



Pairing exceptional hardwoods with accomplished aptitude, design firm Method imbues its elegant and intelligent undertakings with a holistic approach. As **Brian Noone** reports, the resulting bespoke wares are redefining Scottish savoir-faire

# ALL IN THE METHOD



From the workshop of Scottish design studio Method, you can open the shutter and look out to the shimmering navy waters of the Firth of Forth, but for Callum Robinson, the brand's ebullient co-founder, the real beauty is found within the timber strewn across the space.

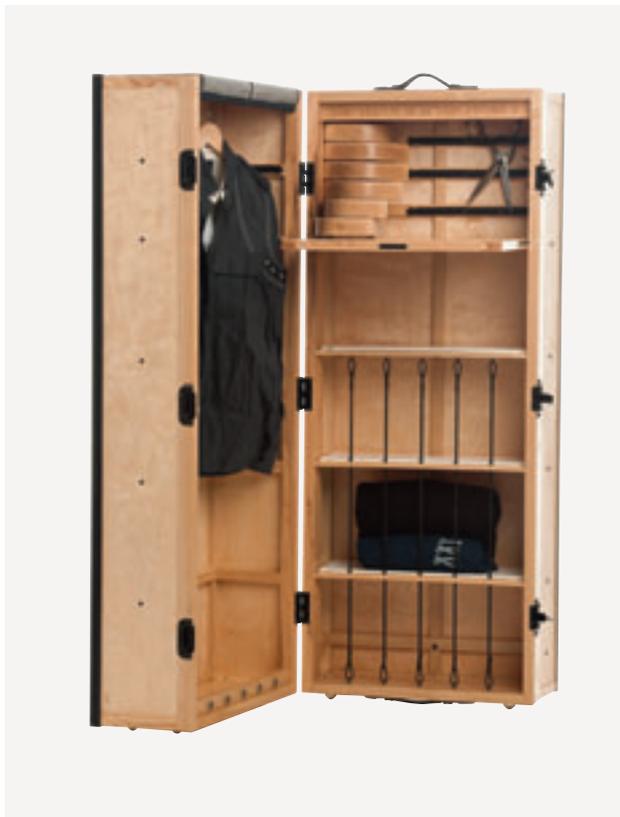
"There's such a sense of wonder in cracking open a log," enthuses Robinson, a second-generation master woodworker surrounded by oak and sycamore beams, all locally grown. "It's finding something exciting – like a prize."

Robinson's clients have been known to react with similar enthusiasm when they open a piece which he has crafted from that wood: the studio's steamer trunks, timpiece cases, tea boxes and other bespoke creations are one-of-a-kind, hand-hewn masterpieces that are giving

British custom design a modern face and are reaching a new generation of clientele.

The country's tradition of fine woodworking dates back to the days of Chippendale and Hepplewhite, but the better parallels for Method are contemporary designers of custom yachts and couture ballgowns, where the back-and-forth process of consultation and refinement is nearly as important as the final product itself.

Robinson and his partner and wife, Marisa Giannasi, call each piece a journey, and along the way they sometimes send clients photos of the grove where the tree once stood or parcels containing "things they can smell, things they can touch" and sometimes even "little scale models of the design – something to play with, to get a sense of the tactile nature of it".



Clockwise from top left: the Althorp watch chest; Malt Vault made in collaboration with Cumbria Crystal; Memories treasure chest; old-growth brown oak watch chest for a one-off Vacheron Constantin timepiece; solid ash Journeyman steamer trunk. Facing page, clockwise from top left: tools of the trade; Method co-founder Marisa Giannasi; her husband and master woodworker Callum Robinson; a concept in progress

This all-encompassing design process at Method was an approach they initially thought might not interest all their clients. "But everybody," says Robinson, "has been passionate about it." So much so that over the last seven years Method has come to design principally for clients and brands who crave the full immersion of the experience. "People who just want a thing – they never come to our door," says Robinson.

The current six-month waiting list includes only production time, not working to develop a concept, which itself can take months, or the time necessary to work with other specialist producers, as Method is currently doing with Cumbria Crystal, Britain's last remaining traditional firm of its kind with whom the studio is creating new glassware for the Malt Vault, an oak case for

whisky decanters and glasses.

Other projects have ranged from chairs for the Charles Rennie Mackintosh-designed Glasgow School of Art to a limited-edition tea caddy for London culinary emporium Fortnum & Mason. A one-off bike rack made with copper pipes drew considerable attention in Spencer Hart's Savile Row window two years ago.

Method is expanding as fast as it can find able craftsmen – one German, one Scot, one English at the moment – and future plans include travel cases, more pieces integrating leather and a possible collaboration with Vertu, another hand-made British brand. But for now Method is focused on each individual piece, finding just the right grain and cut for each corner, each joint, each detail. [methodfurniture.co.uk](http://methodfurniture.co.uk) →

