



White Carnation Designer: Nicola Slaney
 Shapes: JU7 – Height: 18.5cm 780/4 – Diameter: 10cm
 Limited Edition: 75

Generally speaking, designs from Walter Moorcroft were easy to understand and perhaps the most spiteful comment that Walter recalled came from a dealer who once said that his flowers all seemed 'stuck on'. That hurt, and Walter never forgot it. Neither did Moorcroft designer, Nicola Slaney. Picking up the thread of one of Walter's wonderful tales about design, she heard him to comment that "green carnations were for Oscar Wilde: pink carnations for cheap nights out and white carnations for love itself". Nicola soon made white carnations appear as if by magic on an ever-popular jug and a modest little coaster. Design can be like that. A chance remark: a snip from a story and the visual impact of an open, white flower in full bloom, can start to meld together, and with Nicola as the designer, against a backcloth of dark blue shading to pure white. Simple, yet perfect. Those are the attributes of a good design and *White Carnation* is one of them. Walter Moorcroft would have been pleased.



Pure Innocence Senior Designer: Rachel Bishop
 Shapes: Plaque 18 – Diameter: 30cm Numbered Edition 32/8 – Height: 16cm Limited Edition: 40

Very often in this strange world of ours, it is the smallest of objects which command the greatest respect. In the case of Moorcroft, its Senior Designer, Rachel Bishop, decided to honour the man whom she got to know well in her early years at Moorcroft and who, like herself, designed Moorcroft pottery. It was hard not to like Walter Moorcroft. His views on design were simple and straightforward, and it was not a career that he would have taken up out of choice. "I was an innocent in a strange world", he once remarked. Rachel took him at his word and decided to work on a round plaque and make it home to a broad-petalled clematis flower, a Walter favourite. She coated her image with soft white petals fading to pink and from there into a mellow burgundy at the centre. It was an experienced designer's view of innocence.

Song of Spring

Designer: Kerry Goodwin
 Shape: 122/8
 Height: 20cm
 Limited Edition: 50

Spring Flowers, introduced by William Moorcroft in 1936 was, Walter would always allege, his own design and not that of his father. We shall probably never know. However, as if to prove that the dispute was far from dead, Walter Moorcroft introduced another, more complex version of *Spring Flowers* not long after he took over the art pottery in 1945. Moorcroft designer, Kerry Goodwin took a simple approach to *Spring Flowers* with light-hearted, soft flowers to create *Song of Spring*. Yellow daffodils sway in unison with soft bluebells, with rich purple crocus and humble daisies in supporting roles. *Song of Spring* is a timely reminder that the cold grip of winter is easing.



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I Am Not My Father 04/17

MOORCROFT



I AM NOT MY FATHER

A Collection dedicated to
 Walter Moorcroft OBE





In 1945, on the death of his father, Walter Moorcroft took over the business that carried his name. He inherited the Design Windows that his father had created but Walter was determined to be his own man, and change was inevitable. What are today referred to as 'broad floral' flowers such as Anemone, Hibiscus, Magnolia and Wisteria, were all the rage in the 1950s, and Walter, whether he liked it or not, had no alternative but to go along with some part of his father's design legacy. Even so, he remained adamant that it would only be that part which related to broad florals. The remaining Moorcroft design windows, including fish, fruit, landscapes, mushrooms and toadstools all slipped away into oblivion and, other than on Walter's own terms, they were never again allowed to return. Under his stewardship, most of them never did.

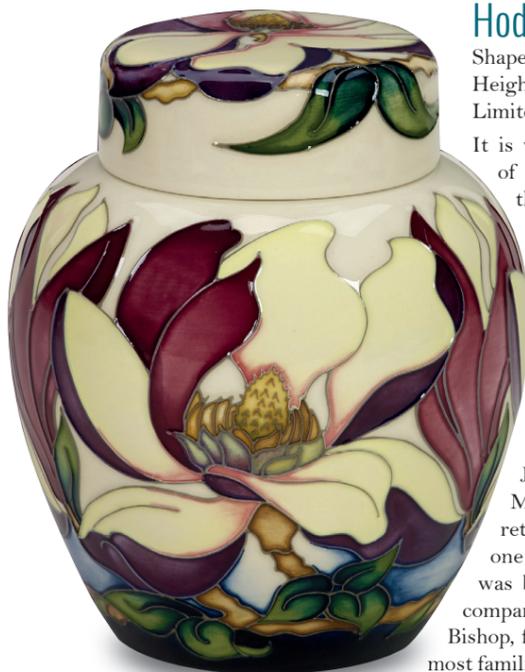
Instead, Walter re-shaped the *Broad Floral* design window by tapping into a new mood of the time – a desire across nations to seek out and enjoy rich experiences from distant countries; the excitement derived from a national rebirth after World War II and the luxury of holiday travel to faraway places. From Walter Moorcroft came the Caribbean seascapes, palm trees, sailing boats bobbing on blue seas, orchids, and colourful hibiscus. To ensure total fairness to the kind, gentle man that the world now knows as Walter Moorcroft, Moorcroft designers were challenged to take up some of Walter's own design themes, and rework them in a twenty first century idiom. The result is a selection of pieces which pay homage to the man who kept Moorcroft design alive, albeit within limitations, for over 40 years.



Race Against Time Designer: Paul Hilditch

Shape: JU3/12
Height: 30.5cm
Limited Edition: 40

By the time the mid-1980s arrived, Moorcroft was in deep financial trouble. Walter Moorcroft, a man who never gave up hope of keeping his business alive, found himself talking to a young Hugh Edwards, a commercial lawyer based in the City of London. There was no time for niceties – which was perhaps just as well because the diagnosis was that Moorcroft was suffering from design starvation. Neither was there time to complain about old father William and his heritage, and so, with a huff and a puff, Walter resketched a tulip design he originally had in mind for lamps a year or so earlier. After a short interlude, Walter proceeded to design *Tulips* – for him an almost revolutionary turn of events. Even so, it was the start of a Moorcroft fight back with Walter leading the way. Out came Walter's white tulips on an olive green ground. Simple, and for its time, effective. *Tulips* sold more quickly than most other available designs. Better still, a familiar flower was re-introduced into Moorcroft art. Designer, Paul Hilditch's version of *Tulips*, has striking red and cream tulips which surge in unison from the base to the rim of the jug, their leaves adding strength and vigour to an already striking design.



Hodnet Hall Senior Designer: Rachel Bishop

Shape: 769/6
Height: 15.5cm
Limited Edition: 100

It is widely accepted that William Moorcroft, founder of Moorcroft pottery, bequeathed his legacy through the language of ceramic design and with it, the tremendous contribution that he made to the Applied Arts. Yet, in truth, William was no different to most ordinary family-men who will always see their true legacy in their children. When Walter Moorcroft was born on 17th February 1917 to William and Florence Moorcroft, a wonderful combination of a father's creativity and a mother's pragmatism was passed on to a whole new generation.

Just like his father, Walter went on to manage Moorcroft and create new designs right up until his retirement in February 1987. February 2017 marked one hundred years since this remarkable and kind man was born, and 30 years since his retirement from his company. To honour the occasion, Senior Designer, Rachel Bishop, fits a new handle on to one of Walter's oldest and most familiar designs, *Magnolia*. The original *Magnolia* design was drawn in 1975 from flowers seen by Walter in the grounds

of Hodnet Hall, Shropshire, and first exhibited in February 1976. Pink flowers on blue were used at the outset, but later ivory, yellow, and even olive green grounds were added. The design was to be sold in all five continents within 18 months of its inception – a remarkable achievement by any measure. Rachel's, contemporary counterpart carries the name of *Hodnet Hall*, and it sees bountiful magnolia blossom, with petals coloured in delicate pink, intensifying to burgundy.

Him and Her

Designer: Nicola Slaney
Shape: 35/5
Height: 12.5cm
Numbered Edition

One thing guaranteed to irritate Walter Moorcroft was any form of hint that the hallmark *Anemone* design originated from his father and not himself. History must judge in the final analysis, but father William did make life more awkward at times by signing the work of his son and (rarely) his daughter, Beatrice! For now, it matters not. The *Anemone* design mutated over the years in such a way that it became timeless – a piece of Moorcroft which gave pleasure to at least two generations, and perhaps three. Designer, Nicola Slaney, used the anemone flower to create *Him and Her*, a cheerful, loving piece of work using a pure white anemone and a second, rich, almost burgundy, flowerhead. It was a simple twist on a famous design. Interestingly, Walter Moorcroft once painted, by hand, an original watercolour as a Christmas card for a close friend and ally using his favourite flower – the anemone.



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Lost Time Designer: Vicky Lovatt

Shape: CL1
Height: 16cm
Limited Edition: 50

Sometimes time can race by: sometimes it seems as if it will never move forward whilst at others it flutters and blows about like leaves in the wind. From the moment she was asked to pay her respects to Walter Moorcroft, Vicky Lovatt allowed herself to drift away from her more familiar work centering on the galaxy, woodlands, fantasy and fairylands, to produce *Lost Time*. More surprisingly, she reached for a Moorcroft clock on which to set her work. Walter first used leaves as a design theme in 1960. Called *Leaves in the Wind*, his was a simple design on a white ground. Perhaps encouraged by its success, *Poplar Leaves* was introduced in 1962 and *Chestnut Leaves* much later in 1986. No surprise therefore, that Vicky should return to this theme and in so doing, she swept her own leaves onto a clock face and called it *Lost Time*.

Marine Magic Designer: Vicky Lovatt

Shape: 93/8
Height: 20cm
Limited Edition: 50

World War II brought in its wake, design styles that were very much "1950s" – but by the 1960s, new waves were sweeping through the quiet world of the applied arts. The Caribbean islands became holiday destinations of choice, and Walter Moorcroft was ready to embrace this new world in which he found himself, and to do so, he produced several new designs to match. One of these, *Caribbean*, first made its debut in 1960, and successfully struck that note of change. Sales surged. Almost 60 years later, Moorcroft designer, Vicky Lovatt, took up Walter's *Caribbean* theme. On the principle that great art often emerges from simplicity, Vicky's two seahorses dance together, but the world in which they live is geometric, and as such reflects the fact that geometric art first emerged in volume at the beginning of the decade known today as the 'swinging sixties'. *Marine Magic* does not ask you to stand there and admire. It beckons you into this new world of colour and gentle geometric linework.

