



Edward Johnson

Crafting innovative furniture for inspiring people



Throughout my senior school years, I was either found on the rugby pitch or in the D&T department where I was fortunate enough to have excellent teachers and facilities. This in turn led to my friends nicknaming me 'DT Ed'!

I found that focusing on my art and design work had a calming effect on my restless mind, helping me to focus, and enabling me to explore my passion for design and to develop my ideas. My overarching consideration, when thinking about and approaching design, is to question everything with an open mind and a deep-rooted determination to solve problems. I always believe that, no matter where you are with your education or career, you should always strive to improve and always aim to progress your ideas and products to make them the best they can possibly be. Following school, I went on to study furniture design and cabinet making at Buckingham Chilterns University, graduating in 2007.

Questions

My questioning mind became apparent as a child. I always wanted to know 'WHY': I wanted to know the reason behind almost any decision being made. As you can imagine, this didn't make me the easiest child to teach! I would often ask too many questions and disrupt the flow of lessons. Although I realise now this must have been very challenging, it is however part of my character that drives and motivates me. Moving forward, this trait has certainly contributed to the successful furniture design business I now run.

Escaping the maze

A few designers stumble upon brilliant ideas, but most need to work very hard at it. However, those that do stumble upon a brilliant idea early on can often struggle to surpass their initial success. I believe there is a fundamental reason for this: that perhaps they didn't fully understand how and why they got there first time around. Rather than being a single lightbulb moment, good design is very much an ongoing process. It is something that takes time, effort and hard work if you are to fully explore your ideas. It is rather like escaping from a maze: you start with a basic idea, an idea that is either self-generated or given by others, perhaps teachers or clients. You then explore different routes and paths in search of a solution to your problem. You will often come to a dead end and need to turn back, but with determination, belief and an open mind you'll eventually find a solution that works. But don't just be content with that solution, as it could probably still be improved!



Splash coffee table – Ripples Collection



Radiant desk – Murano Collection



*Squaring the Circle
jewellery box – Murano
Collection*



*Family Tree keepsake
box – Murano
Collection*



I have been running my furniture design and manufacturing business for 10 years, and I now employ staff to help me with the daily routine and rigours, from marketing to cabinet making. I've always considered the making aspect to be part of the design process, and I've come to use the craftsmanship element and my technical making knowledge as the unique selling point that sets me apart as a designer. Through successes and failures, I understand how timber works – how it bends, how it shapes, how it shrinks and expands. It is this knowledge and knowhow that enables me to produce my concept-led designs, whilst pushing the limits of my materials. Looking back, I feel I have achieved a decent amount through my work and career thus far. However, I still feel there is so much more exploring, fun, experimentation and head scratching ahead of me.

Methodologies

My work is largely experimental and inventive, and I like to find my own path and techniques to create unique pieces. Two examples of this would be my Ripples Collection and my Murano Collection, where I have worked hard to find inventive ways to achieve these results.

Ripples

My Ripples Collection was inspired by the action of a stone dropping into water. My concept was to give the illusion of the ripples engulfing the entire form, bringing movement, life and softness to the surfaces. I spent many hours prototyping, perfecting and refining this technique to enable the successful crafting of this unique effect.

Murano

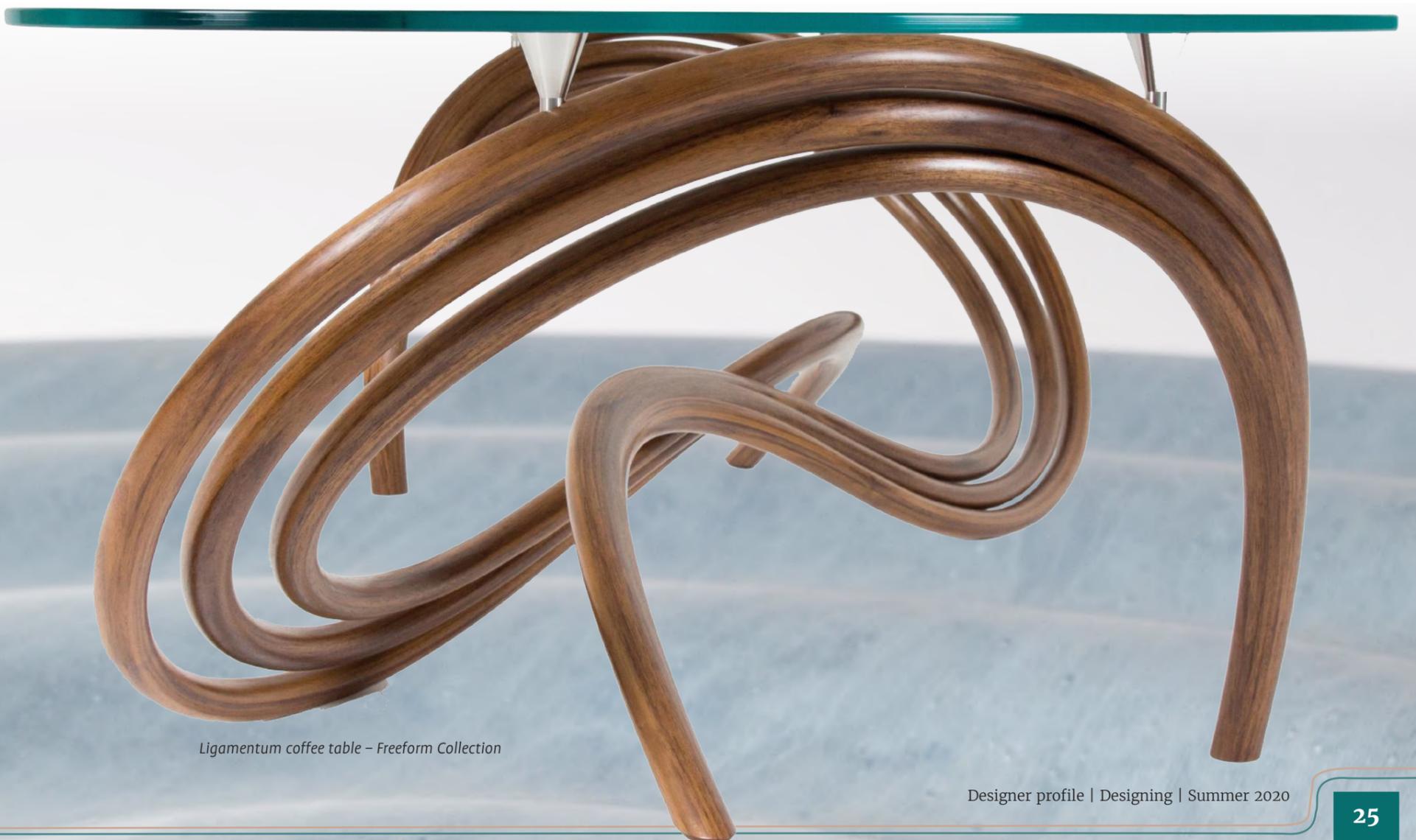
My Murano Collection was inspired by a visit to the island of Murano, where Venetian master craftsmen have been producing glassware for centuries by floating layers of different coloured glass through one another to produce exquisite patterns.

I have developed this technique by layering different combinations of timber together to produce wavy, radial and straight designs. The various patterns result in carefully matched sweeping lines and curves that engulf the entire surface of the furniture. The circular and semi-circular designs are reminiscent of the growth rings of a tree. ■

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Ripples chest of drawers – Ripples Collection



Ligamentum coffee table – Freeform Collection