

INSIDE STORY

EIKUND

The brand on a mission to bring Norwegian classics out of the attic and into the mid-century hall of fame

‘It was a year-long treasure hunt,’ says Eikund CEO Jørgen Tengesdal, on the furniture company’s enterprising beginnings in 2015. When a conversation between Tengesdal and co-founders Morten Hippe and Frode Tingbø raised the question, ‘Why aren’t heritage Norwegian pieces as renowned as Danish classics?’, they decided to create Eikund to help set it right. ‘We wanted to put our mid-century designs under the spotlight,’ Tengesdal explains. ‘Most people didn’t know that there were any Norwegian designs from that era on the same level as the Danish icons.’

The trio delved into books and records from the 1950s, seeking out specific pieces (and discovering hidden gems along the way), before tracking down the designers’ children or grandchildren. Travelling all over Norway, they rifled through long-forgotten drawings in basements and attics of relatives who, in some cases, were unaware of their parent’s or grandparent’s design acumen. ‘The families were incredibly positive about bringing these old designs to life,’ says Tengesdal. ‘If we hadn’t gone to meet them, the plans would probably have been thrown away or never found.’

With around 10 designers on its books, Eikund has a shapely collection of seating and tables, as well as decorative animals by renowned maker Arne Tjømsland. While all of the designers are now deceased, the brand did work with industrial furniture designer Sven Ivar Dysthe on his ‘Era’ dining chair before he passed away in March, aged 88. Having been told in 1956 that a stackable chair was ‘too modern’, he was enthusiastically involved in its revival and was delighted to see the piece finally in production.

Today, the furniture is made on the country’s western coast using sustainable oak (‘eik’ is Norwegian for oak) and walnut, rather than the less eco-friendly mid-century timbers of choice, teak and palisander. Highlights of the collection include Fredrik A Kayser’s 1955 ‘Krysset’ chair, with its striking cross-shaped legs, and the whimsical ‘Fluffy’ chair from 1954, also by Kayser, a statement in shaggy wool from wild Norwegian sheep.

The brand now has rights to around 50 archive designs and is currently working alongside Studioilse on Panttechnicon, the soon-to-be-opened Nordic-Japanese fusion restaurant in London, as well as on projects in the US, Europe and Australia. Thanks to Eikund, Norway’s timeless pieces are at last getting the global recognition they deserve (eikund.com).



‘Veng’ armchairs, from £1,497 and ‘Evja’ coffee table by Torbjørn Bekken



‘Krysset’ lounge chair by Fredrik A Kayser, from £2,444



‘Fluffy’ lounge chair by Fredrik A Kayser, from £6,957

‘THERE ARE NORWEGIAN DESIGNS ON THE SAME LEVEL AS THE DANISH ICONS’



‘Era’ dining chair by Sven Ivar Dysthe, £672

‘Broadway’ lounge chair by Torbjørn Afdal, £3,480. All at Aram Store (aram.co.uk)

