

# Thirty years of BATHING BEAUTIES

Over three decades, The Water Monopoly has built a global reputation for its hand-crafted bathrooms with personality. Here's how it developed from one-man band to leading luxury brand

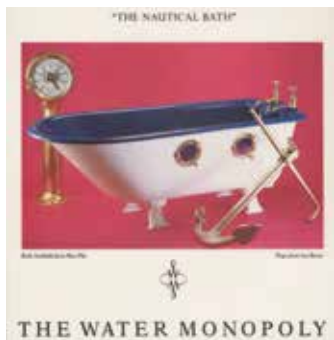
There was a time when the bathroom was, perhaps, the most unloved or least interesting room in the house. But not since The Water Monopoly set out on a mission to add a touch of colour and personality. That was 30 years ago. Now, this London-based company, which started out restoring antique bathroom and sanitaryware, has firmly established its reputation as the supplier of choice for beautiful and luxurious bathrooms. Its USP is that its bathrooms comprise one-off, vintage originals alongside high-quality reproductions – thus allowing customers huge scope for originality.

The Water Monopoly's vintage pieces are sourced predominately in France and include copper tubs, prized for their original patina, ceramic baths and basins, glamorous tri-fold mirrors, swan-neck taps and canopied shower units. Sitting alongside them in the showroom are faithful, UK-manufactured reproductions of fireclay tubs in stone and resin and cast-iron baths □

For more details, call 020-7624 2636, visit [thewatermonopoly.com](http://thewatermonopoly.com) or the showroom at 10/14 Lonsdale Road, London NW6 6RD

## DOUBLE AWARD-WINNING COLLECTION AT DECOREX

2016 The 'Rockwell' collection of retro-inspired bathroom fittings, including ceramic crosshead taps, shower roses, bath and shower mixers and bath feet, available in 10 pastel hues, was launched. This powder blue room set, created by designer Susie Atkinson, won the award for Best Stand at Decorex 2017 while 'Rockwell' was named Most Stylish Product by *House & Garden*



1987 The 'Nautical Bath' featured in The Water Monopoly's first advertising campaign. It evolved into the 'Porthole' bath, a fun choice for a children's bathroom.



1997 Elegance and classical lines are signatures of the 'Paris' bath, a faithful reproduction of a French fireclay tub, circa 1910. Twenty years on, the collection is still a best seller.



2008 'Soho' basin taps in aged brass with charcoal black levers. Designed for Soho House, Berlin, the 'Soho' range is one of the most popular.



2011 The Water Monopoly moved into its current showroom in Lonsdale Road, NW6, which had space to accommodate growing demand.



## Founder Justin Homewood (right) tells the story so far...



The Water Monopoly started as a cottage industry. I was working from a garage on a pig farm in West Sussex, aged 19, and buying and renovating antique baths, basins and loos. Word soon spread about the man on a mission to make over the "forgotten room" of the house.

'I moved to a workshop in London, and The Water Monopoly was born. That was 1987 and I was trading out of the front room of my ground floor, Victorian terrace flat – the baths had to be brought in through the window as we couldn't get them through the front door. Some clients took a leap of faith and came in, others refused: it was time to find new premises.

'Within three years, we had moved into larger premises where we could showcase the reconditioned English and French antique sanitaryware collated in suites for the first time. We launched with a big party. Then, in 1997, I came across the most beautiful, original French fireclay tub, which I could have sold a dozen times over. We decided to reproduce it. We named it the 'Paris' bath and it became an iconic piece in our history.

'After a decade trading, The Water Monopoly had become synonymous with beautifully crafted, luxury bathrooms and our products were in demand globally. In 2008 we secured our first hotel contract, for Soho House in Berlin, which resulted in the 'Soho' range. In 2011, we moved to our current showroom on Lonsdale Road, NW6. Last year, we launched 'Rockwell', a collection of interchangeable coloured ceramic crossheads. We celebrate 30 years in 2017 with a collaboration with Farrow & Ball to be unveiled soon, and we have relaunched our website. The Water Monopoly is proud to be at the forefront of bathroom design and to continue to change the way people think about bathrooms.



ABOVE Vintage pieces and beautifully crafted reproductions are displayed side by side in the showroom