AN ICON YOU SHOULD KNOW...

Neville Brody

English graphic designer, typographer and art director, born 1957

Neville Brody is an English graphic designer who changed how magazines looked in the 1980s. As art director of *The Face* and then *Arena*, he treated type as image and drew new letters for headlines. He went on to design typefaces, newspapers and brand identities, and he taught at the Royal College of Art. Read this page in about five minutes, then use the links at the end to look deeper.



Neville Brody. Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.0. Full credit on page 3.

FURTHER LOOKING

The Graphic Design School: The history of *The Face*, with Brody's covers and mastheads. thegraphicdesignschool.com

German Museum of Books and Writing: A short history of Industria. mediengeschichte.dnb.de

Royal College of Art: His staff page with a short bio. rca.ac.uk

Website: Brody Associates

Video: D&AD Legends of Design: Neville Brody

Instagram: @brody_associates

01 Fact Sheet

1957	Born April 23 in Southgate, London.
1975	Takes a foundation course at Hornsey College of Art.
1976	Starts a graphics degree at the London College of Printing. Punk shapes his early work.
Early 1980s	Designs record covers for Stiff Records, Fetish Records and Cabaret Voltaire.
1981	Becomes art director of *The Face* and stays until 1986.
1984	His Industria letters appear in headlines in *The Face*.
1987	Becomes art director of *Arena* and stays until 1990.
1988	Thames and Hudson publishes *The Graphic Language of Neville Brody*, with a show at the V&A.
1990	Linotype releases three of his typefaces, Industria, Arcadia and Insignia.
1991	Starts FUSE with Jon Wozencroft, a magazine that came with new experimental fonts.
1994	Founds Research Studios in London. It later becomes Brody Associates.
2011	Becomes dean of the School of Communication at the Royal College of Art.

Life and career Milestones tied to the key works

THREE KEY WORKS, PAGE 2

1984 Industria

1986 Arcadia

1992 FF Blur

02 Three Key Works

Brody's magazine covers are still in copyright, so they are linked under Further Looking. The three works below are his typefaces, shown in openly licensed type samples.

1984: Industria

Tall, tight letters for magazine headlines

Brody drew Industria while he was art director of *The Face*. The German Museum of Books and Writing says it was used for headings in the magazine from 1984. The letters are tall and narrow, with rounded corners and square inner spaces. The museum notes that its stern look echoed the 1930s. Linotype released a digital version in 1990.

LOOK FOR Narrow letters packed close together | Rounded outer corners with square insides



Industria, 1984. Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

1986: Arcadia

Thin lines for Arena

Creative Bloq reports that Brody created the Arcadia letters in 1986 for a banner in *Arena*, the magazine he art directed after *The Face*. Arcadia is very tall and thin, with hairline strokes and sharp contrast. Linotype sold it with Industria and Insignia in 1990, as one package of Brody faces.

LOOK FOR Hairline strokes next to heavy ones | Letters stretched very tall



Arcadia, 1986. Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

1992: FF Blur

A font that looks out of focus

Brody was a founding partner of the type library FontShop, which published FF Blur in its FontFont line. FF Blur has soft, fuzzy edges, as if the letters were seen through fogged glass. The Museum of Modern Art dates FF Blur to 1992 and holds it in its collection. Some sources give 1991 instead.

LOOK FOR Edges that fade instead of stopping | Letters that still read at large sizes

See FF Blur in the MoMA collection →



FF Blur, 1992. Wikimedia Commons, CC0 1.0.

TRY THIS

Brody drew new letters for magazine headlines instead of using a font off the shelf. Pick one word, such as the name of a club or a band. Draw it three ways on a grid: once tall and narrow, once very thin, and once with soft edges. Which one feels most like the subject?

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REFLECT

Think About It

Brody drew new letters for the magazines he art directed instead of using fonts everyone else had. When is it worth making your own letters, and when is a ready-made font the better choice?

03 Sources

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IMAGE CREDITS

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Reinhard Jahn. *Industria Solid*. Type specimen, 24 Oct. 2005, via Wikimedia Commons. Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 (relicensed from GFDL). Accessed 23 Nov. 2026.

Roger Koslowski. *Typefaces Brody*. Type specimen of Industria and Arcadia, Dec. 2006, via Wikimedia Commons. Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0. Accessed 23 Nov. 2026. Cropped to the Arcadia line and shown at its original small size.

Affegass. *FF Blur Font Specimen*. 28 June 2022, via Wikimedia Commons. Dedicated to the public domain under CC0 1.0. Accessed 23 Nov. 2026. Rendered from SVG.

Process Circles. Full Color Icons. Supplied series branding asset.