

BENCHMARK

22 June 2010

TERENCE CONRAN DESIGNS NEW COLLECTION FOR BENCHMARK



Benchmark, designer and maker of bespoke furniture and specialist joinery, is introducing 20 new pieces to its domestic furniture range, available to order from 23 June 2010.

Terence Conran, with his assistant Stuart Westwell, has designed all 20 pieces for the company which he co-founded with Sean Sutcliffe over twenty five years ago. He often describes Benchmark as the business that is closest to his home and his heart. "I am proud of what Benchmark has achieved in its 25 year life, making furniture of the highest standards using local craftspeople and apprentices. In a world increasingly filled with cheap products of dubious quality, I am heartened that this small English company is thriving by holding to its core values of best design, materials and craftsmanship, producing sustainable quality sold at ex workshop prices."

Benchmark's workshops are situated in the grounds of Terence's country house in Kintbury, West Berkshire, enabling Terence to keep a close eye on the prototyping of his designs which are an eclectic mix, ranging from sleek and sophisticated cabinets with intricate veneering to more robust and rustic console tables, all with product names inspired by Terence's much loved butterfly collection. "I love British butterflies, their colour, pattern and design, and I like to think that their design is

reflected in the design of my furniture. I also like the names which seem to me to suit the furniture rather well. Good British country products stand together.”

For the living room, Terence has designed the **Arran Sofa**, a stylish and comfortable sofa upholstered in a soft cotton/linen with deep seats and a fumed oak or ash frame. It is available in a range of sizes as standard with other bespoke sizes, including corner configurations, available on request. There are a number of new occasional tables including the striking **Mazzarine Console and Side Table** with elegant oak legs and polished pewter tops and the **Brimstone Side Tables** topped with Carrera marble on a turned oak pedestal that is cleverly exposed through the marble. **Albin's Low Console** has been designed for multi-media systems and includes two deep drawers for DVD storage. The clean, simple lines are complemented by the fine detailing of the dovetailed joints and the solid oak frame.

For the dining space, Terence has designed the **Weaver's Table** – a chunky oak refectory style table with exposed joint detailing which can be partnered with the **Weaver's Console** which also works well with many of Benchmark's existing tables. In stark contrast to these more informal pieces is the **Heath Dining Table**, a magnificent crab legged table made from American Black Walnut with a lacquered finish and the matching **Heath Dining Chairs** with panelled upholstery. Equally excellent are the **Admiral Sideboard and Cabinet**, both veneered in American Black Walnut with beautiful nickel plated locking detail. Both are available in a number of interior configurations making them suitable for living, dining or bedroom storage.

In response to feedback from Benchmark's loyal customer base, Terence has designed the **Camberwell Writing Desk**. With its inlaid leather writing surface and up stand, it gives a nod to traditional style with a lift up lid that is reminiscent of old school desks but the clean lines and space for keyboard or laptop make it very contemporary.

The new pieces join an existing collection of furniture designed by other well known designers including Russell Pinch, Thomas Heatherwick, Stuart Padwick and Kay+Stemmer as well as Benchmark's own in-house design team and up and coming young designers such as Jonathan Tibbs, whom Benchmark are keen to help develop.

All of the furniture is made from sustainable timber, by Benchmark craftsmen, in the company's workshops. Many of the pieces will be available in a choice of timbers and finishes as well as different sizes. Each piece, individually numbered and recorded, carries a pewter disk which may be engraved with the owner's personal inscription.

The new collection will be available from June 23rd onwards at Benchmark's showroom in Kintbury, West Berkshire, where customers have the benefit of buying

directly from the makers at ex workshop prices. Visitors are given a very warm welcome and are positively encouraged to take a tour around the workshop to see the furniture being made. Also in the showroom, visitors can buy accessories made by some of Britain's best craftspeople including ceramics by Linda Bloomfield and Gareth Mason, textiles by Melyn Tregwynt and basket ware by Jenny Crisp. Also on show is artwork by Berkshire artists Susie Whimster, Tom Cartmill, David H Jones and Sally Haynes.

From Saturday 3 July to Saturday 10 July, Benchmark will host an 'Open House' event with an **introductory offer of 15% off** all pieces in the new collection for visitors to the showroom.

The collection may be viewed on-line at www.benchmarkfurniture.com and in the new Benchmark brochure. Ordering is by phone on 01488 608020 or e-mail at sales@benchmarkfurniture.com.

Ends

Note to Editors and Stylists

High resolution images of all the pieces are available on CD on request. Pre production items of furniture may be loaned from 23 June onwards but please be aware that we only have one item of each piece so please give as much notice as possible.

Contact

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