
UNSPECIFIED

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The Designers Behind the Style

An illustrated talk by MoDA’s Assistant Curator Maggie Wood
Lucienne Day and her mother Dulcie, early 1920s
L: Lucienne Day, c.1941
R: Day’s Horses Head fabric, 1940
L: Etruscan Head, Marion Dorn, 1936
R: Day’s Horses Head design, 1940
Fluellin, Heal Fabrics, 1950
Calyx, Heal Fabrics, 1951
L: Calyx, Heal Fabrics, 1951

Right: Untitled, Marian Mahler for David Whitehead, 1953
L: Heal’s Ad, *House & Garden*, Oct 1954
R: Publicity shot, 1952

HEAL’S FABRICS from 10/9 a yard

You will find them in London at Heal’s and throughout the country at most leading furnishers. Or, write to Heal’s for the name of your nearest stockist.
L: *Provence*, John Line, 1951
R: Robin Day’s ‘low-cost living room’, 1951
L: Article from *House & Garden*, July 1952
R: Ad for Smirnoff vodka, mid-1950s
L: artwork for fabric design, 1950
C: *Stella*, Cole & Son, 1951
R: ceramic design for Rosenthal, c.1957
Terence Conran, c.1952
L: Conran design for David Whitehead, c.1952
R: Paolozzi design for David Whitehead, c.1952
Two David Whitehead ads featured in the *Daily Mail Book of Ideal Homes*

L: 1951/2, R: 1952/3
DAVID WHITEHEAD FABRICS

Good fabrics in well conceived designs help to characterise a room and contribute to the balance of the colour scheme. Here is shown a small selection of David Whitehead fabrics to give you a hint of their possibilities.

Martha Minniger has conceived this plain and effective four-colour machine print which will be at home in any room. It may be shown in four colour tones.

6d. per yard. 46 ins. wide.

A subtle hi-fi design from Terence Conran. Machine printed in three colours with four alternative colour combinations. 9d. 6d. per yard. 46 ins. wide.

Subtle in its simplicity, this is another fine example of Terence Conran's contemporary designs. A distinctive machine print available in three colour ways. 6d. 6d. per yard. 46 ins. wide.

Manufactured by
D WHITEHEAD LTD. Higher Mill Rawtenstall Lancs.
also 4 New Burlington Street London W1
L: Ad for Midwinter, *House & Garden*, April 1957
R: Ad for Conran Fabric, op. cit
We are not just another young couple who stumbled across an Elizabethan house, gutted it, and then remodelled it with great initiative and effort. We didn't have a good old companion who could help us track down the right pieces of furniture for a relatively modest sum that we could buy for a relatively modest outlay. We weren't actually looking for anything at a country auction, the prices were way too high when the bidding started. And, finally, we did not paint the whole house and lay the wood in one week only, only taking time off to knock up some new shelves for the King Charles loveseat. It took all our spare time for two months to lay the living room floor; our marriage nearly broke up before it started because of the many bitter words about the right way to apply Perspex. But we did not finish as a collection for junk shops, although some of the cases we first listed seemed to collect interesting jewels, which we bought at half the price.

We made four small rooms at the top of the house (part of a really old Regency terrace), into one large open-plan living room. We have transformed this drab house into one which normally stays in its current state without too much effort, but when we give a party the dining room for its first birthday we had to move the chairs with the orange to prevent the child from falling down again. The second disadvantage is that, although in theory it is a good idea to be able to hear and to be able to converse without going out in the living room, in fact, the conversation tends to be distanced to the cook who is tempted to wander away from the scene and thus in some fascinating groups only to be abruptly recalled by something hearing or feeling over. We are often asked if cooking smells are not a nuisance to us, although we did not notice them by having an extractor fan but we find we do not need one.

Open-plan living has proved most successful with us, but it is partly because we have plenty of room in the rest of the house, even though the basement is occupied by our bookkeeper and the ground floor is let as a self-contained RC. Our bedroom is on the second floor and we cook in the first floor studio. However, the atmosphere of quiet conversation there may now be distorted across the main side to the dining room, because the next room is the nursery.
Jacqueline Groag
Field Fare, late 40s/early 50s

Hill Brown Ltd.
Untitled, designed 1948, manufactured 1951, roller-printed rayon for the Rayon Design Centre
Colours fresh and clear as spring. A wide choice of designs by brilliant young artists. Guaranteed fast to sunlight and washing. Yet, in heavy spun rayon 45" wide, they're in most cases priced at under 15s. a yard.

DAVID WHITEHEAD FABRICS
Groag fabric designs for David Whitehead

1952

1953
David Whitehead advertising

Ad from 1955

Fresh, new and gay—and moderately priced

Every year, a large group of new designs by Britain’s most brilliant young artists join the David Whitehead range of moderately priced contemporary prints. Although their trends in design and colour—something very hard to find, as a rule, in moderately priced fabrics—these are practical as well as beautiful, for they are roller-printed on 44” wide-spin rayon, in colours guaranteed not to fade and wash—a very important point for many climates. And prices come well within the medium category.

Besides these contemporary prints, which are available in colours as well as spot-mix, David Whitehead make a complete range of other furnishing fabrics of every style and type. For further information, please write to David Whitehead Ltd., Higher Mill, Rawtenstall, Lancashire, England.

Ad appeared in Daily Mail Ideal Home Book 1955

Fresh gaiety at little cost

Raising a homedome house or giving a fresh start to a weary old room? These bright-hearted David Whitehead Fabrics will brighten your life and keep their good looks. Designed by Britain’s young artists in every spot-mix 44” wide, and guaranteeing care and washing, they come, in most cases, only £1 10s to £2 10s a yard—and they are guaranteed. Ask to see them in your local store. As well as these Contemporary Prints, David Whitehead lead the way in traditional linen and modern floral designs.
L: Mary Storr photographed at MoDA, Dec 2008
R: *Frivolite*, Mary Storr for John Line, designed late ’40s
L: Storr design for John Line, c. 1948 (BADDA 3158),
R: Ad for John Lines, featuring ‘Limited Editions’
Frivolite, Mary Storr for John Line, early 1950s
Six more wallpapers

1. One of five colourings in which John Linn and Sons Ltd produce Henry Shaw's Country design.

2. Abstract shapes produce an effect reminiscent of the convex of grains in this design by Graham Robertson. It is hand-painted in white on ground paper by Cole and Son (Wallpapers) Ltd, W.

3. Spring Flowers has all the freshness of its name. It is a design by Margaret Stones, machine-printed (on white) by Wall Paper Manufacturers Ltd.

4. Egyptian Passion, like Spring Flowers, is a new WYMS paper for the Amateur market. In it Prior Shuttleworth has used many motifs in a small-like style.

5. Bonanza, with its samba motif, is produced in new versions light on a dark ground, as illustrated, and dark on light ground. The two can be varied in one room. Designed by Mary Stan, hand-painted by Linc's.

6. Native art inspired the Abatis pattern. Illustrated here in light colour, it is also produced in maroon and blue. Designed by Annelie Fossara, hand-painted by Linc's.
Shenstone, Mary Storr for John Line, 1951
Want to see more?
Book an appointment in MoDA’s Study Room to see more examples of 50s design

Contact Maggie Wood, Assistant Curator
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