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A chat with...



Sebastian Conran

Design is second nature to the eldest son of Sir Terence Conran. Here he talks to *KBB* about his style, his inspiration and, of course, his new collection

Compiled by **Sophie Baylis**



Tell us about your latest project?

We all love entertaining friends, and enjoy eating fresh food with traditional natural materials like porcelain, glass and wood, so we have launched the Universal Expert Cookshop 'Serve & Share' collection. It's a range of versatile products with thoughtful features that are perfect for enjoying and sharing food with friends. The neutrally elegant design is ideal for any social event. The tabletop collection has been designed to be multifunctional but also to sit elegantly with your existing collection of tableware, while the durable porcelain dinnerware is designed to make your food look good and stacks really well in the dishwasher.

What or who inspires you?

The sculptors Constantin Brancusi, Umberto Boccioni and Anish Kapoor for form and finish, and Achille Castiglioni because of his lateral thinking and ingenious, idiosyncratic approach to lighting and furniture. Dieter Rams has always been a design hero because of his Teutonic,

rational, slightly formulaic approach to designing electrical appliances, which gives elegant neutrality. And finally Sori Yanagi, whose attention to detail on kitchenware is playful and poetic.

How would you describe your signature design style?

Soft, 21st-century, minimalist modernism, using simple elegant forms and tactile natural materials, combined with ingenious functional innovation. Form follows fabrication.

What is your prediction for the trends of the future?

I envisage a de-plastication of the home. As much as the trend for plastics brings vibrancy to the modern home, I prefer the tactile quality of natural materials. Our Universal Expert collection is designed to grow old beautifully and gain character with age.

Universal Expert by Sebastian Conran is available from John Lewis.



John Lewis
0845 604 9049 or www.johnlewis.com

Sebastian Conran
020 7036 0636 or www.sebastianconran.com



1 A sprinkle of this, a dash of that: all aspiring chefs need Sebastian's pinch pots, £30.

2 The oil and vinegar set, £29, is ideal for informal dining.

3 Restore a sense of order to your kitchen with this decorative mug stand, £40.

4 Start the day the right way with this two-slice toaster in silver, £34.95.