

THE RIGHT BALANCE

London-based Australian designer Brodie Neill brings his groundbreaking, boundary-pushing philosophy to a new range of everyday pieces.

'IMPOSSIBLE' SIMPLY DOESN'T register in young Australian designer Brodie Neill's vernacular. "It's what sets me apart — I roll up my sleeves and get it done. I don't take no for an answer."

'It' is the innovative, gravity- and material-defying approach Tasmanian-born Neill has made his own. Based in London since 2005, he debuted with an ensemble of highly sought-after limited-edition 'design art' pieces such as the 2011 'Glacier' chaise longue, his most expensive piece at £50,000, made from 135 litres of pure glass poured by artisans based deep in the heart of the Czech Bohemian Forest. Made in Ratio, his new brand developed with design industry veteran Theo Theodorou and launched at Milan's Salone del Mobile in April, is so named to reflect Neill's ongoing ambition for finding the perfect balance between craftsmanship and quality, form and revolutionary construction techniques. "I see a shape and apply it to a function, rather than setting out with a specific furniture idea," explains Neill of the collection's beautiful, sculptural forms heavily inspired by nature.

These shapes range from the curve of a cowrie shell and elegant undulation of a stingray's wings to the petals of a lotus flower and, in the 'Cumulus' pendant, the puffiness of a cumulus cloud. Made in Ratio is about working with craftsmen and producers around the world, many of whom have worked on Neill's limited editions, to replicate the same level of innovation for a wider audience. "Why should design at this level be dumbed down?" Neill questions.

The sculptural 'Cowrie' rocker and chair are fashioned from "a single-surface monocoque fold"; the 'Supernova' table frame, made out of recycled aluminium, is "a bit like a jack — any way it sits, it will self level". The digitally proportioned 'Matrix' coat stand, welded in such a way that the 'diamonds' run in a continual loop, is "a real workhorse". "Every time I design, it's an opportunity to do something new," says Neill. "I'm not interested in walking the same old line. When you put so much of yourself into a piece, it may as well be as original as possible." **FIONA MCCARTHY**
Made in Ratio, (+44) 20 7490 8601; madeinratio.com.



PHOTOGRAPHER: JANET MERRELL PRODUCER: FIONA MCCARTHY

Australian design dynamo Brodie Neill in his East London studio, with pieces from his new collection for Made in Ratio: a 'Cowrie' chair (and rocker against the wall), 'Supernova' desk and table, 'Cumulus' light pendant and 'Matrix' coat rack. On the table are models for the Cowrie series and multi-material 'Remix' chaise designed in 2008.