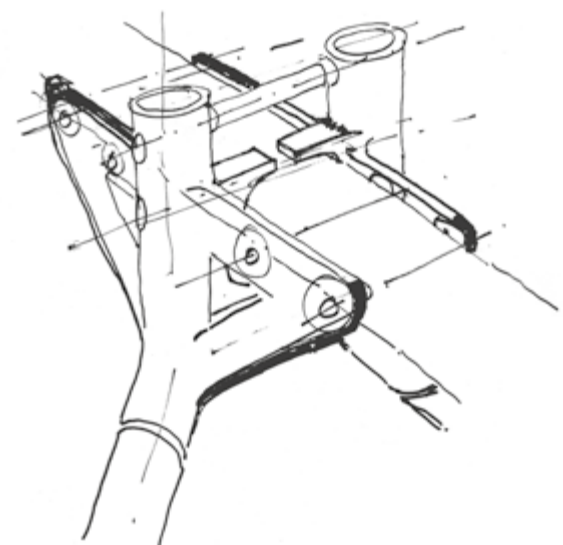




Craft + Manufacture

Industrial design by Foster + Partners

The science, art and craft of making things, has been at the root of the work of the practice since its foundation in 1967. Joseph Paxton's 19th century Crystal Palace through to Ezra Ehrenkrantz's SCSD systems schools in 1960s California, were early inspirations and continue a tradition where buildings are considered as exquisitely assembled elements, manufactured to create integrated elements of the buildings. This design philosophy created innovative and inherently flexible spaces where design extends to the furniture and fittings. In the 1980s retail projects allowed experimentation with the design of fittings such as balustrades and hangers, and then the Hongkong Bank became the ultimate example of integrated and modular design where every detail from the facade to the handrails was treated with equal love and importance.



Left
Norman Foster's sketch illustrates the component assembly of the Nomos Desking System (1987).

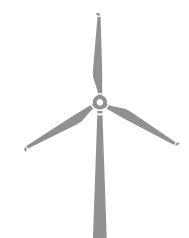
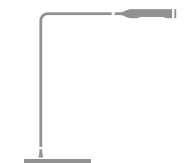
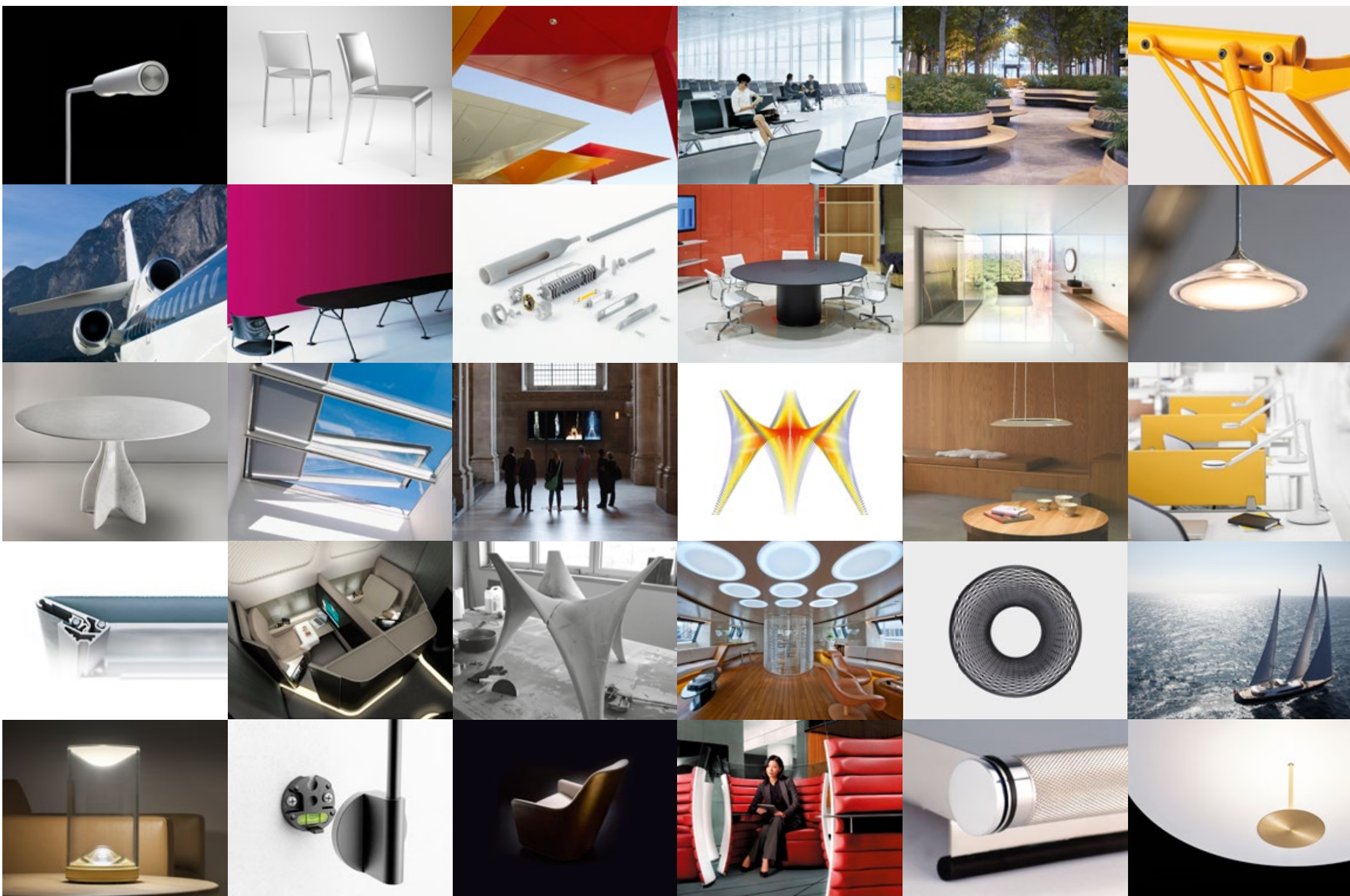
The collaborative nature of the design team pioneered by Norman Foster has always included engineers, environmental experts, graphic designers, industrial designers and model-makers, as well as architects. An integrated team delivers design solutions which treat the built environment in which we live and work in a holistic way; everything we see and touch is designed, and this was seen as a seamless activity. This philosophy of integrated design is as important to the practice now as it was in its birth in the 1960s.

It is against this backdrop that in 1981 when the practice moved to its new premises on Great Portland Street in London, that a new design for a drafting table was felt necessary when off-the-shelf examples fell short of design standards. This signalled the beginning of a dedicated industrial design team within the practice which then further developed the table for Renault's industrial headquarters in Swindon. In collaboration with Italian manufacturer Tecno and their engineers the team developed and refined another version of the table into the Nomos range of furniture.



Below
The Industrial Design team at Foster + Partners.

This exhibition traces these themes, exploring the diversity in the work of the current industrial design team, from door handles to wind turbines. The team frequently works as an integral part of the overall studio, designing specific building elements, but also develops products at the commercial and domestic scale independently. The practice's philosophy of working alongside manufacturers, carefully crafting products, exploring, refining and optimising each element, and experimenting with innovative materials and latest technology finds reflection and resolution in the latest pieces on show at the exhibition – the new lamps, EVA and DOT, developed with Lumina and the sculpted marble tables, Hadrian and Hadriana, for Citco. The tradition of industrial design in Foster + Partners owes much to talented individuals such as Arek Wozniak in the 1980s and John Small from 1985 until 2010 when Mike Holland took over as head of the Industrial Design team of 14 designers.



The points of contact in a building, the things that we touch, are as important as the broader vision. We draw no distinction between architecture and product design: in terms of priority, no detail is too small. Our industrial design team has designed everything from door handles to furniture; from a fountain pen to the cabin of an executive jet; from a tap to the fit-out of an ocean-going yacht.

Overleaf,
from left to right:

- Lumina DOT Pendant
- Molteni Teso Table
- Lumina EVA Light
- Molteni Vicino Table
- Artemide ORSA Light

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Craft + Manufacture
Industrial Design by
Foster + Partners

12 May – 2 July
Open Monday to Saturday
10 – 6pm (7pm Thursdays)

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