

L'Œil du textile - Rapport 20

Finesse française

Temps forts des défilés parisiens : Retour à Paris pour Maison&Objet et Deco Off avec notre reportage Printemps 2024. Nous vous apportons un aperçu exclusif des maisons du patrimoine historique, des collections de pointe et des dernières nouveautés en matière de design d'intérieur. Découvrez les traditions artisanales et les approches modernes des designers d'aujourd'hui, notamment des fabricants établis comme Lelièvre et Rinck, et des talents indépendants comme Ghislaine Garcin et Benoît Averly. Notre rapport présente une collection pratique de palettes de couleurs émergentes, capturant les nouveaux schémas présentés lors des salons. Avec des profils captivants, des photographies immersives et des points de vue uniques, accompagnez-nous pour explorer le passé, embrasser le présent et anticiper l'avenir du design.





“A kind of magic...”

...Like a dream”, these words, used by Patrick Frey to describe the acquisition of heritage wallpaper house Zuber capture the awe and wonder I felt during my recent visit to the company’s factory. I had extended my trip for a day so that I could take the four-hour train ride from Paris to Rixheim—to the historic place where they make these wall coverings. The factory itself has barely changed in 200 years. History is palpable, especially in foreboding cellars where creaky towering shelves full of ancient and mysterious wood blocks sit, as they have for centuries, waiting to be repaired and rediscovered.

As I toured the historic factory and watched artisans at work, I was blown away by the ingenuity and dedication of the craftsmanship. While some tasks have been the same for centuries, others are invented and reinvented on a daily basis. But, at its heart, it’s a place where time seems to stand still, and every tool tells a story.

Amidst the rich array of tradition on show at Deco Off and Maison&Objet, there’s a sense of innovation and creativity redefining history. Whether it’s Lelièvre reviving the Quenin brand, Valentin Goux of Rinck with his marvelously nerdy dedication to great design of the past,

or Giles Deacon putting a daring spin on archival patterns, there’s a palpable energy driving our industry forward.

And it’s not just the established names making waves. Independent talents like Ghislaine Garcin, Benoît Averly, Anne Corbière, and Karin Sajo, free of the demands of multi-generational family business, are creating personal and meaningful work. Freelance artist Lucille Boitelle straddles both worlds, working with heritage brands while focusing on her own creative growth.

On a personal note, I collaborated with Jiun Ho on a captivating pop-up space alongside Sarah von Dreele and Parete, two innovative New York-based companies. We showcased Jiun Ho’s exquisite cabinet layered with intricate embroidery and a custom sequined overlay. I was so gratified to collaborate on the design of this couture masterpiece, and seeing it installed and receiving positive feedback was immensely rewarding. And as you can see from the preceding photo, *The Textile Eye* found a temporary home in Paris at our gallery on Rue Guenegaud. It was a joy to share my passion for textiles with a new audience in such a vibrant city.

As contemporary designers, we are called upon to honor the past, embrace the present, and anticipate the future of design. I hope that this look at how our colleagues are rising to these tasks inspires you to do the same!

Saana



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Interview

GHISLAINE GARCIN

MAILLE & FEUTRE. EST. 2016. MARSEILLE, FRANCE

Self-taught craftsman Ghislaine Garcin's atelier fuses two innovative techniques: knitting ("maille") and felt ("feutre") to create contemporary, textural works of wool art. Garcin's collection of rugs, cushions, accent furniture, and decorative objects elevate the naturally sustainable properties of wool, further enhanced by her decision to switch to responsible vegetable dyes for her designs—resulting in luminous, artisan-crafted offerings that are truly one-of-a-kind.

Tell us about your background and design journey.

I used to work as a graphic designer, but one day I decided to dedicate myself to my old passion for wool. I tried knitting, crochet, weaving, embroidery, and other techniques before discovering the wet felt technique. Combining knitting and felt became a passionate desire for research and creation.

Choose three words that define your brand.

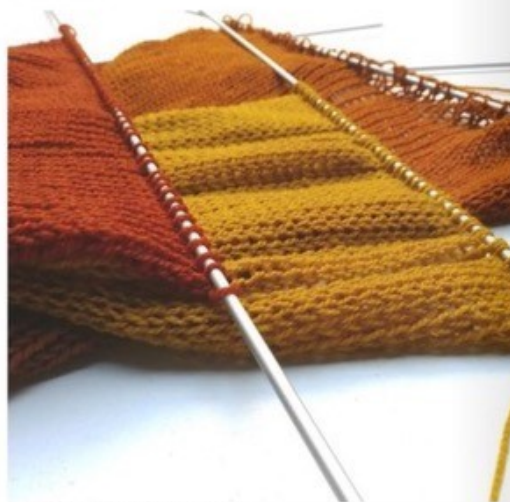
Elegant, sensitive, authentic.

Why did you choose wool as your primary medium?

I've been fond of wool since my childhood, perhaps because of the local sheep I encountered spending summer vacations at my grandparents' house. But actually, wool now seems obvious because of its natural properties. Wool felt has thermo- and hydro-regulation



Ghislaine Garcin



Process for the Fragments collection



Process for the Fragments collection



Laurent Gardel's original artwork for the Fragments collection

properties that can't be matched by any other fiber—natural or synthetic. It is highly insulating and sound-proofing. It's anti-static, hypoallergenic, hydro-regulating, and pollution-absorbent, and it's the perfect material for coziness and relaxation. As well as being natural, noble, and generous, wool is beautiful!

How does wool allow you to express your intentions as a textile artist?

What started out as a simple artistic curiosity regarding the mix of knitting and felt initiated a demanding and inspiring discovery gradually that evolved into a passionate desire for research and creation. This association is the perfect answer to my love for textures, materials, asymmetry, and imperfect beauty. By combining traditional savoir faire and personal experimentation, I try to update the still-rustic image of felt and enhance the value of wool through an approach that is both aesthetic and sustainable.

Please tell us about your newest collections.

In my two previous collections, I used 100% natural materials and techniques, including the color. The felt fibers are the natural color of the sheep, and the threads of the knitting have been hand-dyed with plant-based pigments. The use of natural dyes sublimates the wool (which receives the tint beautifully) and instills a raw charm through the intensity and power of colors.

Do you have any sustainability initiatives? If so, please explain.

By definition, the very nature of my work is sustainable!

My objects are handmade with natural materials, sourced as locally as possible; the technique is very frugal, using only hot water and soap—and now, even the color comes from plants. I also pay particular attention to manufacturing conditions, the origin of materials, and the welfare of

animals. And, of course, the natural properties of wool felt make it very durable...

How do you begin a new project?

A new project starts in my head while I am working by hand on the previous one. I'm free to dream, and I probably combine what I'm making and the various influences I've certainly come across the weeks before (such as nature, travel, paintings, movies, shows, magazines, "air du temps") through associations of ideas.

I have no team, but collaborate with other artisans, including Lola Verstrepen as a natural dyer for the wool, and Julie le Moel, a cabinetmaker who creates the legs of the seats. Also, I sometimes borrow drawings from artist friend Laurent Gardet that become beautiful rugs.

What is your favorite activity to spark inspiration?

I travel physically, or just in my head. Or I try something new, an idea or a technique I sometimes thought about, but had no time to experiment with yet.

How would you describe your aesthetic and overall approach to textile design?

Maille & Feutre is a singular signature with strong aesthetic codes: a texture that everyone can recognize, highly personal color choices, and research into shapes. It's also a brand that has made responsible and committed choices to promote the traditional know-how and the local resources.

Do you have a French design sensibility? Where do you see the future of French design heading?

I do what I like most—guided by my own intuition—without worrying too much about what others are doing. However, I'm particularly interested in those, who like me, are trying to safeguard the ancestral savoir faire and pass it on before it disappears. Like everyone, I'm



Detail of the Fragments collection



Process of the Fragments collection



Detail of the Fragments collection

probably influenced by what I see around me, and I really appreciate the work of other talented craftworkers with a contemporary approach. I believe there is a deep revival in many craft disciplines such as textile, ceramics, glass-making, basketry...

What advice would you give to your younger self when starting out in the industry?

Be yourself, don't try to please. Take your time, be patient.

Aim for perfection, but be humble, you won't get it. And finally, the path is more exciting than the result.

What new techniques are you interested in exploring for future designs? What are you researching now?

I work on rigidity and volume. Basketry is my new passion, I'd like to combine this technique with my current work...



The Fragments collection