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Title: Question 1: 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

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The role of a designer in the 21st century

Being introduced to practitioners through my lecture strand, the key speakers and theorists explain the journey through design and show how it will affect designers and makers in the next 10 years. The designer is responsible for the use of creative materials and their waste. Sustainability is a major problem and a topic that is trying to be resolved. Also, designers are trying to create meaning in their work despite judgements from society and the economy on questioning the power of art in today's society. Is it needed? What is the point? Is design relevant? Designers are desperate to change people's negative ways of thinking on the creative industry and prove that art is powerful, holding great ideas and innovations for the future decade. The language through art has been adapted and transformed through practitioners like William Morris who made it his mission to create beauty in the arts and crafts movement back in the 19th century.

Showing how the designer's role within the creative industry demonstrates sustainability and the control of waste.

One of the important roles as a designer in the 21st century involves the incredibly important topic around sustainability. I have come to the decision that for a designer to succeed, they must adhere to environmental rules to become sustainable in their work. Florida International University defines the principles on sustainable development "The overall goal of sustainable development is the long-term stability of the economy and environment; this is only achievable through the integration and acknowledgement of economic, environmental, and social concerns throughout the decision making process" (Emas, 2015, n/a). A modern approach to today's way of living allows for creatives to plan how designers and makers can reduce their carbon footprint and learn to work sustainably. The Welsh government in 2016 issued The Environmental act where they plan and monitor climate change, practice ecosystems and control waste. They encourage for communities to work together to help the reduction of waste.

The role of a designer in the 21st century is to innovate. Designers focus on finding new ways to create art. Sustainability is influenced in the creative industry to prevent the rise of pollution. There is a continuous demand and outreach for designers to optimize the tools they have and recognise the limitations on working. Within this role, it recognises the need for research. Admittedly, the future of design is unknown as trends, society and the industry changes and innovates rapidly. However, it is viable to recognise recurring patterns and to gain inspiration into designers' methods in their practice. An artists' manifesto on the role of a designer in the 21st century states "Finally, design is about communication, about understanding and harnessing a company's identity" (Klint, 2005, n/a). Evidently, the identity of a designer depends on how they manage their role. Their carbon footprint leaves a permanent mark on the planet. The role of a designer is primarily to recognise innovation and how to adapt this in a positive way. There are many considerations to take in the practise.

Muthu's article, a study conducted to see hypothesis on the carbon footprint of recycling at the end of life, 50% cotton and 50% polyester. The results showed '1 kg of polyester fabric created more carbon footprint compared to 1 kg of cotton fabric. And when both of them were recycled, cotton brought net zero result out of recycling (due to cut-off at recycling process)' (Muthu, 2012, n/a). The results are appalling. For the role of a textile designer for example, this means that the entire process of sorting, producing and packing amounts to a large part to play in creating their carbon footprint. The recognition is made on how to redesign materials.

Designers reforming waste in a fashion context

In a designers' practise, already waste is being reformed. Waste is becoming something that is beautiful. An article, '*Reducing waste, wearing science*'. I noticed a fashion designer, Suzanne Lee, who launched a bio couture line with her practise in Fashion Design. She grows bacteria and designs clothing patterns out of the natural material. Designers are trying to find methods of working sustainably. Lee is experimenting with this natural method. Early development is shown in the image below where the jacket demonstrates an investigative process into natural design. In the next 10 years, we may find ourselves with full garments within collections walking down the runway.



IMAGE 1

Biocouture jacket design, Lee, S, (2011)

Language in art and design, reflecting on history.

Further to this, the role of a designer involves calculation, skill, hand craft, technical and traditional methods of analysis. William Morris, a Utopian craftsman inspired the Arts and Craft movement during the 19th Century. The role of William Morris plays a historical influence on how designers in the 21st century adapt to pattern design, textile and making of an object. Morris has inspired designers to create in a different way. William Morris has led me to find John Ruskin, a philosopher during the 1800s who led the way into reforming beliefs of what it means to be a designer. An author of the article '*Biography and Influence of John Ruskin, Writer and Philosopher*', Jackie Craven wrote "Ruskin's writings paved the way for a return to craftsmanship and all things natural." (Craven, 2019). My ideas for the future of a designer gravitate towards focusing on how designers through history have allowed for innovation to push the creative industry in a positive direction adhering to craft and technical skill.

During an interview on what change in design means for the world, Berger states "Design tries to take on a challenge or a need and figure out how to solve it." (Berger, 2009). Berger in his interview speaks about how design is like problem solving. It needs a creative solution. This juxtaposes against Richard Kraut's ideology where he states, 'Human beings cannot satisfy the conditions necessary to have perfect knowledge of the future' (Kraut, 1994). There demonstrates a difference in expert opinion from where Berger reckons design is a problem in aid of creative solution, to where Kraut demonstrates how humans cannot have the knowledge for what happens next. A common opinion has been found where on my research into finding the role of a designer, Deepak Mehta states too that design was seen as 'define the problem, find a solution, and the solution was often very much manufacturing agnostic'. However, in a later answer she sees the future of design as hybrid learning. I agree with Mehta in the way that the designers' issues involve encouraging for the role of a designer to be a blended skill, though not only illustrative techniques, but the making and creating of a product or object furthering my approach to push the skill in design for the future decade. Therefore, it is highly possible in my opinion that design can change the world. In the next 10 years design has the multidisciplinary approach to construct possibilities for the future.

Emotion through art and design. Designers' behaviours in their role.

Does design bring joy? A designer of the 21st century naturally speaks through art. The art may be socially, environmentally, or even politically influenced. However, through this process, joy, happiness, and emotion comes out in their work. A TED talk by Donald Norman explains how emotion is a key tool in design to achieve happiness. He explains 'if you're happy, things work better because you're more creative.' (Norman, 2003, 6:11m) The empowering statement made by Norman makes me realise how important it is for a designer of these times to question what direction their art can take them in within the next 10 years. Norman categorises emotion design processes. The visceral and behavioural approach within emotional design occurs within the subconscious where a reaction causes response. 'Behavioural design is all about feeling in control' (Norman, 2003, 8:15m). Consequently, inhabits reflection in the super-ego. As the role of a designer/maker,

Normans' analogy influences a response through how art can adapt and change in the years to come.

Emotion and perception, the science behind the role of a designer

The definition of the word '*emotion*' implies feelings, sensations, and perceptive means. Through my research, I discovered the definition 'Emotions are complex responses to perceptions. They work by generating (mostly temporal) physical and chemical changes in our bodies and brains to adapt and better respond to our surroundings.' (Ospina, 2016). Designers and makers contemplate emotion to understand complex tools which are used to investigate future trends and changes in the creative industry. The role will change through technical and digital sources. This in turn will develop cognitive abilities. Senses, perceptions and feelings will change with the direction of the makers' work.

From an early age, we are taught through cognitive processes such as thinking, connecting, problem solving and knowing. All these processes are vital in life. As a designer, it is important to put these in place to plan the future. To contradict this, Gopnik states "Psychologists have found that counterfactual thinking is absolutely pervasive in our everyday life and deeply affects our judgments, our decisions, and our emotions." (Gopnik, 2009, p21). The role of a designer requires natural creativity. But, from a young age we are taught that there is a complete divide between fantasy and reality. This being taught, allows for a disconnection in finding meaning creatively.

Changing the façade, a designer in the 21st century

Another way the role of a designer in the 21st century performs is through composing trend forecasters. These are vital for a designer to see what emerges future trends. Fascinated, I have become familiar with The Doughnut Economy Lab where they investigate creative problems, work as a team and come up with probable solutions. They do not only focus of the professional role of a designer, but they also focus on how this is impacted on our everyday lives. What stood out to me was how they came up with several issues surrounding the design waste problems in the 21st century. One of which states 'lack of emotional attachment with objects and waste.' Previously, I never used to think about how waste could retain an emotion. So, when speaking about human behaviours, it should become natural to feel a sense of passion to the object made. The parts that do not qualify for use should become vital into becoming something else, to be reformed in its quality and meaning. Overall, for a desirable future, we need to emerge into feeling and sensing our waste. The Doughnut Economy Lab also states that designers are partially responsible for this. 'Designers extract raw materials and add value to them through the act of design. Designers make things desirable and contribute to the quest for novelty.' As I have mentioned previously, the main message is to improve on finding attachments to objects and exerting meaning.

In a recent video, I found myself drawn to the idea of reinterpreting what it means to be a designer in the 21st Century. In 2012, Matthew Manos spoke about the idea of changing how designers are seen. He mentioned "change the design industry

through disruptive innovation intention.” (Manos, 2012). I found myself drawn to his intention and ideology behind what it means to be a designer. The intention that ‘designers only make facades’ plays a huge part in the social and economic sector when relating to the design industry. This means that unfortunately there are consistent views that art just makes money. As a designer, it is our obligation to change this mindset where what’s beautiful sells over the controversial mindset, to just make money. This relates to an inspiring statement “‘There will always be a market of people who want something that isn't seen everywhere, and that isn't available to everyone,” says the New York designer David Kleinberg.’ (McKeough, 2019).

On this same controversial mindset, an article states ‘students are being discouraged from thinking creatively, being more experimental and, perhaps, ‘failing’ and learning from their mistakes.’ (Exton, 2018). This ideology again, relates back to what I mentioned previously about being taught as children where there is a divide between fantasy and reality. It is a wrong way of thinking. How are designers meant to pursue their role in the 21st century? The next 10 years will be difficult to dissatisfy these judgements on the creative industry. It is proven that in this same article ‘Between 2012 and 2017, entries for GCSE Design and Technology dropped by 32 percent, Performing Arts by 26 percent, Drama by 14 percent, Music by 8 percent and Art by 1 percent.’. These are worrying figures and there are hopes to improve these statistics within the next 10 years. As a designer myself, I aim for the next decade, to obtain change with passion. I will do this in my discipline by acknowledging the change and influence to reverse these judgements.

The reversal in judgement is formed from designers alike Yinka Llori, a British/Nigerian furniture designer who proves there is beauty in art. Llori primarily focuses on (un)functional chair designs which connect with parables related to culture and meaning. In 2017, Llori spoke in a conference. The artist spoke about his work and explained how he has grown as a furniture designer using life lessons and cultural Nigerian parables relating to his objects. The role of Llori as a designer in the 21st century extenuates through dedication in revealing meaning of objects and involving himself in emotion. A statement from Llori explains “It’s while sitting on chairs that we all share our thoughts and emotions. Just imagine if chairs could tell your secrets” (Llori, 2011)

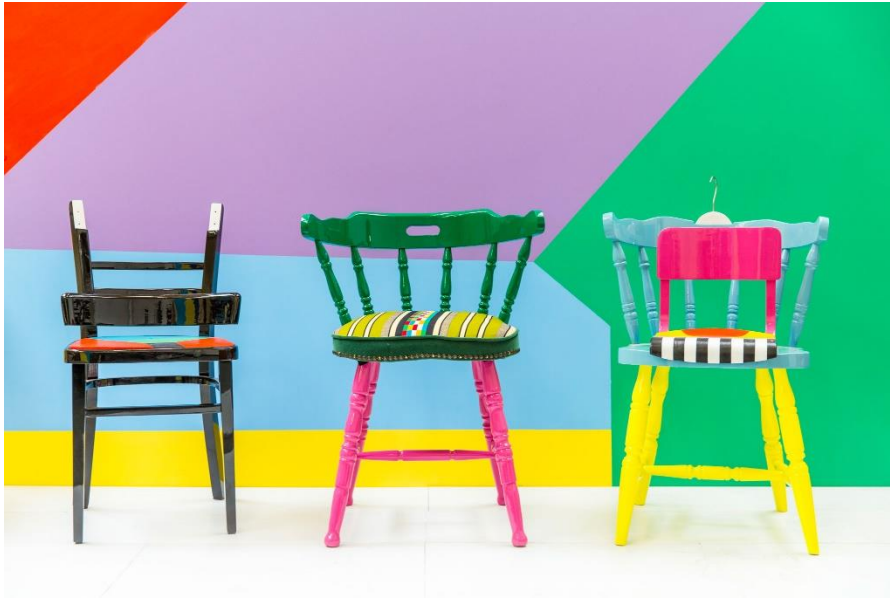


IMAGE 2

Yinka Llori chairs, furniture designer, (2017), NATAL.

As a designer, not only does Llori accentuate the detail, colour, and form in his work, he effortlessly allows for his audience to grasp emotion and see its meaning. The structure of the chairs does not always physically conform in a functional way. Llori allows for the chair's structure to tell a story. Therefore, as a designer he allows for a connection to be set between the object and the audience. This will change in the next 10 years from influences through designers and demand. But also could be from what materials there are to use. There is a demand for designers to focus on using and reusing natural product. Already, Llori adapts to this way of working and thinking by upcycling chairs and transforming them into meaningful objects.

Reflecting on the role of a designer in the 21st century

To reflect, the role of a designer in the 21st century involves a complex attitude and process within the social, economic, and personal ideologies of design. In the next 10 years I expect to see change in the way art is seen, the language, environmental causes and ways of thinking. The variation of opinions from experts and designers themselves has allowed for me to dive in deep to see what design could potentially become in the next 10 years. Historical theorists, philosophers, and craftsmen such as William Morris and John Ruskin have given me the ideas to gain today's theories on how times have changed and how design is seen. There is clearly a controversial issue from my findings, money making and the idea that art has a strong economic power focus. However, grows importance towards sustainable resources and demonstrate how designers can continue to reduce their carbon footprint and limit waste materials.- We know from designers like Yinka Llori, that waste or old product can be transformed into something beautiful which tells a personal story. The future is in our hands and although as designers we cannot predict the unknown, creatively, we can push for a positive role for the next 10 years.

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