Rajasthani clan. Bethan Gray is one of the UK's most celebrated furniture and homeware designers. "Her contribution to craft and design was recognised when she won Best British Designer at the 2013 Elle Design awards and more recently the coveted Best British Designer and an honorary Fellowship of Cardiff Metropolitan University." (ASTARISM, 2021). Bethan Gray design was established in 2008 and she creates luxury handcrafted furniture and homeware.

Gray's role in design is a lot different to many other designers as she uses a lot of local craftsmanship around the world to enable to get the best quality products. "She has spent two decades developing close relationships with master craftspeople all over the world". (Bethan Gray, 2023). To manufacture her furniture and products Bethan Gray likes to use a lot of traditional craftsmen around the world. Gray finds a way off balancing technology and traditional craft in the manufacturing off her designs. Collaborating with these craftsmen can often depend on the materials she uses as she pays a lot of attention into what material she uses in her designs as she uses a lot of traditional or rare materials. Although with times changing and technology growing this may have an effect on the way Gray designs and makes her work over the next 10 years.

Over the last few years sustainability has had a massive impact in design and Gray has tailored some of her designs so that they do not have any impact on the environment. According to Hitti (2019), Gray "teamed up with natural surface specialist Nature Squared to create a collection of iridescent furniture clad in leftover materials from the seafood and farming industries." This collaboration with Nature Squared is where she designed furniture that was made from waste materials in the seafood and farming industry, she created a range of furniture from shells and feathers which were getting thrown away. Gray thinks a lot about sustainability within her designs but does not let it limit her designs this project that she done is a way that she pushed the way natural materials are able to be used. She is well known for using a lot of rare materials such as marbles, leather, and birds eye maple.

In the next 10 years Bethan Gray's role in design and making will change due to the way the times are changing. Gray is all about collaboration and working with local craftsmen around the world this allows her to create connections with them. Gray uses these craftsmen because they are so skilled, and she can get the highest of quality products made. Gray does use some technology manufacturing processes, but she will use more and more as time goes on. Handmade products can only go so far and with technology advancing Gray may be limited with her design unless she uses these new processes. Technology will allow Gray to be free within her designs and create a large amount a lot quicker. Having craftsmen make these designs takes longer and making a bulk of products could take a long time whereas manufacturing through technology will speed up the process. Although this may take away the principle of what Gray is with the technology advancing, she may have to look at this option. Manufacturing through technology is now so popular as it is so advanced it's getting to the point where any designs can be made through it whether its CNC, 3D printing or resin printing the list is endless. "The automation of workplaces has led to an increase in skilled workers but a decrease in job opportunities, as machines have taken over the jobs previously done by humans." (BBC, 2023). The growth of handmade makers coming through could be very limited as machines are taking over jobs so Gray may be still able to use these craftsmen for now but how many will there be in the future could be very limited as everyone will be trained in programming the machines.

Gray will carry on progressing to make sustainable designs and collaborate with more companies that want to push sustainable materials. Although the way she uses rare materials in her work may be no longer in the future as people will not want these materials to be used for furniture as they could be causing harm to environment such as leather from animals which causes massive controversy in the world. "It's believed only 1% of maple trees possess the birds eye pattern." (Farabaugh. 2019). Gray uses a lot of bird's eye maple wood in her furniture which is a rare material that is difficult to find and hard to replant due to the small percentage of maple trees having the birds eye pattern within it. Due to how rare the material is it comes at a cost, and this is one reason that Gray's work is so expensive. Less trees getting produced and especially of this kind will have an effect on Gray's work as she may have to start using more common types of woods and use less rare materials this could have a huge effect on the cost of her work as people will not be paying for the high-end materials like they were before which put the cost of her furniture so high.

James Dyson is a British inventor and industrial design engineer. Dyson's company was founded in 2002 and his products are now being sold in 84 markets around the world. James Dyson is one of the Britain's most influential designers as he constantly is setting the standard and lead within design. Dyson brought new technology to the world on several occasions such as the bagless vacuum cleaner or the cordless vacuum cleaner.

James Dyson's role within design is to set the standards within design and bring other companies along with him as technology advances. Dyson prides himself on solving problems and developing products through the advances of new technologies. For years Dyson has been the first on the market with loads of new technology and the first big invention that changed the market was the first bagless vacuum cleaner that was brought onto the market in 1993. This changed the market completely as everyone was buying this Dyson vacuum cleaner and other companies were struggling due to Dyson having this new technology that other companies could not compete with. This pushed the rest of the companies to advance with the time so that they could compete with Dyson. Dyson carried

on bringing new products to the market and pushing forward the technology behind them. Dyson is the reason that design is where it is today as he constantly sets the standard. He invests large amounts of money to discover these new technologies. "Dyson says it will invest an additional \$3.67bn (£2.75bn) into new technologies and products over the next five years." (BBC,2020).

Sustainability has become a massive role in Dysons design in recent years. He has worked on using more energy efficient products and exploring ways to reduce the environmental impact that their products have on the environment. When Dyson first designed the bagless vacuum cleaner that had an environmental impact within it as changing the design so that bags weren't constantly being bought used and thrown out there was an alternative option that benefited the environment which was going bagless. In 1995 Dyson brought out a fully recycled plastic vacuum cleaner. Recycled products weren't well known back then although now they are popular. This is another sign of Dyson being a leader within the market proving to the world that he sets standards.

In the next 10 years James Dyson's role in design is going to change with the time due to new technologies advancing. Dyson is all about technology and using new technology to bring brand new products to the market. AI design is now becoming more and more popular with loads of software's using it. It is taking over the world of design and will carry to do so as the technology advances. "AI can be used to generate design options based on specific parameters and constraints. This can save designers time and effort by generating multiple options for them to choose from." (Designity, 2023). This software can be used to create loads of designs quickly with just a couple of words to describe what you need, it can bring outcomes such as various designs, the style and you can bring in sizes so that software can design to specific sizes. Dyson could bring this into his design in the next 10 years as he loves to advance with the technology, and this is the technology that is advancing. Dyson could see his designs be generated with AI instead of having designers within his company but could also being influenced a different way that could bring AI into his design by having products are controlled remotely or through voice commands. Dysons products are all very high advanced products where technology is the main part of the product as he prefers the user to have a product that functions better than the way it looks. Including AI into their design and manufacturing processes, Dyson can potentially create more intelligent, efficient, and user-friendly products that go with the growing trends in smart home technology. Whereas now Dyson is the one who introduces all the latest technology to the market and then the companies follow, in 10 years' time this could change massively as with the other companies could be using AI design to figure out this new technology and then they could be the ones who introduce the technology into the market instead of Dyson. If this did happen then this is one way that Dyson's role in design could change in the next 10 years.

Dyson will be bringing more sustainability into his designs and trying to lower the impact his designs have on the environment. His products include a lot of technology and electrical parts in it which are difficult to dismantle and recycle although I feel Dyson will try to find a way where you can recycle these parts or even send them back to Dyson so that some parts are able to be reused or dismantled and recycled in the right way. "Dyson engineers are developing core battery technologies, including cleaner, safer batteries with higher energy density, to maintain high performance." (Dyson, 2023). Dyson are already trying to find a way where they can make their electronics sustainable and more energy efficient benefiting

the customers and the environment. Dyson has a history of exploring new materials and manufacturing techniques. In 10 years, Dyson could be using cutting-edge materials that enhance the products aesthetics and is more beneficial to the environment.

Over the next decade, these designers will need to stay agile and embrace the new emerging technologies and using them within their design to meet the demands of the market. Although these may now be the designer's strong points, they will need to find a way to adapt to not get left behind in the market and keep on growing throughout design. I believe AI will take over the world of design and everyone will be dependent on it and be using it for the designs of their products. This will change the way the market is as new models of product will be coming out even faster as AI will speed up the designing so that its ready to go on the market in no time. This may change the quality over products as AI is best at replicating human tasks in a quicker time so there may just be more products on the market that are not of quality of what they are today. AI will change the number of jobs there are for designers as it does all the work a designer would usually do meaning the design world could be very limited to having people within the design industry. With all the way everything is getting manufactured by machines as well so there is only a certain amount of time until there are no handmade products, and everything is just machined. "21st century design is a practice where designers apply their focus to address the world's major problems." (InteractionDesign,2021). Designers will continue to focus on solving the world biggest problems although with times changing AI will play a massive part within this role as AI will be used to not just design the solution but will also be involved within the design limiting what the user does and pushing the amount technology does whether this is through voice commands or buttons the user will find themselves doing a lot less in years to come. Designer's roles are constantly changing day by day without anyone noticing and every now and then it will change dramatically due to what happens around the world.

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