

Five key projects by designer and Dezeen Awards judge Faye Toogood

By Elisa Barkan



London-based designer [Faye Toogood](#) has joined [Dezeen Awards 2024](#) as a judge. Here, she selects five projects that best reflect her work.

While the founder of the contemporary British brand [Toogood](#) identifies herself as a designer, with work spanning [interiors](#), objects, [furniture](#), [clothing](#) and [art](#), her practice is often referred to as multidisciplinary.

"For myself, I like the word tinker. I tinker with a lot of things, but I'm a master of nothing. I like working in interiors, objects, furniture, clothing and art," she told Dezeen.

"There's less of a defined rulebook because of that, helped also by the fact I didn't study design but fine art and history of art."

"I'm a designer, not an artist"

The British designer considers her design philosophy to be deeply rooted in four fundamental principles.

"My work is and has always been rooted in four integral concepts, or four ways of seeing, which are drawing, material, sculpture and landscape," said Toogood. "I don't see any difference between a coat, a chair or an interior. The approach and the ethos are the same," she continued. "Everything I do and the studio does is relevant – it has a place, it is desired and it's not just for me. That's why I'm a designer, not an artist."



*Faye Toogood is a British designer who works across a diverse range of disciplines.
Photo by Delfino Sisto Legnani*

As a designer, Toogood explains how she relies on industry and manufacturing to realise her vision, emphasising the synergy between human skill and [technological](#) innovation.

"I'm very interested in craft, but even more so, in how I can industrialise craftsmanship," she said. "I'm a designer who is interested in how as an individual you can bring man and machine together."

The British designer is currently working on an upcoming [fashion](#) collection alongside her sister Erica Toogood, as well as a new range of furniture and collaborations for the furniture fair [Salone del Mobile](#) in Milan.

She also [recently debuted an outdoor furniture collection](#) with Finnish furniture brand [Vaarnii](#) at the [Stockholm Furniture Fair](#).

Toogood among Dezeen Awards 2024 judges

Dezeen Awards 2024 launched last week in partnership with [Bentley](#). On Tuesday we announced our first five Dezeen Awards judges, including architects [Suchi Reddy](#) and [Gaetano Pesce](#), British-Ghanaian designer [Giles Tettey Nartey](#) and interior designer [Bobby Berk](#).

Submit your entry by Wednesday 27 March to save 20 per cent on entry fees. Click [here](#) to find out more.

Read on to find Toogood's views on the five projects that best represent the work of her studio:



Featuring four sturdy legs and a bowl-like seat, the chair's design has expanded to furniture including a coffee table. Photo by Mathew Donaldson

Roly-Poly, 2014

"The Roly-Poly chair has been recognised as an iconic design of the last decade. Launched in 2014 as part of Assemblage 4, its smooth, rounded, voluptuous shape was inspired by my experience of motherhood.

"Further editions of the Roly-Poly chair have explored working with different solid materials and finishes, from brushed aluminium to gold leaf. Assemblage 5, entitled

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Earth, Moon, Water pushed the boundaries of manufacture with chairs cast in solid cob composite, patinated [bronze](#) and crystal barium [glass](#).

"With its four plump legs and dish-shaped seat, the Roly-Poly chair's generous form has evolved into dining chairs, stools, drawers and a cantilever desk. Examples of the Roly-Poly sit comfortably in leading global [museum](#) collections, as well as comfortable and beautiful homes.

"I had children and then Roly-Poly came. Round, full, soft. I developed a raw [fibreglass](#) where the fibres are exposed. In this primordial jelly finish, fibreglass has its glow. It is incredibly durable and has such a unique personality, meaning that no two pieces are the same."



*Toogood's third solo exhibition in collaboration with Friedman Benda features shellac-stained oak.
Photo by Genevieve Lutkin*

Assemblage 7: Lost and Found, 2023

"This is my third solo exhibition with Friedman Benda. The roots of this body of work are signalled in the title, which implies an archaeological situation, things that have been somehow lost from view, and then reclaimed.

"The two materials used have a powerful resonance in British history. [Oak](#) is the country's most reliable building timber and was the principal choice for furniture in the medieval era. Those simple, muscular forms were beloved of the British arts and crafts, and exert their evident influence here.

"Particularly when gathered together, the pieces recall the rings of the shaped standing stones that are Britain's most ancient works of art. I felt like I was revealing something that had always been there. Something almost prehistoric that had been lost to time, and it was my job to find it again.

"A friend told me they thought that the pieces were romantic. I think there's a lot of love in there, love, connection, relationships, intimacy, as well as the landscape of the body, bodies together, ageing and growing."



*Inspired by painter Philip Guston, Collection 020 is a colourful clothing range.
Photo by Scott Gallagher*

Collection 020 / SS24

"Collection 020 has a rebellious and playful spirit, inspired by painter Philip Guston. Initially a member of the abstract expressionist brotherhood, he later turned his back on all that painterly purity with an outpouring of visceral, brutish, figurative and pink work, greeted with absolute horror by the critics.

"This collection reasserts our parameters and reaffirms what is important about Toogood and made with Toogood's chuck-it-on pleasurable ease: nothing too structured, but still with a sense of sculptural scale.

"I think Toogood is often considered quite a monochrome brand and I wanted to chuck that in the bin. In Collection 020 you'll find a lot of electric-bright, life-giving pink. I

wanted there to be a sense of drama and play in the collection – something of the dressing-up box.

"Ten years ago Erica and I created Toogood clothing from a place of rebellion – it was very black and quite angry. I don't necessarily feel angry now, I'm looking for joy, laughter and playfulness."



*Studio Toogood's voluminous ceramic homeware collection was informed by rising pastry dough.
Photo by Mathew Donaldson*

Dough Collection

"The Dough range – named to highlight the common ground of kneading in both baking and pottery – comprises five pieces: a mug, a jug, a platter, a bowl, and a vase. It is the studio's first dedicated collection of ceramic homeware.

"Hand-shaped in Toogood studio before being cast in stoneware, the pieces share a pared-back yet playful simplicity. The mugs and pitchers boast chunky, outsized handles, while the platter has a rounded swelling quality that calls to mind rising dough. "The Dough collection began with the mug and the jug being hand sculpted, reshaped along the way for the right grip. The plump, swelling forms were then used to design the bowl, platter, and vase.

"The inspiration first came whilst I was exploring common items from the kitchen such as the soft volumes of rising dough and hand-shaped leavened pastries. Being able to

translate those experiences and forms into functional yet sculptural pieces has been thrilling, and represents an important moment for the studio."



*Esquisses embraces a neutral palette while focusing on line and shape.
Photo by Genevieve Lutkin*

[Esquisses, Toogood x Maison Matisse, 2023](#)

"Esquisses is a new collection of furniture and rugs with Maison Matisse, launched at Milan Design week. Founded by Henri Matisse's descendants, Maison Matisse is a house of design objects inspired by the artist's work.

"Using drawing as the starting point, I worked on creating a library of gestures, lines and shapes responding to motifs in Matisse's sketches, I kept coming back to a series of table still life drawings Matisse made in the 40s. Fruits, vegetables, and household objects, all rendered in his eloquent, essential line.

"We ended up with more than one hundred sketches and initially just to catalogue them, we chose the best 24 and stuck them together in a concertina book. That format immediately suggested rugs and a blanket and so those were the first pieces we developed.

"The rug is made from natural wool, so it's only colours found in sheep. Perhaps it's the contrarian in me, as Matisse is so known for his colour, but I wanted to keep the whole collaboration in a palette of neutral shades. It's all about the line and shape.

"We created an upholstered armchair and stool, and a coffee table, all developed from the shapes and gestures found in the sketching process. The finished pieces all have the energy and slight irregularity of a drawing."

[Read more about Toogood x Maison Matisse ›](#)

Dezeen Awards 2024 in partnership with Bentley

Dezeen Awards is the ultimate accolade for architects and designers across the globe. The seventh edition of the annual awards programme is in partnership with [Bentley](#) as part of a wider collaboration to inspire, support and champion design excellence and showcase innovation that creates a better and more sustainable world. This ambition complements Bentley's architecture and design business initiatives, including the Bentley Home range of furnishings and real estate projects around the world.