

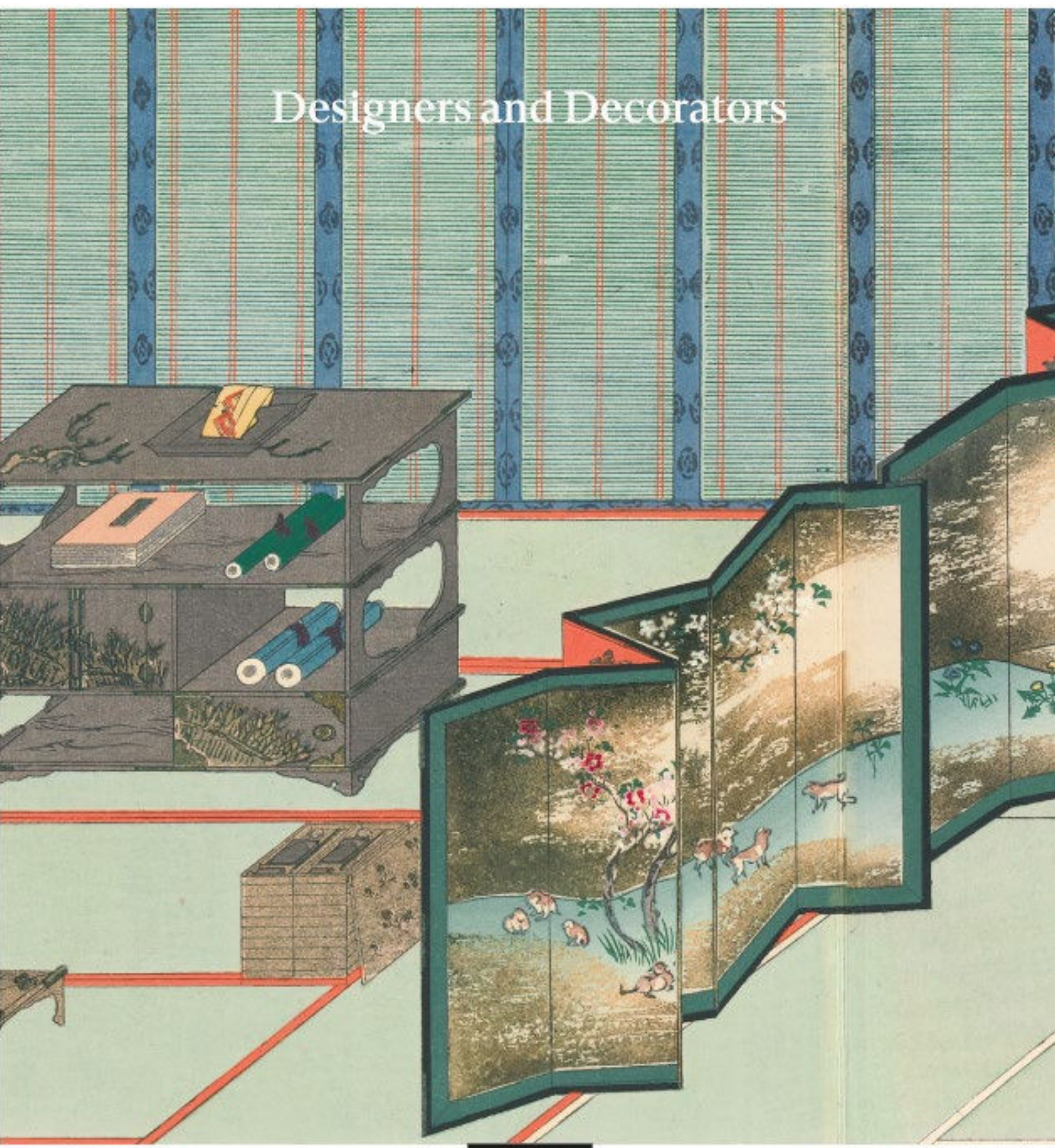
The World of Interiors - October 2024



THE WORLD OF INTERIORS

OCTOBER 2024

Designers and Decorators



What's in the air this month

by David Lipton

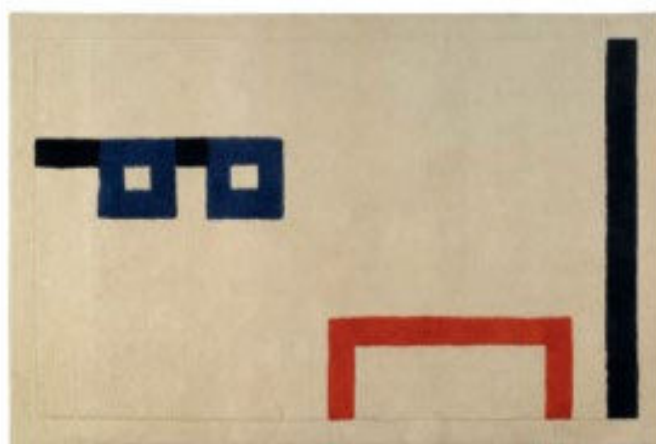


contemporary sensibility, the self-proclaimed passementerie artist creates stand-alone pieces that allow for the intricacy of the work to be intimately appreciated. And appreciate you must, each painstakingly hand-dyed, -spun and -woven thread. Her contrasting palette, meanwhile, invites you to follow every single one of them as if they were pieces of complicated calligraphic script dissolving into abstraction. It speaks not just to the deftness of the medium, but the undiluted joy of decoration. Shown, below left: 'Chromatic' tieback, £240. Visit elizabethashdown.co.uk

Arp Gets Knotted

Abstraction was a reaction against Aestheticism. Art for art's sake became art for shape's sake: squares and circles were in, lounging ladies were out. Not that Sophie Taeuber-Arp was ever one of those. Starting out as a textile weaver, she reinvented herself as an artist, recasting her designs in paper, pencil and paint. The Swiss national realised that abstraction had an alternative origin, one based in craft, especially the ready-made grid of the loom. It was

happen if you exiled the interior from the tassels, fringe and braid etc? This is the essence of the work of Elizabeth Ashdown, one of only a handful of craftspeople handmaking such things in the UK. Reinterpreting traditional techniques with a



Ensign of the Times

Ever since the 17th century, the Fante people of coastal Ghana have been fashioning Asafo flags out of trade cloth, each one a colourful patchwork of appliquéd symbolic images. Drawing on his own West African heritage, and inspired

by Akan stories, the London-based designer Amechi Mandi has been busy playing with that tradition, creating bright jacquard throws, rather than flags, featuring charming scenes that tell their very own story. There are five designs in total, and they join a whole panoply of cushions available on his eponymous online shop, launched four years ago. Shown, above: 'Asaf O'donis' throw, £245. Visit amechihome.com

Trim with Whim

In 1913, the architect Adolf Loos banished ornament from buildings altogether. The impending war finished it off for good. Inside, however, decoration remained, and – thankfully for us – a healthy trimmings trade has persisted ever since. But what would





precisely this that she began to interpret and distort in her artwork. No wonder she found such synergy with fellow Dadaists; her tussle against her own rigid grids echoes their rejection of definability. With the war she broke free, creating works that were increasingly loose and liberated. Recognising her oeuvre was ripe for reprising, Christopher Farr has collaborated with the Arp Foundation to produce hand-knotted rugs inspired by her art. 'Aubette, 58' (below, near left; £1,500) is based on a 1926–27 gouache painting of hers and will be presented at Christopher Farr's Shoreditch studio for the London Design Festival this year. In the context of her career and its beginnings, it all feels entirely apt, a full-circle moment rather than simply Arp for Arp's sake. Visit christopherfarr.com

Zoffany: the Remake

Unlike cinema, in biblical exegesis the sequel is often better than the original. Think of how Lazarus foreshadowed the Resurrection, for instance. Recycling is similar. It at least offers a chance for a cul-de-sac to become a thoroughfare. To this end, the fabric brand Zoffany is partnering with the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust, a charity supporting emerging craftspeople, to give its used fabric new life. Specifically the drapes that formed the centrepiece of the company's wow!House entrance space this year, which the Q&A scholars will remodel into new design, fashion and art pieces. Further resurrections abound: this 'Long Gallery Brocade'

(left), which originated in the 1980s when the fledgling company was asked to reproduce some of the historic wallpapers at Temple Newsam in Yorkshire (Wol Nov 1990), for example. The crafted fabric pieces will be displayed in an exhibition, *Second Life*, at Zoffany's old/new HQ, Voysey House in west London, its parent company Sanderson's original offices and, now that it's been reacquired and restored, permanent home. Second time's a charm, as they say. 'Second Life' runs 9 Sept–8 Oct. Visit zoffany.sandersondesigngroup.com

Tuft Love

If God didn't exist, Voltaire said, it would be necessary to invent him. The same goes for the wheel and even, it might be said, modular seating. Both are so ubiquitous that one imagines them to be parentless. We don't know who invented the wheel, of course, but modular seating was born in the 1940s, the offspring of Harvey Probber. Showing just how enduring his designs are, the American furniture company RH has collaborated with his estate to reissue three of them, including the 'Deep Tuft' sofa (below; from £17,850) of 1972. Largely self-taught, Probber was not one to pander to convention; he confessed to 'horsing things up' with his decorative details, which flew in the face of Modernist doctrine. And so the tufts of this sofa become an ornamental flourish. His seating has been much copied over the years; but while imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, it generally pays to return to source. Visit rh.com

Frau-line Faye

Why is an armchair like a racing car? Horsepower, of course. At



least it is in the case of 'Squash', which is part of an eponymous collection by Faye Toogood and will form the centrepiece of her installation, 'A Squashed Space', at the London Design Festival. It is a staging of her collaboration with the heritage leather and furniture brand Poltrona Frau, which – to explain – also provides the hides for the interiors of the ultimate Italian automobiles. 'English folk with Italian horsepower' is how Toogood herself described the range: which is no more absurd a juxtaposition, I suppose, than

the Mad Hatter's raven-and-writing-desk riddle. She has long been fascinated by folk and here it has been combined with the 1930s elegance and craftsmanship she discovered in the Poltrona Frau archives. The result is textbook Toogood, a compellingly contemporary combination: slouchy yet ineffably chic. If Chanel was the Ford of fashion, she is the Ferrari of furniture. Squashed Space' runs from 14 to 22 September at Poltrona Frau, 147–153 Fulham Rd, London SW3. Visit poltronafrau.com



Pauline Conversion

Sir Paul Smith is part of an exclusive club: like Bridget Riley, he has never met a stripe he didn't like. In fact, so partial is he that he's inclined to emblazon any merchandise that stands still long enough with them, from the Mini to HP Sauce. For his latest collaboration, with Artek, the vertical lines came ready-made in the guise of Alvar Aalto's 'Screen 100', which is made of upright pinewood strips. Using two of Artek's house stains, and three custom ones, Sir Paul got to work, applying his signature motif, which ordinarily consists of 40 shades rather than the five here (below; £3,150). Look out too for more Smithian twists elsewhere in the firm's range: a coordinating 'Coat Rack 109' and 'Stool 60', the underside of which has been painted electric blue. Three classics that have earned their stripes. Visit artek.fi

Golden Wonder

Our homes are not just static surroundings – they have anthropomorphic potential.



The gilded backgrounds of Byzantine icons shimmered to consciousness in candlelight. Oscar Wilde did battle with wallpaper, and lost. With a layered series of techniques and materials – painting, embroidery, collage, vintage papers, faux leathers and succeds – artist and wallpaper designer Claire Coles is reinvigorating the lifeless grounds of walls and ceilings, rendering what is usually flat in three dimensions. And not just metaphorically with shifting reflections of Dutch-gold ground, but literally with appliqué and machine embroidery worked directly on to the paper. 'Golden Hour', the wallpaper in question (above; £1,500 per sq m), is handmade by Coles in her Norfolk studio, having first been showcased at the Maison Diptyque perfume boutique in London. With more than a nod to the swirling gilded forms of Art Nouveau, the style of wild and Wildean aestheticism, it would certainly give Oscar's wallpaper a run for its money. Visit clairecoles.co.uk

Now There's Bosch

Like his compatriot Vermeer, Hieronymus Bosch exerted an influence that quite belied the size of his oeuvre. Today, a mere 25 paintings are attributed to his hand, yet ever since the 15th century his idiosyncratic

style has held enormous sway. Witness the proto-surreal pinnacles of his most famous panel of the triptych *The Garden of Earthly Delights*. A delight indeed and a precursor, perhaps, to the mystical mountains of Leonardo's unsettling atmospheres. Whatever, 500-plus years later these ranges continue to lend themselves to further reinvention. Stripping the landscape of its characters, designer Jennifer Shorto, whose

work has long drawn on diverse art-historical inspiration, has exposed just how inventive Bosch's Eden is. Transformed into a four-panel panoramic wallpaper, this artist's diminutive output is shown for what it really is: a dream world of magnificent proportions, which proves that, though size may not matter, impact does. Shown below: 'The Mountain', from £620 per panel. Visit jennifershorto.com

