



## like clockwork

**Some people were** born with design nous. Auckland designer Nikolai Sorensen is one of them. He's taken a simple product as old as time – the clock – and given it a simple and stylish makeover that draws the eye.

A plywood dodecagon with slices of washed colour, each clock is so much more than a timekeeper. The sharp design reminds us of the segments of a cleanly sliced orange – made more so when Nikolai uses a wash of Resene Clementine Orange from the Resene Karen Walker Paints collection.

Nikolai majored in product design for his design degree at AUT University, and worked part-time at design store *Essenze* at its (now closed) Parnell store. Surrounded by works of top New Zealand artists, Nikolai realised that the products instore, as well as beautiful, were also manageable to produce. He also noticed a gap in the market for functional wall art. He got to work.

Not long after, Nikolai's segment clocks caught the eye of AUT University peer Mike Grobelny. They collaborated on product design and in 2012 started furniture design company *Trestle Union*.

Their pieces are affordable and practical, but still stylish: they include sturdy trestle legs with coloured

ropes and hardwearing trestle tops made with functionality in mind.

"I found at my age that I wanted quality design pieces but couldn't afford them," says Nikolai. "We decided to strip back all the fluff and frills of the design and materials to make it more affordable. When it comes down to it, Mike and I share the same design ethic: products need to have clean lines, be uncomplicated and, most importantly, be practical."

The pair is constantly prototyping new ideas, and it takes months before they test it on the market. Their focus on lower priced product with higher design value has garnered *Trestle Union* a loyal following for those decorating home offices and small business fitouts.

But back to those beautiful clocks. Nikolai enjoys taking custom orders from clients, letting them choose their colours and the number of painted segments.

"I'm really big on co-creation – with their input, I hope to help our buyers feel more connected to our pieces."

The clocks are available from *The Object Room* in Auckland and [www.nikolaisorensen.co.nz](http://www.nikolaisorensen.co.nz). Also see the [www.trestleunion.co.nz](http://www.trestleunion.co.nz) for Nikolai's other designs and ventures. **H**

**Above:** Nikolai's segment clocks are washed with Resene colours, including (from left) Resene Morning Glory, Resene Clementine Orange and Resene Sublime.



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