



The *IKEA: Magical Patterns* galleries are packed with bold, printed-textile lengths created by different designers. Prints are loosely grouped by theme, including Basic Shapes, Sun and Rain, Natural World, Storytelling, and Folk Art, demonstrating different styles that IKEA has produced. Geometric repeats, illustrative motifs, blocks, dots, stripes, circles, brick shapes, abstract marks, botanical, and floral patterns sit side by side. Despite their variety, the shared medium of printed cloth gives the displays a sense of bold cohesion. The selvedge on some printed lengths notes the designer's name and year of production, acting as labelling. Textiles are interspersed with display cases, which connect to aspects of textile designing including tools of the trade; drawing implements, pens, pencils, paint, paint brushes, papers, tapes, and colour swatches. Certain display cases relate to textile designing generally, while others are associated with specific designers' working methods, providing brief insights into creative processes and sources of inspiration.

The role of drawing, painting, mark making, and collage is evident throughout the exhibition as processes for generating imagery and working with colour to create textile designs. It is fabulous to see original designs framed and displayed alongside the printed fabrics. Inez Svensson's "RANDIG BANAN" is a particularly compelling example. Designed for IKEA in 1986 and reissued in 2013, larger-than-life bananas are collaged onto a painted black-and-white striped background. The visibility of pencil lines, taped seams, and fold marks on the design work highlights the hand-created origins of mass-produced textiles, and the framed design work is displayed next to a length of the printed fabric. This approach to including hand-created design work continues in the exhibition's final gallery with designs by 10-Gruppen. Again, printed textile lengths hang like vast canvases: drawn florals,

geometric patterns, vivid grids, and zig zag patterns are adjacent and layered in the space. Leaving the gallery, visitors will find printed textiles for IKEA by British designer Zandra Rhodes. It seems fitting that this more recent 2021 collaboration is included, bringing Rhodes's signature style to new audiences and demonstrating how IKEA continues to engage with external designers.

The exhibition omits technical detail about production: how design works are prepared for industrial printing or how large-scale facilities operate. Given IKEA's outsourcing of manufacturing, this absence is perhaps expected. Still, it leaves open questions about the technical expertise and equipment required to translate designs on paper into printed textiles and the company's efforts towards more sustainable materials and production methods. Dovecot Studios presents a version of the show previously exhibited at the IKEA Museum in Älmhult, Sweden, a curatorial collaboration between the IKEA Museum and Dovecot Studio. With Scotland's longstanding textile heritage, industry and education, the Dovecot Studios iteration of *Magical Patterns* feels timely. It highlights designers' contributions, whose work often remains invisible once translated into commercial products. The exhibition acknowledges this hidden labour and affirms the importance of textile design to the IKEA brand. It offers insight into a design history that is often overshadowed by the company's reputation for furniture, and in doing so, draws attention to the creative and cultural value of textile design itself. At a time when worldwide headlines and uncertainty about the future feel overwhelming, the exhibition offers an escape, immersing visitors in an explosion of colour and pattern that reminds us of the power of textiles and design to uplift and energise everyday life. *** **Dr. Helena Britt**