

Neville Brody

Neville Brody: One of the Most Influential Art Designers

Outline

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- II. Brody's Project
- III. Brody's First Work
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## I. The Beginning of Brody's Career

Neville Brody is one of the most influential art designers in the contemporary art world. He has created numerous works that challenged conventions of the graphic design. His creativity and his ideas have contributed greatly to the world of design. Brody is a London born artist who studied at the Homsey School of Art. He continued his studies at the London College of Printing.<sup>1</sup>

He started his career in 1980 when he started working for Rocking Russian and then he joined Stiff Records. He created a variety of covers for albums. In 1981, he started working for The Face which was one of the most influential street magazines at that time.<sup>2</sup> Brody was the art director of the magazine which became even more popular due to Brody's creativity and boldness. He also published several books on graphic design which became very popular among the specialists of the same sphere. Some of his works are *The Last Treatment*, *Zebra Club*, *Thirst by Clock*.<sup>3</sup>

## II. Brody's Project

Neville Brody started his own company in the 1990s. In 1994, his company was named Research Studio.<sup>4</sup> The company has completed a number of significant projects. Thus, Brody and his company have recently developed a new "visual language" for ITV.<sup>5</sup> Apart from creating new stunning works and running a company, Brody participates in a variety of projects.

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1. "Neville Brody: Biography 09," *Research Studios*, November 23, 2012

[http://www.researchstudios.com/NB\\_Bio\\_09.pdf](http://www.researchstudios.com/NB_Bio_09.pdf).

2. Ibid.

3. "Neville Brody and Fetish Records," *John Coulthart*, November 23, 2012

<http://www.johncoulthart.com/feuilleton/2006/04/23/neville-brody-and-fetish-records/>.

4. "Neville Brody: Biography 09," *Research Studios*, November 23, 2012

[http://www.researchstudios.com/NB\\_Bio\\_09.pdf](http://www.researchstudios.com/NB_Bio_09.pdf).

5. Angus Montgomery, "ITV Moves Towards Centre-Stage," *Design Week*, November 16, 2012

<http://www.designweek.co.uk/editors-view/itv-moves-towards-centre-stage/3035599.article>.

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More so, he started a very interesting project, Anti Design Festival, which is now held annually.<sup>6</sup> The festival aims at giving creative artists an opportunity to express themselves and introduce new ideas. It is also a great opportunity “to produce completely new work without the imposition of market restrictions”.<sup>7</sup> One of the major ideas of the festival is to challenge the conventions which tend to persist in the art world.

It is necessary to note that many of his works become inspirational examples for novel artists. Most of his works were commercially successful. Renowned publishers are eager to work with the designer. For instance, The Times, which had hard times in the 1990s, addressed Brody who reshaped the newspaper completely. Brody had a really great job as the newspaper managed to regain its popularity. Brody’s work included “the creation of a new font called Times Modern, a major restyling of the navigation of the newspaper, a new masthead, new crest, iconography, new weather icons, style-sheet layouts and suggestions for picture use/editing”.<sup>8</sup> Notably, the artist also created a very helpful “total tool-kit”.<sup>9</sup> It is possible to note that Brody taught The Times team to remain up-to-date and close to the reader.

### III. Brody’s Very First Work

As has been mentioned above, his works often became sensational as each of them contained some novel idea, new approach, a brand-new vision. It is possible to analyze any of Brody’s works as one can find a variety of messages and lessons

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6. “Neville Brody Wants You,” *Change Observer*, November 23, 2012

<http://changeobserver.designobserver.com/feature/neville-brody-wants-you/14648/>.

7. “Neville Brody Wants You,” *Change Observer*, November 23, 2012

<http://changeobserver.designobserver.com/feature/neville-brody-wants-you/14648/>.

8. “A Profile of Neville Brody, Founder of Research Studio, Which Redesigned The Times,” *Design Council*, November 23, 2012 <http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/about-design/types-of-design/graphic-design/neville-brody-profile/>.

9. *Ibid.*

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to learn. However, his very first work made for Rocking Russian is worth a particular attention. This is the cover for the album *Love and Loneliness* by The Motors.<sup>10</sup> The artist notes that punk culture had a particular influence on him. Interestingly, it disgusted him first, but soon he found a profound meaning and roots of the culture. He learnt to be anarchistic. The first cover made was a kind of illustration of his readiness to be an art anarchist, a person to break many conventions.

The artist calls the cover a “pre-computer” work as computers were unavailable for artists at that time, they simply “did not exist” for graphic designers.<sup>11</sup> This makes the work even more relevant. It is necessary to note that the artist combined three ‘conventional’ colors: black, white and red. However, the combination, i.e. the frame, itself was quite novel. The artist did not make a single background as all of these colors can be regarded as backgrounds. Brody used stripes of red color, which are really intriguing as it is unclear whether red or black or white is the background.

The images revealed are certain shadows whose presence is tangible but still uneven. The artist also stresses that they tried to use every possible space to fill it.<sup>12</sup> The cover (inside out) and the record bear images. Importantly, every part of the design tessellates into a complete mosaic conveying specific ideas. The use of fonts against different backgrounds is also exceptional.

#### IV. Brody’s Motto

The work is a certain kind of discourse between avant-garde and punk or more generally, pop culture. Avant-garde with its black fonts and images against the white background is challenged by the first Brody’s work. The major message the

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10. “Neville Brody,” *The Black Sheet Project*, November 23, 2012  
[http://www.blanksheetproject.com/creative/1/neville\\_brody](http://www.blanksheetproject.com/creative/1/neville_brody).

11. “Neville Brody,” *The Black Sheet Project*, November 23, 2012  
[http://www.blanksheetproject.com/creative/1/neville\\_brody](http://www.blanksheetproject.com/creative/1/neville_brody).

12. Ibid.

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work conveys is revolution. The artist calls people for changing the very basis of their existence. The work reveals the idea of the complexity of the modern world that can be framed in really simple frames. Brody's first work happened to become a certain motto or his manifesto. He has never betrayed his earliest inclinations. He has worked to change the art world. He has tried to use revolutionary approach to everything he could. Brody has succeeded as many graphic designers are inspired by Brody's works and ideas. Novel artists are ready to create and break laws and conventions, which is the art itself.

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