# New Designers unveils playful, future-focused identity for 40th anniversary



New Designers, the premier showcase of graduate design talent in the UK, has unveiled a striking new campaign identity to commemorate its 40th anniversary. The reimagined visual direction, crafted by long-standing creative partner TM Studio, aims to usher in a future-focused experience for this summer's milestone edition. In contrast to nostalgia, the design promotes playful abstraction while fostering a sense of community over individualism.

Since its inception in 1985, New Designers has established itself as a critical platform for UK design graduates, serving not only as a launching pad for many to enter the industry but also as a hotspot for employers seeking emerging talent across diverse disciplines, including textiles, furniture, digital design, and the gaming sector. The fair has perpetually balanced the youthful exuberance of new designers with the professional ambitions that drive the industry.

With this 40th edition approaching, TM Studio faced the challenge of honouring the event’s rich legacy while avoiding a sentimentality that could tether it to the past. Creative director Johnny Tsevdos emphasised the importance of framing the anniversary as a celebration of the future, stating, “It was important that our interpretation of the anniversary was celebratory rather than harking back.” This forward-thinking ethos informed the design concept, symbolised by a hyperreal, balloon-inspired central element that encapsulates both familiarity and abstraction.

This unique visual motif does not merely evoke birthday celebrations; it invites deeper contemplation. The engraved '40', combined with surreal reflections and an unconventional texture, creates a multidimensional narrative. "We resorted to 'engraving' the number into a balloon," Johnny explains. "It immediately made it more abstract… In that obscurity, we were hoping to represent the diversity of New Designers."

The campaign not only reflects a visual evolution but responds to the shifting dynamics of the design landscape. The choice to focus less on individual designers and more on a collective visual language marks a strategic pivot in response to a world increasingly centred on digital engagement. Johnny notes, “Our designs now avoid a single 'hero' focal point and instead serve as a kind of visual landscape,” highlighting a trend towards simpler yet impactful imagery.

This shift resonates with a broader cultural climate characterised by collaboration and collective authorship, where community is increasingly valued over individual accolades. “Not to get too philosophical,” Johnny remarks, “but it's fair to say that society could do with less egos and more community and collaboration.” Such sentiments reflect a growing recognition of the importance of shared experiences in fostering creativity and innovation.

The campaign's aesthetic also draws from a diverse array of influences, merging elements of kitsch and craft. Jeff Koons' glossy balloon sculptures serve as a notable reference point, yet TM Studio strives for a more nuanced approach. “We challenged ourselves to try to take the balloon into a more palatable and aesthetically engaging place,” Johnny explains, further asserting that their interpretation aims to evoke multiple design disciplines without specifically tying itself to one.

Navigating the complex expectations of a diverse audience—which includes students, industry professionals, university representatives, the press, and the general public—remains an ongoing challenge for New Designers. Johnny admits, “It's a really broad audience,” and emphasises the need to balance creativity with accessible colour palettes and typography that resonate across the spectrum.

This abstract and inclusive approach not only appeals to professionals but also intrigues students and engages casual observers, effectively inviting participation from all. Thus, while the campaign celebrates New Designers’ past, it equally asserts that the organisation is poised for a collective, inquisitive, and open future, ensuring that it remains a pivotal platform in the design community for decades to come.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/), [[2]](https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/), [[2]](https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/)
* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.creativeboom.com/news/new-designers-reveals-future-facing-identity-by-tm-to-mark-40th-anniversary/> - New Designers, the UK's leading showcase of graduate design talent, has unveiled a new campaign identity to mark its 40th anniversary. Designed by long-time creative partner TM Studio, the refreshed visual direction sets out a future-facing tone for this summer's milestone edition, eschewing nostalgia in favour of playful abstraction and a renewed focus on community over individualism.
3. <https://tmprojectslondon.com/exhibitions> - TM Projects is a London-based art gallery and cultural platform that curates exhibitions and events.
4. <https://mediacentre.kallaway.com/new-designers/press-releases/-connecting-with-the-natural-world-visionary-designers-unveil-work-at-new-designers-2023> - The New Designers 2023 event showcased visionary designers unveiling work that connects with the natural world.
5. <https://thermas.co.uk/winners-2023/> - The Recruitment Marketing Awards 2023 recognised outstanding campaigns, including the Home Office's innovative recruitment website.
6. <https://modernshows.com/newsletters/september-2023-newsletter/> - The September 2023 newsletter from Modern Shows highlights events like the London Design Fair and features on vintage poster brand Orson & Welles.
7. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joanneshurvell/2024/09/20/london-fashion-week-40th-anniversary-highlights/> - Forbes' article highlights emerging talent showcased during the 40th anniversary of London Fashion Week in 2024.