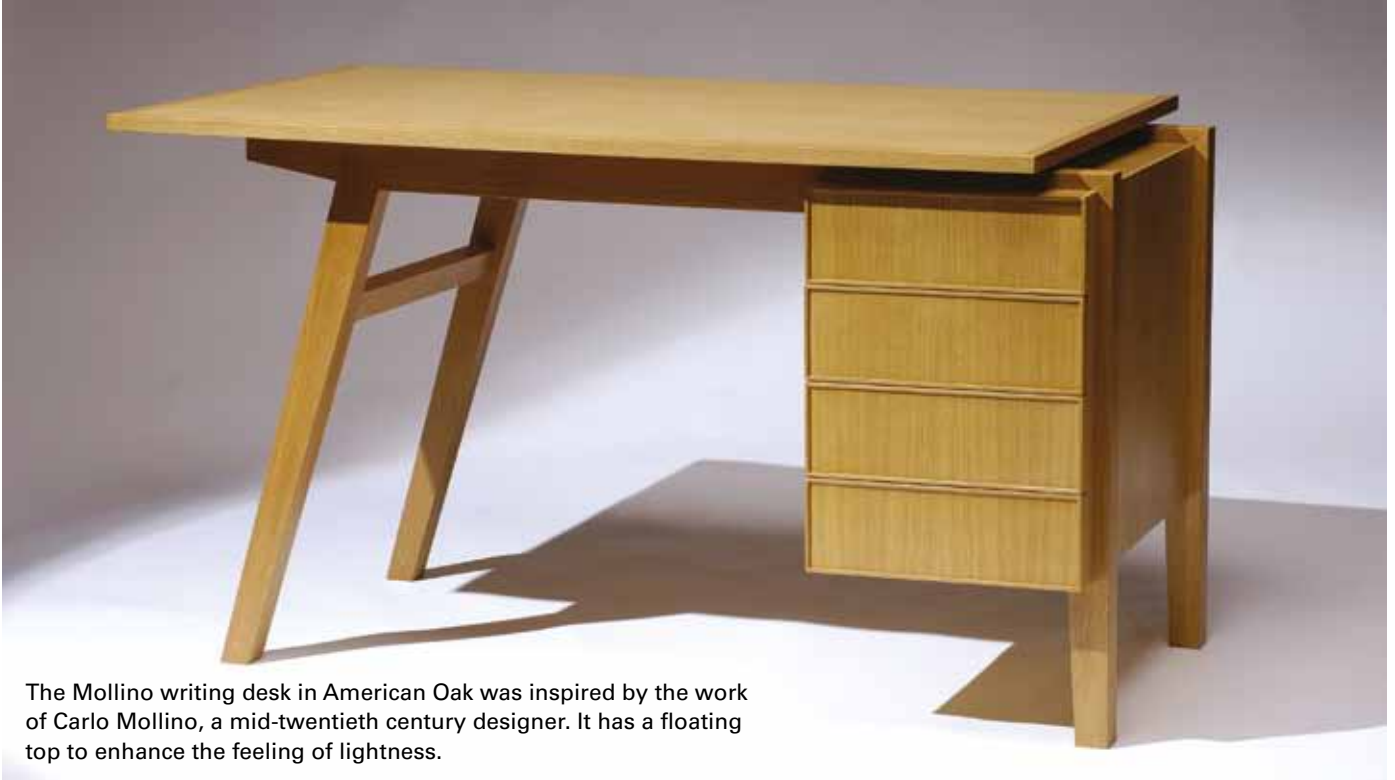


Design delivered function

Guiding principles meld functionality with simplicity to produce timeless furniture for the home. This forms the essence of Tide Design.



The Mollino writing desk in American Oak was inspired by the work of Carlo Mollino, a mid-twentieth century designer. It has a floating top to enhance the feeling of lightness.

Furniture designer, George Harper has his design priorities firmly in place, paying acute attention to detail in the function of his pieces. "Design to me is a means to an end – not the end itself," he explains. "For me, function is of the highest importance. I wouldn't want to produce an uncomfortable chair, for example. From there it is all about elegance, lightness, detail and quality. And producing something fresh..."

At the same time, Harper resists making furniture "of the minute" by focusing primarily on comfort with a fifties and Scandinavian aesthetic when it took on a softer, more organic approach. His style has a retro influence with a contemporary appeal.

Harper admits to the Scandinavian and fifties elements in his work. "I love the simplicity along with the character and warmth that they both embody, as well as the sculptural elements they possess," he says. However as an artist, he is also discovering an ever-expanding catalogue

of ideas that can be drawn on when trying to develop new designs.

To deliver these designs, Harper is committed to producing the highest quality, handmade, contemporary pieces, where the design is considered, well resolved and individual, providing lasting appeal. For Harper, creating furniture is in equal parts artistry and problem-solving.

"I'm striving to produce furniture that is timeless. Sometimes inspiration comes from things that happen by accident like an irregular shaped off cut. Sometimes it's found in my direct environment. But most often it comes down to cold hard persistence with pencil on paper trying to find an appealing form or line," he adds.

Turning professional

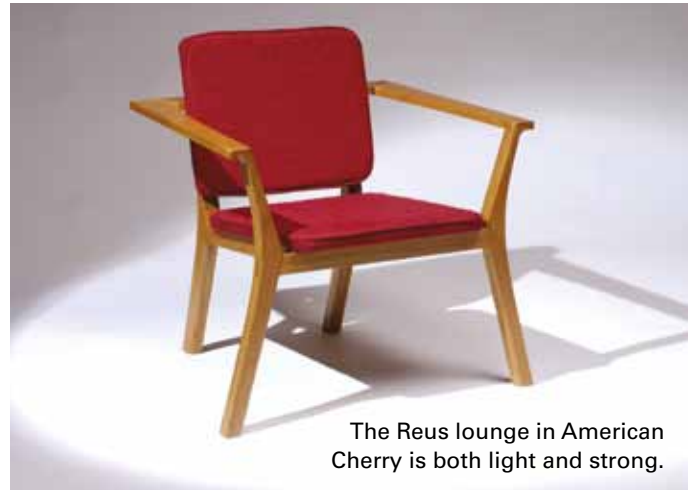
Tide Design was established in 2007 after Harper, who had always dabbled in furniture as a hobby making "bits and pieces", left a long-term office career to pursue his passion. He successfully completed a Diploma of Furniture Design



George Harper of Tide Design left an office job to pursue furniture design.



The Remi couch in American Oak draws from the Reus lounge chair with its splayed legs and inviting stance.



The Reus lounge in American Cherry is both light and strong.

and Making at Box Hill Institute of TAFE in Victoria.

After winning the prize for best furniture at the graduate exhibition, Harper went on to work part time for another furniture maker, which provided invaluable real world skills. Buoyed by these two experiences, he was more than ready to showcase his ideas.

Four years later, Tide Design has become a reflection of Harper's vision for his business. "I've tried to position Tide to create limited production, high quality handmade furniture that is affordable. It's also about establishing a clear style that is unique and accessible," he says.

Harper aims for all of his designs to look as fresh in ten years as they do today and continue to complement any interior or style.

Individual attention

With customer focus as the top priority for Harper, furniture from Tide is custom designed to specific requirements including materials, finish and dimensions. As a way of helping his clients feel part of the process, a fact sheet on each piece is sent out upon request with an invitation to view the pieces in his workshop while under construction.

Needless to say, Tide pieces are not mass-produced which gives each item some exclusivity. Most recently, Tide Design has developed a reputation for its side-boards, dining tables, daybeds, stools and writing desks.

Top quality North American timbers, from the best managed forests in the world, are favoured by Harper. With an environmental awareness, coupled with a desire to give his customers a product designed and manufactured to last a

lifetime, Harper is committed to providing an eco-friendly alternative to mass-market and disposable furniture. More importantly, Harper aims to continually improve his environmental practices as the business becomes more established.

"The cornerstone of my philosophy is that I'm making furniture that is designed and built to last for generations," he says. Harper's attention to detail is reassuring and heartfelt – a rare mix of the best materials, hardware and finishes to produce a level of quality only achieved by carefully considered, handmade works that are durable. "No shortcuts are taken", Harper proudly states.

Coming up

Tide Design has a user-friendly, simple website that represents where the business is currently at in its development. Harper considers this online tool as "a forum to present [my] work to the marketplace, and it is a great way to be able to do this. As things progress

I'd like my website to become more sophisticated and I'd look at increased functionality then."

Another clear vision for Harper as director, designer and maker of Tide Designs, is his determination to produce innovative, fresh designs that are immediately discernible. As furniture makers today feel the pressure to keep up with the latest fad, Harper knows that continuing to develop his individual style, producing the right products, establishing the brand and having the persistence to make it happen, will all reap rewards in the years to come and keep satisfied clientele coming back for more. He is currently planning to release a couple of new dining tables soon.

Tide Design supplies retailers, architects and interior designers. Harper mainly produces small tables to retail, and other pieces are sold direct. Some of its stockists include Luke Furniture, Exhibit Interiors, Safari Living, Thomas Gannan, Southwood Trading and Southwood Home. 



The Lyssna side table in American Walnut utilises an intricate three way joinery system to achieve the fluid and organic leg structure.