

Sheridan Coakley

Sheridan Coakley is founder and director of SCP which has both manufactured and sold furniture since its launch 30 years ago



When was the company founded? 1985

How many staff? We have about 34-35 over our retail, wholesale and contract business as well as the back office. I'm amazed how it slowly grows, it just kind of happens.

Where is it based? Our offices are located at our Curtain Road showroom in east London which covers over 600 square metres over three floors, but we have another showroom in Westbourne Grove in west London and a warehouse at Shad Thames.

What is your latest significant project of note?

We're launching a new collection in September, as part of our 30th anniversary celebrations, with six sofas by seven of the designers who have worked with us over the last three decades. These include Konstantin Grcic and Matthew Hilton.

What is your best selling product (and how much of it do you sell)? The Oscar sofa is the number one piece of upholstery at SCP. We have sold 1,800 pieces over the last five years.

I've just discovered... This year's Milan Furniture Fair was revolutionised for me by the discovery of Airbnb and Uber. They made a massive difference to my experience of the event and the city, and for all our team to find somewhere to stay and get around.

What inspires me... Working with our designers is inspiring. And a lot of inspiration recently has also come from process. I enjoy working with designers like Donna Wilson on textiles, working with traditional weaving mills in Wales, or with Reiko Kaneko and craft-based makers who are still based in Stoke-on-Trent.

My highlight of the last 12 months... has been looking back over the last 30 years and realising that the principles I had when I founded the business are still there, just as relevant now, and have been reinforced by the experience. I was recently reading about Patricia Urquiola expressing that we need to slow down and consider what we are making, and that really resonated with me. Designers need to stop and think, and this anniversary has given me the chance to do just that.

My next design trip is to... It's been a quiet year for travel, because of all the work we have put in to mark our anniversary. I'd quite like to go to Mexico if I get the chance. As well as the first Formula One race in Mexico City since 1992, I would be very interested to explore the traditional crafts and emerging producers with a view to doing an exhibition during the London Design Festival in 2016.

scp.co.uk

Brodie Neill

Brodie Neill is an Australian designer based in London who is rapidly building a reputation for his innovative designs. He recently launched his new Alpha chair (below) at the Milan furniture fair



When was the company founded? I founded Brodie Neill Studio in 2005 and my self-produced Made in Ratio furniture brand in 2013.

How many staff? We are a small studio of four.

Where is it based? The studio is based in Shoreditch, East London.

What is your latest significant achievement/project of note?

This has been a fantastic year for both Brodie Neill Studio as well as Made in Ratio. Brodie Neill Studio is delighted to have been commissioned to design a gateway sculpture, the 'Portal', in my home city of Hobart, Tasmania. The 8.5m-tall sculpture depicts a falling droplet frozen in time as it touches the ground, flattening slightly to provide seating. The 'Portal' will act as a beacon, a landmark, a meeting point, a place for rest and relaxation, arrival and departure. Closer to home, we recently launched the Alpha Chair by Made in Ratio at Fuori Salone in Milan. The Alpha chair is a solid-wood all-purpose stacking chair produced using the latest production technologies of shaped wooden furniture. The name Alpha is derived from the strong architectural gesture that gives the chair its inherent strength: its A-shaped structure. By adopting contemporary digital processes of design and manufacture, the Alpha chair takes on an almost seamless appearance. The chair organically and sensually moulds all the components into one. Through the Alpha chair, we have explored the use of CNC routing technique as a high-production tool rather than a prototyping technology.

What is your best selling product? Our award-winning Supernova desk by Made in Ratio has been very well received internationally. The Supernova is a completely dynamic, self-leveling table frame, cast entirely from 100% recycled aluminium in the UK.

I've just discovered... a new form of 3d printing where it is now possible to print fully usable parts in stainless steel. The parts are strong enough to power a space rocket or a Formula 1 car.

Who inspires me... I have always been inspired by nature rather than individuals, for example the form of our Alpha chair is inspired by the sinuous lines of whale vertebrae that wash ashore on the beaches of my native Tasmania.

I've always been a fan of... the pioneering design period of the 1950s and 60s which was fuelled by the developments in materials and technology. Today we see a similar period of innovation in digital design and production techniques which we have utilised in our collection.

My highlight of the last 12 months... was returning to my home city of Hobart in Tasmania in February to see our Wishbone sculptural seating take pride of place in the Brooke Street Pier, the main ferry terminal for the City. I happened to be back in Tasmania to get married, which is of course the bigger highlight!

brodieneill.com