



GET A GRIP
Populux (above) is a new collection based on vintage car door handles and wheels; Beardmore's London showroom features hundreds of designs old and new



TURNING POINT

The Beardmore Collection celebrates its 150th birthday with a collection launch, new pattern makers and fresh inspiration from an antique pattern book

Words JENNY BREWER

With clients including the Orient Express, Buckingham Palace and the Houses of Parliament, The Beardmore Collection's beginnings were steeped in English tradition. Established in 1860, the company's reputation for stately ironmongery has lasted 150 years. However its latest contemporary door furniture collection Populux, modeled on vintage 1950s and 1960s car door handles and wheels, is a reminder that the company is not just a thing of the past.

The newest addition to The Beardmore Collection team are pattern makers who have come from working as jewelers for well-known brands. Danny Vara, owner and managing director of the company, believes they are just what it needs. 'They are used to the intricate work needed for our products.'

It has also recently acquired, for a small fortune, a 200-year-old pattern book from which upcoming designs are being created as we speak, and palaces in the Middle East are already on the waiting list. Vara believes the key is in these details, as he explains, 'we can offer something different.'

When Danny Vara came across the company in Chelsea Harbour eight years ago it was up for sale and, as owner of the esteemed hardware store Farmer Brothers

with his brother Manish, it seemed like a great addition to their portfolio. Two years later he received a call telling him there was two tons of original Beardmore patterns sitting in crates in Birmingham due to be melted the next day. This lucky escape saved pieces dating back to the 19th century, some of which had not been seen for 60 years, and designs that feature in some of the company's most successful collections today. Keen to take the company forward while preserving its reputation, Vara 'slowly but carefully' introduced more contemporary styles alongside the popular classic designs, successfully developing a more diverse brand. Not bad considering, by his own admission, Vara had little knowledge of the market to start out with. 'It has been a seven-year learning curve.'

With a predominantly trade clientele, Beardmore works with top interior designers and architects, previously specified by the likes of Mary Fox Linton, Nina Campbell, Candy and Candy, and recently Nicholas Haslam for his Park Lane properties. With the recent refurbishment of their Fulham Road store, The Beardmore Collection continues to grow. As Vara says, 'We're determined to keep old trades alive, and bring them into now.' www.beardmore.co.uk

PEOPLE AND MOVERS

Broadley joins BIID Council; Neville Brody is the RCA's new head of communication, art and design; the Design Council's Sir Michael Bichard takes up seat in the Lords



Paul Broadley of Gush Design has been co-opted as associate director to the council of the **British Institute of Interior Design**. Broadley is a graduate of KLC School of Design and operates Gush with partner Gerda Caner out of offices in London, New York and Monaco. www.biid.org.uk

The **Royal College of Art** has named Neville Brody the new head of the Department of Communication Art & Design. Brody is currently a visiting professor at the London College of Communications. www.rca.ac.uk

Philips Dynalite has created a new role, global product marketing manager, to be filled by **Peter Glasheen**. Glasheen will be based in Sydney and will aim to 'better meet the market's current and future needs for lighting control products'. www.dynalite-online.com

Sir Michael Bichard has been appointed to the House of Lords in the capacity of non-party-political peerage. Bichard is the chair of the **Design Council** and was previously permanent secretary to the Dept. for Education. www.designcouncil.org.uk