

UK OK?

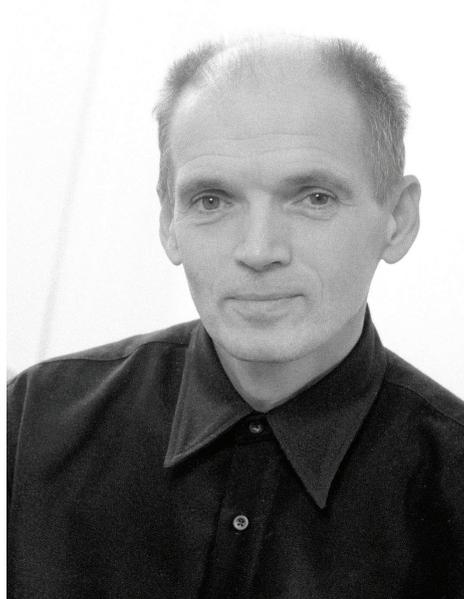
Leading figures from across the industrial design industry offer their response to the result of June's referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union

We woke up on the morning of Friday 24th June (or bleary-eyed remained transfixed to the television) to discover that the people of the UK had voted to leave the European Union. From the moment the result became clear both the pound and the stock markets tumbled as Brexit ushered in unprecedented economic and political uncertainty.

But what does the decision mean for the design industry? The UK is home to some of the world's most innovative design businesses – part of a creative sector that time and again has been highlighted as fundamental to the country's future economic prosperity. Furthermore, many international companies have a design presence in the UK, eager to take advantage of our exceptional (multi-national talent pool, proximity to the continent, and unique design heritage.

Will Brexit destabilize the design world or can we hope to be stronger as an industry outside of the EU?

Although the exact nature of the UK's withdrawal from the EU is yet to be known, the referendum result is without doubt a monumental political moment. In response, New Design has canvassed opinion from leaders across the UK's design community investigating the challenges and opportunities that Brexit might bring to the world of design.



| Adrian Stokes

Adrian Stokes, founder and director of ASA Designers

In the run up to the Brexit vote, dread turned to farce, then to something like normality; at least on the surface. Underneath clients manufacturing abroad are paying a price they can't pass onto customers. The customers have decided that for now prudence is best and aren't buying. The downturn before the vote was worrying and since has become alarming for some. Personally I'm glad I switched from architecture to industrial design 43 years ago.

I was always sceptical about wasteful, selfish, globalization, 34 years in London made me love diversity but loathe the disparity in wealth and opportunity; a problem which afflicts the entire planet. We in the west have to try harder and accept less for it. In the UK we've developed an utterly misplaced sense of entitlement and importance leaving me with an over whelming feeling that through Brexit we've turned our back on our friends. Our economy is over dependent on services that sadly aren't dependent on being in the UK.

With major chunks of the manufacturing we do have, wholly owned subsidiaries of corporations that owe us no loyalty, our small overpopulated island is in for hard times.

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