

# *Awaken GK&C Digital Textiles Collection*

This document contains information relating to the *Awaken GK&C Digital Textiles Collection* output which resulted from a collaborative project undertaken by Elaine Bremner and Helena Britt.

The intention of the project is described and research questions provided. Photographs are included of the *Awaken GK&C Digital Textiles Collection*, the Collection shown in the Awaken Exhibition and extracts from the post-exhibition publication. Details of press and publicity and conference papers which include the *Awaken GK&C Digital Textiles Collection* and Awaken Project are cited.

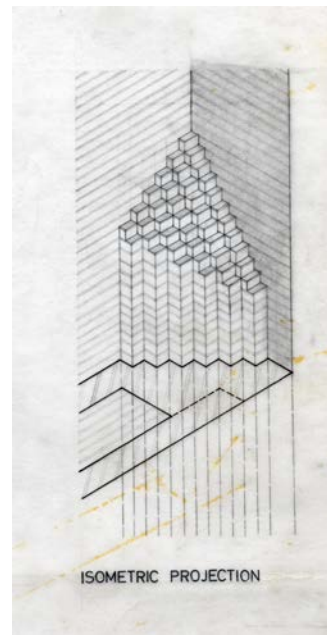
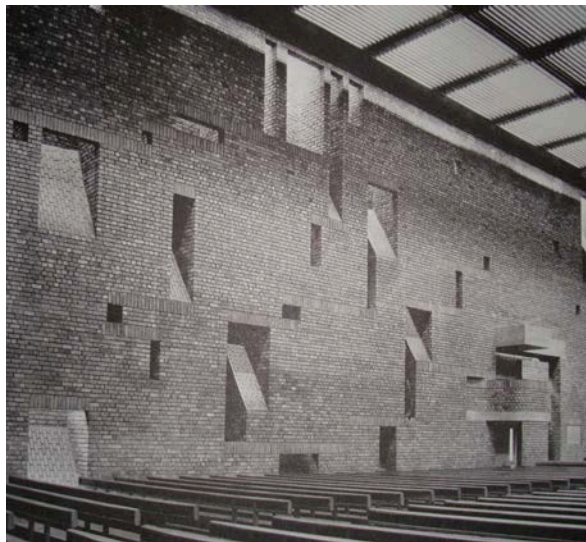
Elaine Bremner and Helena Britt

## Intention of Project

To create a collection of digitally printed textiles inspired by the Gillespie, Kidd & Coia Archive at The Glasgow School of Art (GSA).

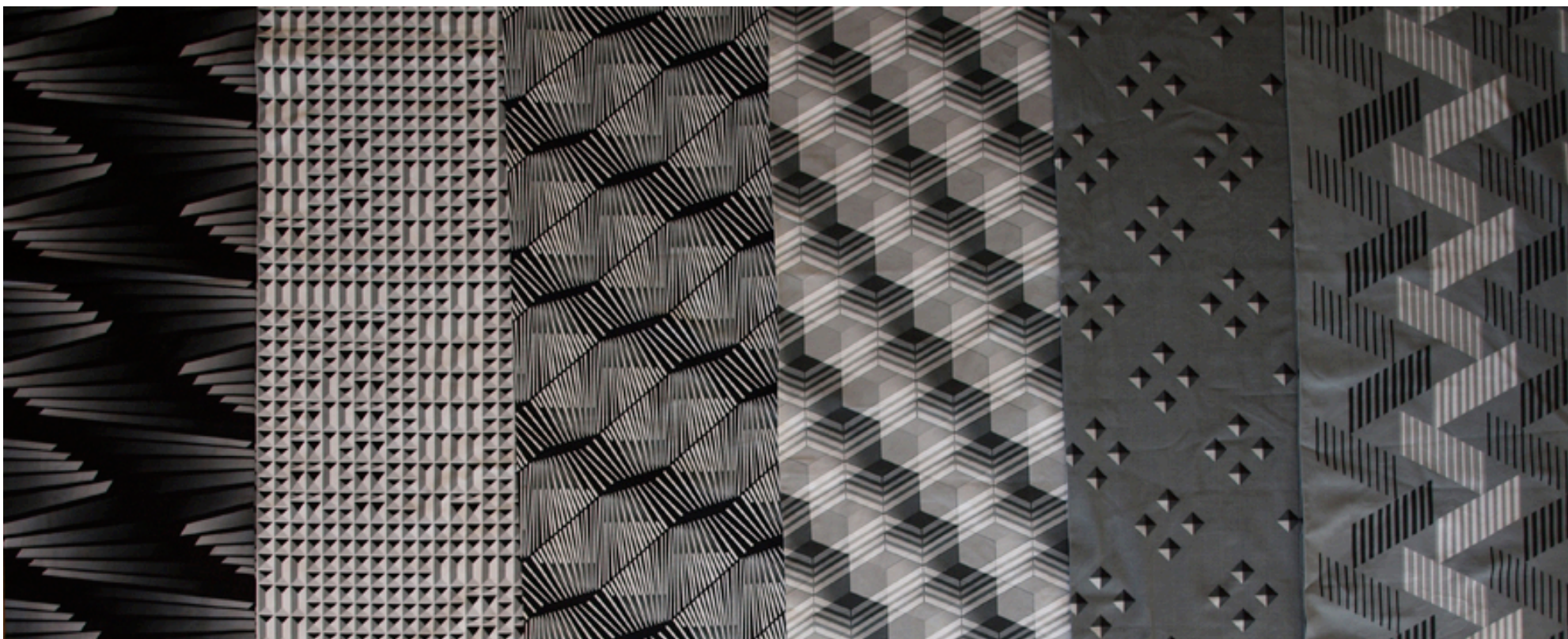
The enquiry was directed by the research questions:

- How do designers utilise archival sources in the creation of digitally printed textiles?
- Does collaborative working assist the digital textile design process, and if so how?
- How does working collaboratively and from archive material differ from previous practice?



Photographs of items from the Gillespie, Kidd & Coia Archive

## Awaken GK&C Digital Textiles Collection



'Awaken GK&C Digital Textiles Collection'  
Photographs of 6 x digitally printed cotton textile lengths. Each length measures 140cm x 300cm.

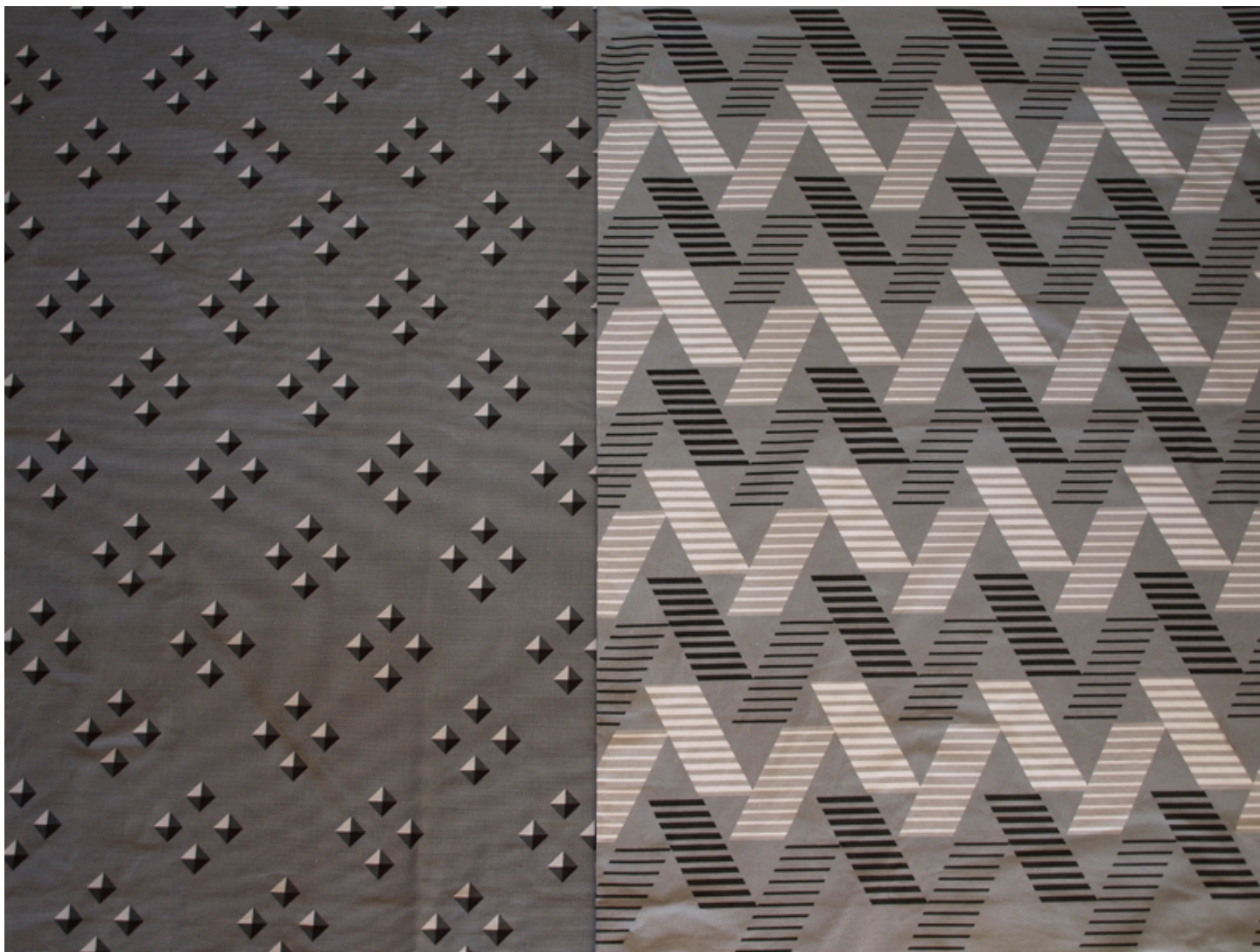
## Awaken GK&C Digital Textiles Collection



'Assembly and Elevation'

Photograph of 2 x digitally printed cotton textile lengths. Each length measures 140cm x 300cm.

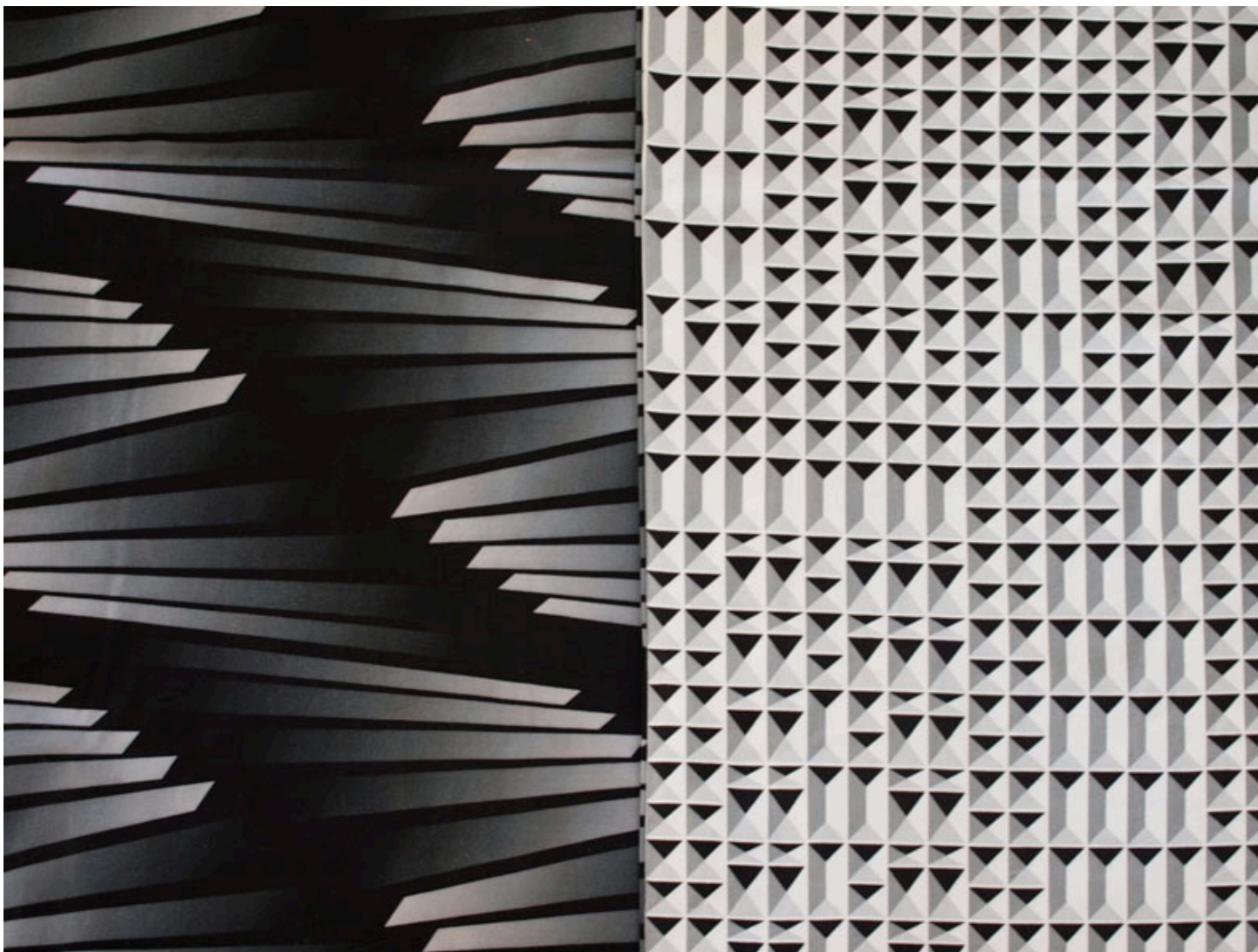
## Awaken GK&C Digital Textiles Collection



'Block and Cross-Section'

Photograph of 2 x digitally printed cotton textile lengths. Each length measures 140cm x 300cm.

## Awaken GK&C Digital Textiles Collection



'Void and Facade'

Photograph of 2 x digitally printed cotton textile lengths. Each length measures 140cm x 300cm.

# Awaken Exhibition



Mackintosh Gallery, The Glasgow School of Art, 24 January – 28 February 2009

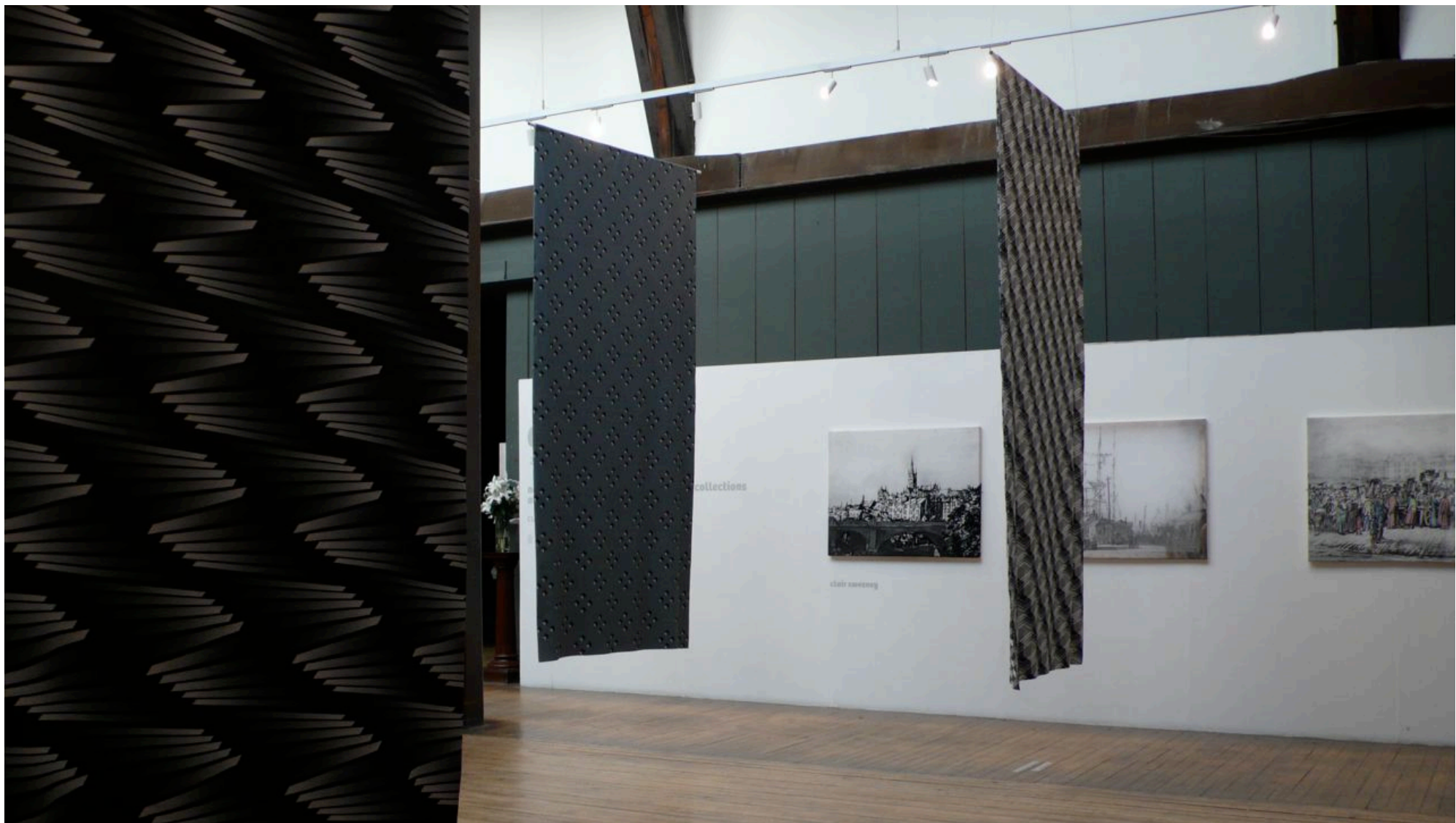
# Awaken Exhibition



Mackintosh Gallery, The Glasgow School of Art, 24 January – 28 February 2009

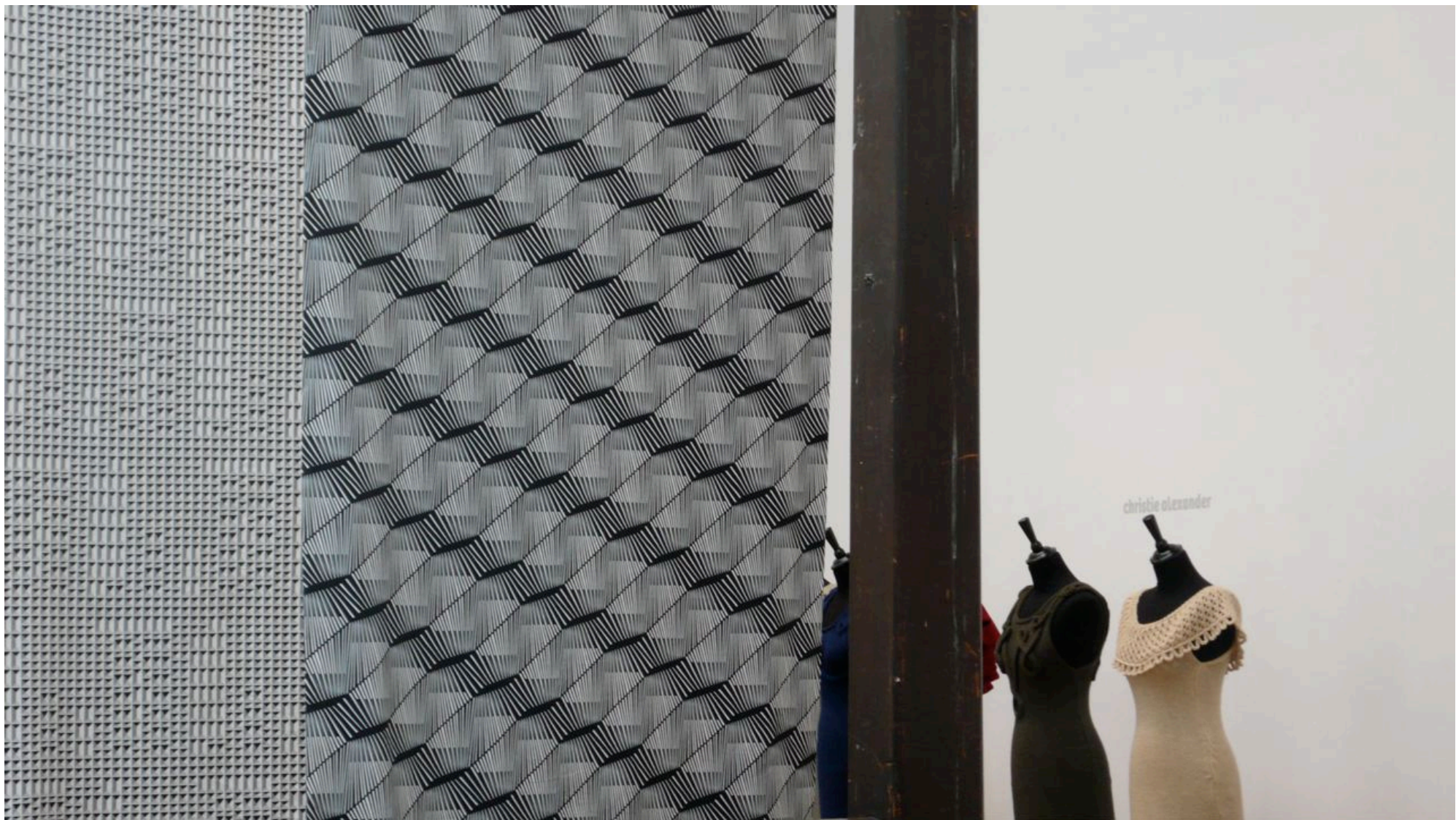


# Awaken Exhibition



Mackintosh Gallery, The Glasgow School of Art, 24 January – 28 February 2009

# Awaken Exhibition

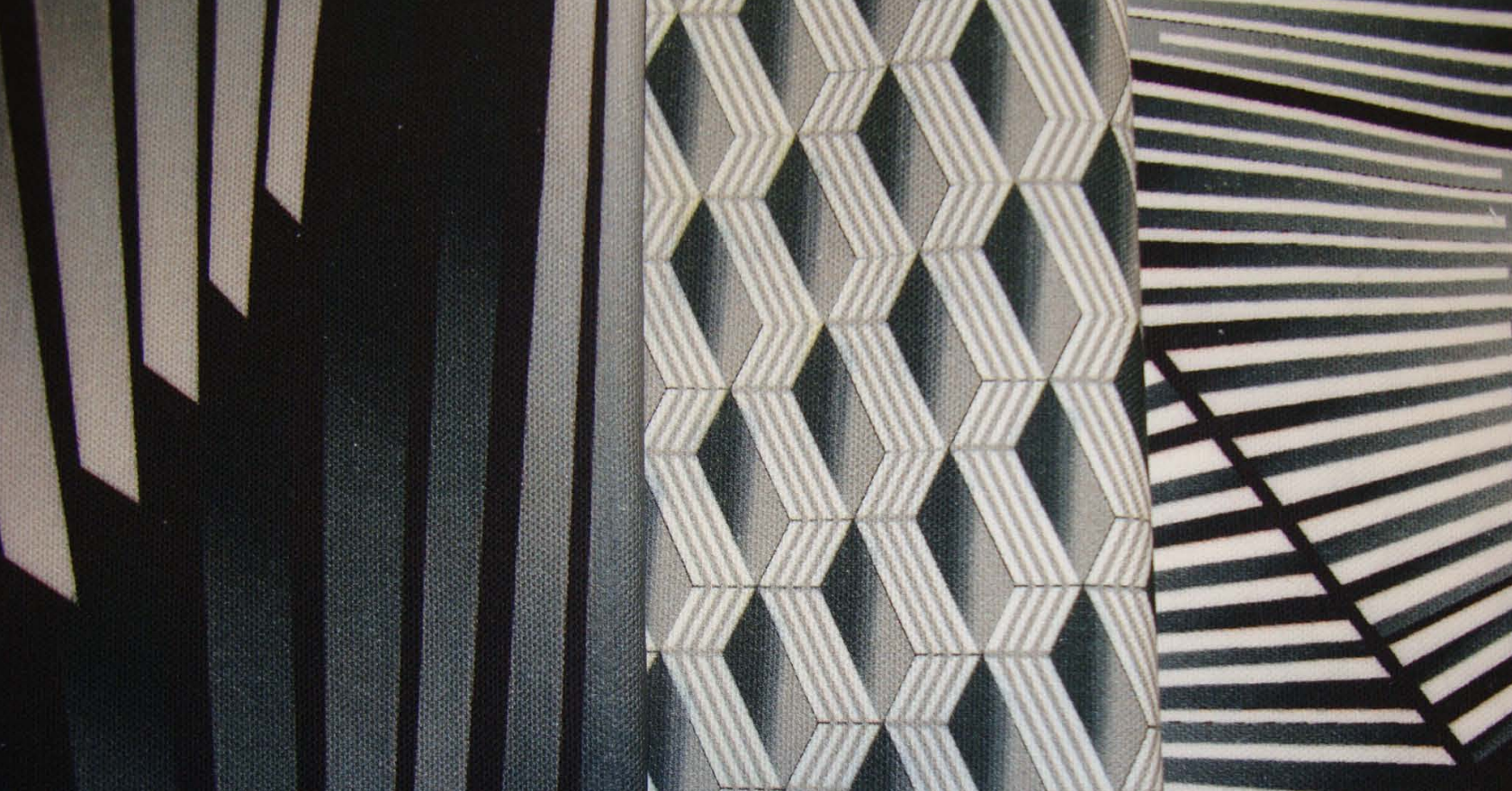


Mackintosh Gallery, The Glasgow School of Art, 24 January – 28 February 2009

## Awaken Post-Exhibition Publication

Bremner, E. & Britt, H. (2009) Cooperation Collaboration. In Stephen-Cran, J. Awaken: New Textiles Inspired by the Archives and Collections at The Glasgow School of Art. Glasgow: The Glasgow School of Art, UK. ISBN 978-0-9560317-4-7.

**cooperation  
collaboration:  
bremner & britt  
describe collaborative  
working and what it  
brings to the creative  
process**



Designs digitally printed onto cotton,  
Helena Britt and Elaine Bremner, 2008.

### *why elect to work collaboratively for the 'awaken' project?*

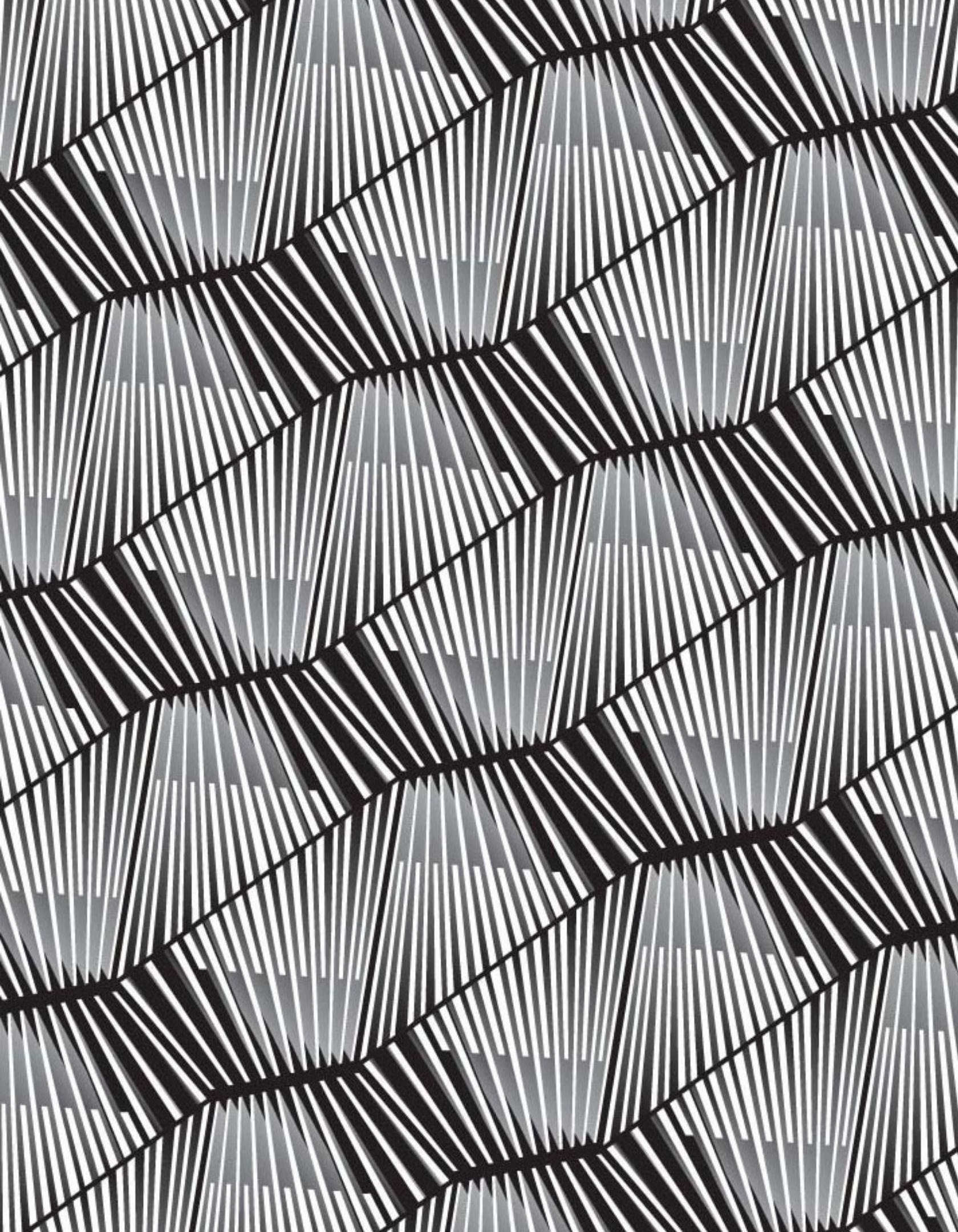
#### **elaine bremner**

We both like a similar aesthetic, and photographed very similar aspects of patterns in architecture while in Berlin. Both like Gillespie, Kidd & Coia archives and thought they had potential to inform textile designs. When the archive exhibition was first proposed I was working on producing work for another exhibition that involved digitally printing onto base fabrics that I had designed and woven. During this time I had some interesting conversations with Helena about the potential of print & weave combinations. It is not unusual for textile designers to work collaboratively in pairs or teams in industry. We were both keen to approach the project from a design point of view and liked the idea of working to a brief.

#### **helena britt**

Initially we were both interested in working from the same starting point so the idea of working collaboratively seemed to make sense. We sit next to each other in the 7th Floor office so often discuss things we work on out with our teaching practice. Also our previous design practice has involved the utilisation of digital design and printing processes so we have had discussion surrounding this in the past. To a certain extent Elaine and I have certain similar aesthetic tastes, during a trip to Berlin with 2nd Year GSA Textiles students both of us were found taking similar photographs of the same subjects.

From the outset I found the idea of the archive/awaken project quite daunting, working collaboratively offered a much needed form of support. I hadn't designed anything for a while due to other commitments requiring a lot of writing, due to this break I was nervous about returning to my design practice. Also the idea of presenting this work through a public gallery-based exhibition as opposed to a forum more akin to my usual design practice i.e. directly to clients or at trade shows was also pretty terrifying. Particularly as students I teach would see the work presented, again producing work collaboratively seemed less daunting.



## Awaken Post-Exhibition Publication

Bremner, E. & Britt, H. (2009) Shadow, Surface, Geometry, Perspective. In Stephen-Cran, J. Awaken: New Textiles Inspired by the Archives and Collections at The Glasgow School of Art. Glasgow: The Glasgow School of Art, UK. ISBN 978-0-9560317-4-7.



**shadow, surface,  
geometry &  
perspective**



# elaine bremner & helena britt

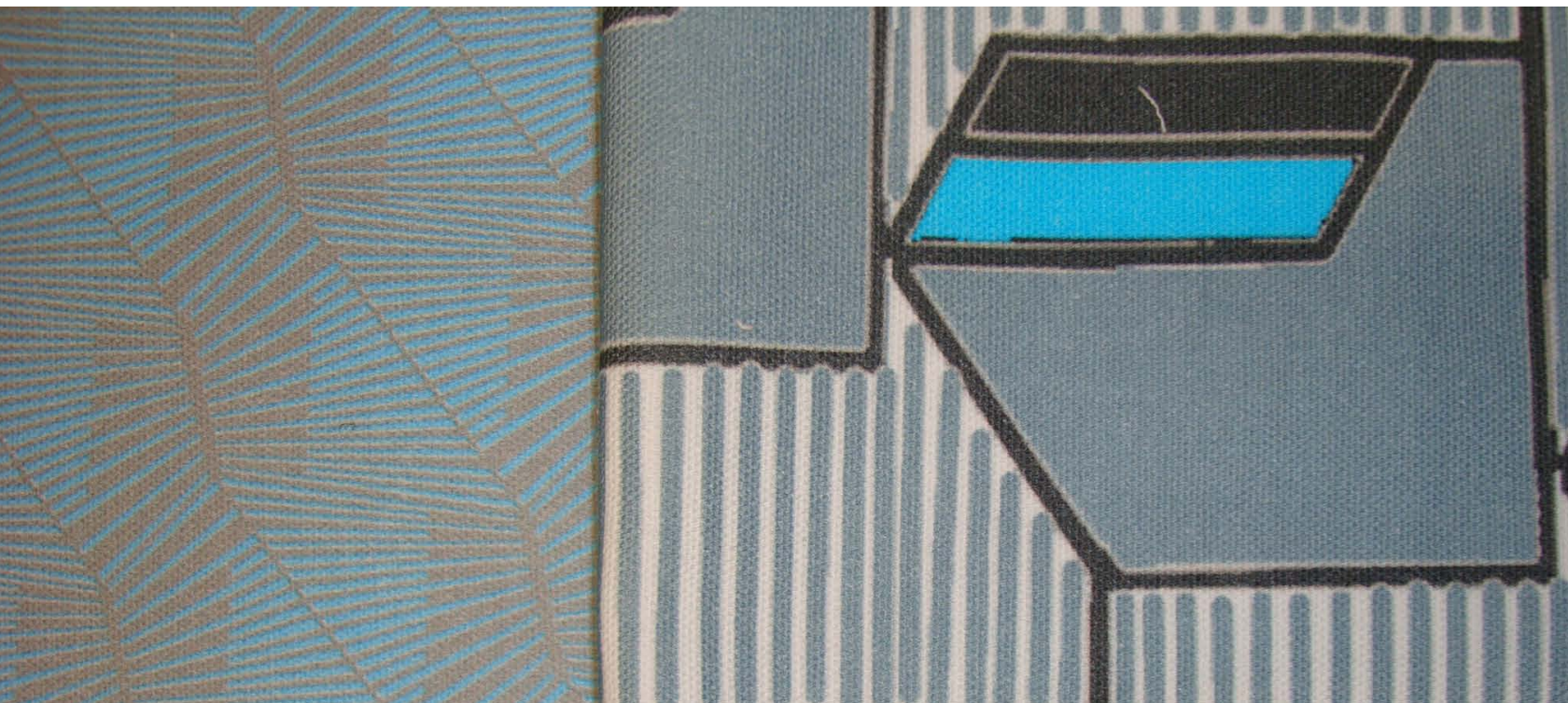
## *why was the starting point of the gillespie kidd & coia archive selected?*

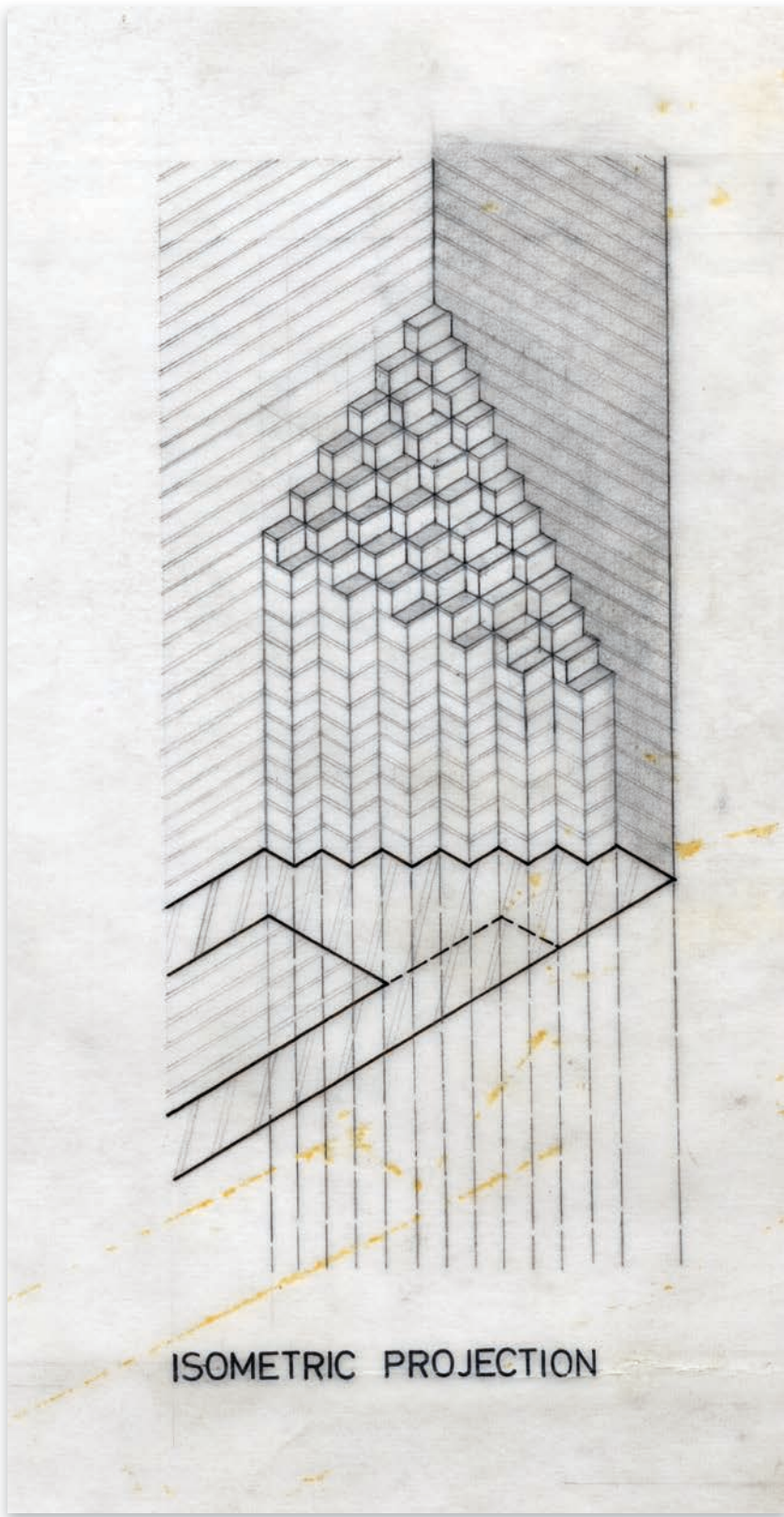
**hb:** Elaine and I visited the Gillespie Kidd & Coia (GK&C) exhibition separately, realising the extensive amount of information held about this architectural practice at GSA. I took photographs at the exhibition of some of the architectural models and plans and particularly liked the shadows cast due to the ceiling in the space were the video was playing (figure 1-2), although this didn't photograph well due to the darkness of the space.

Elaine and I both found the GK&C work presented in the exhibition visually interesting and decided that we wanted to use this as a starting point for the archive/awaken project. Rather than both working from the same starting point independently we decided to approach the project collaboratively.

**eb:** After the initial meeting in Oct '07 to discuss possibility of textile exhibition based on GSA archive my initial thoughts were that I would like to work from geometric /architectural source as this is aesthetic I'm normally drawn to, although at this point didn't know what was available in the archive. I knew I didn't want design new textiles from archival textiles, so was looking for a non-textile starting point.

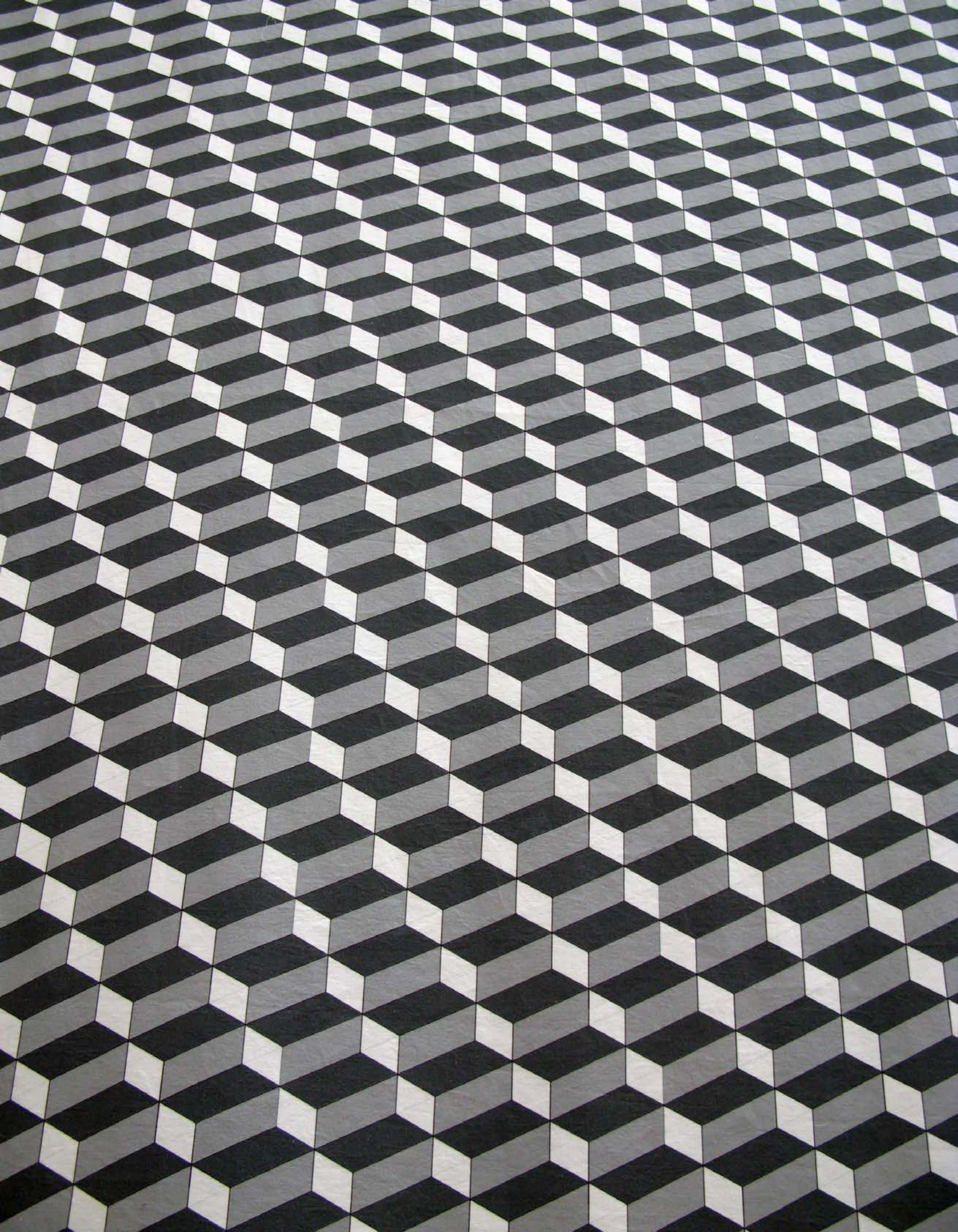
I saw the Gillespie Kidd & Coia (GK&C) exhibition at The Lighthouse in November and was really interested in the architecture itself but also in the plans and drawings, not really for their architectural significance but more the details, the lines, the patterns, the precision and order. It was at this point that I found out that GK&C archive was part of the GSA archive and it would be possible to use this as the starting point for the exhibition. MacMillan & Metzstein were also inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius: architects whose work I'd previously admired. Helena and I discussed the exhibition which revealed we both really liked the work (models, drawings and photographs) and would like to use the GK&C archives for the 'Awaken' exhibition.

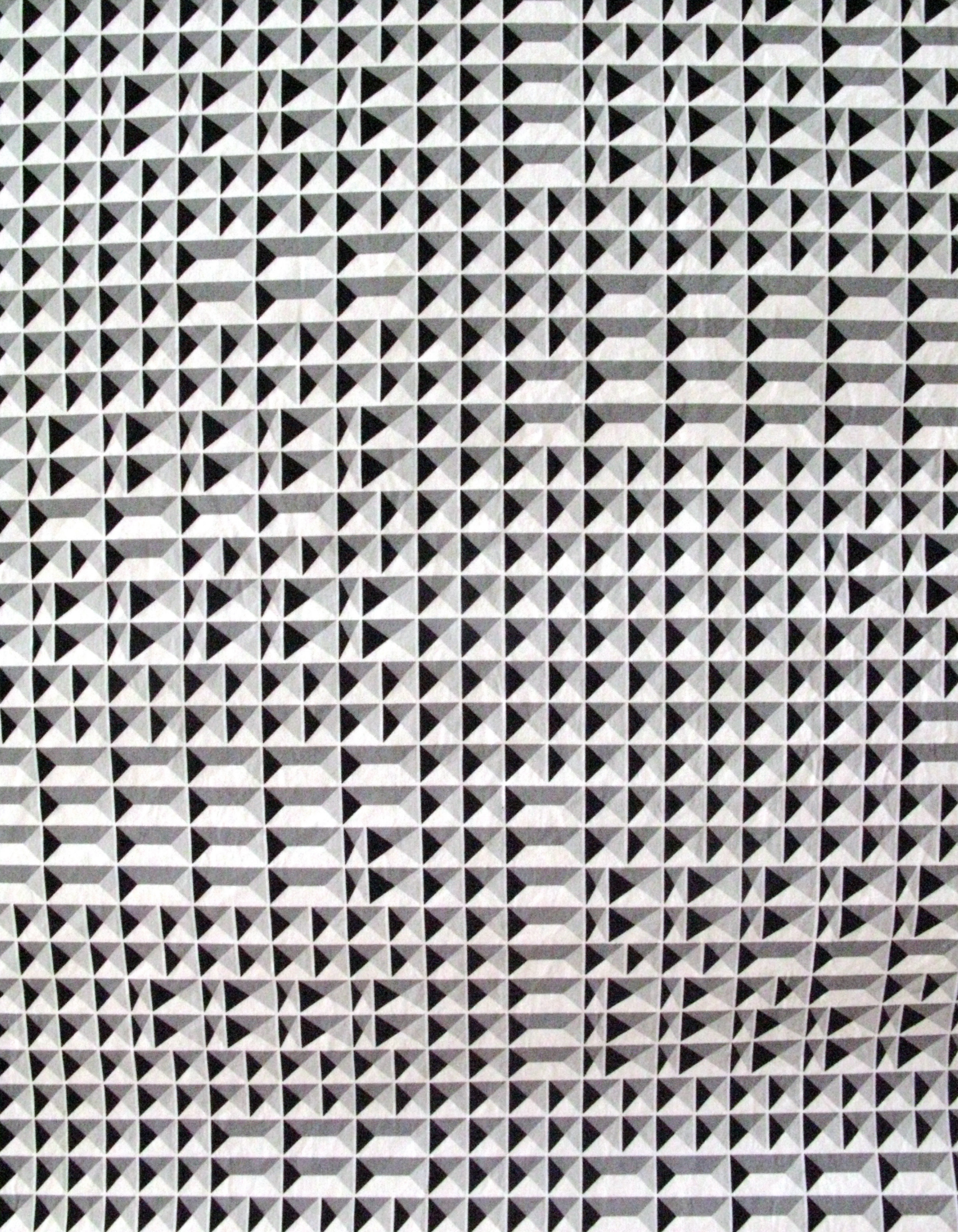


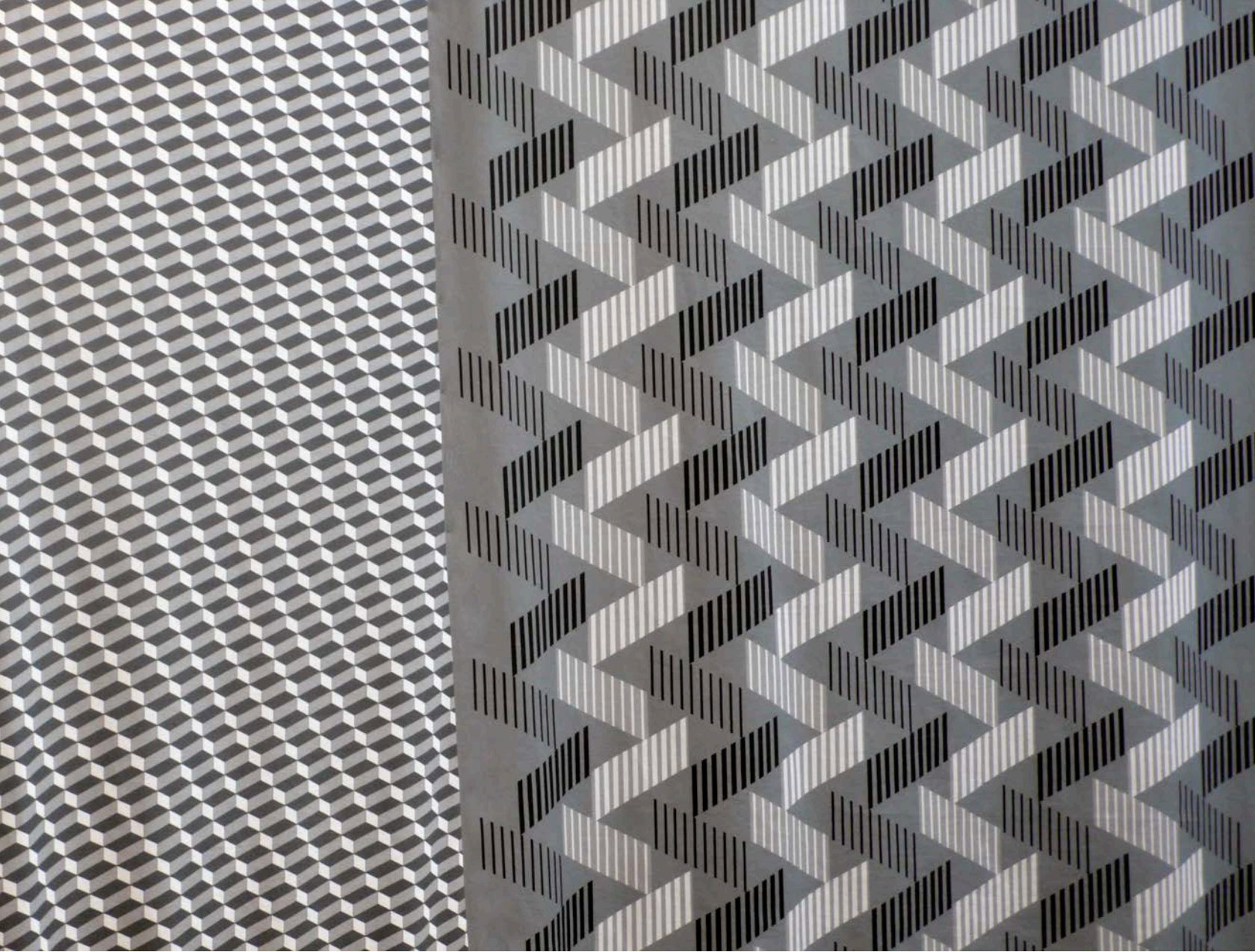


(pages 060 - 061) Digital inkjet printed cotton panama, (developmental work and sampling) Helena Britt and Elaine Bremner, 2008.

(above) Archive inspiration: detail of architectural drawing showing brick at West door of St Bride's Church, East Kilbride (Gillespie, Kidd and Coia Archive), c1958.







(pages 063 - 065) Fabric lengths,  
digital inkjet printed cotton panama,  
Helena Britt and Elaine Bremner, 2009.  
Awaken exhibition installation views.

## Awaken Project and Awaken GK&C Digital Textiles Collection Press & Publicity

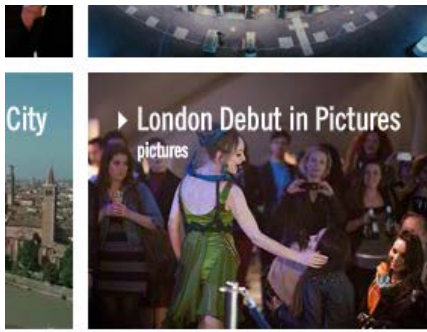
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<http://archivesandauteurs.blogspot.co.uk/2009/02/awaken-awakened-project-process.html>

<http://www.gsa.ac.uk/about-gsa/library-learning-resources/archives-collections-centre/projects/awaken/>

<http://gsalibnews.blogspot.co.uk/2009/01/awaken-exhibition-of-new-textiles.html>



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## School Of Art

By Ben Miller | 21 January 2009  
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Preview

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John Walter Lindsay's travel journal is almost 60 years old. Pic © The Glasgow School of Art

Exhibition preview: Awaken, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, January 24 – February 28 2009

When the Glasgow School of Art opened its new Archives and Collections centre in October last year, it used the occasion to invite designers to re-interpret the historic material for contemporary textile-related design work. Awaken, opening on Saturday, reveals new textiles inspired by the school's 140-year past.

A resin cast by Susan Telford features. Pic © Susan Telford



"Many previously unpublished and unmediated items have been used as departure points," reveals Jimmy Stephen-Cran, exhibition curator and departmental head. "The divergent creative journeys taken by individuals who unknowingly used the exact same starting point are particularly tantalising."

A textile design notebook belonging to Daisy M. Anderson, a GSA student

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Site we like: knitting for enthusiasts at the V&A Museum



Site we like: study the history, art and design of textiles



Site we like: South West Textile Group

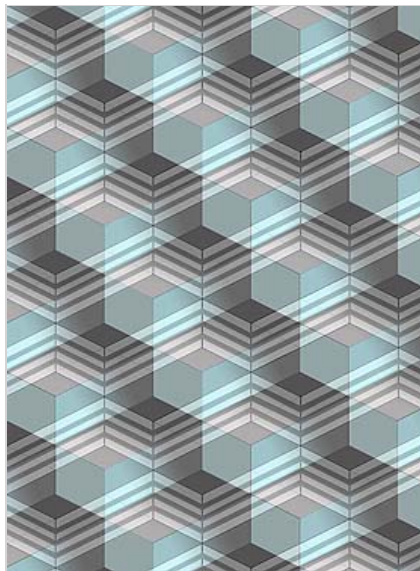


between 1931 and 1936. Pic © The Glasgow School of Art

Their subjects include handwritten and typescript documents, drawings, prints, sketchbooks, architectural plans, ephemera such as pamphlets, photographs and posters and textile and clothing-related pieces.

Finished works include plush knitted lampshades, knitted wall tiles using a blistered surface technique, floral wall tiles in 3D moulded Perspex, printed chairs and cloth posters.

Elaine Bremner and Helena Britt's digital print on cotton. Pic © the artists



A scrapbook recounts architectural student John Walter Lindsay's travels following the award of the Haldane Travel Scholarship 1950, and a textile design notebook from the early 1930s is reconsidered alongside a new digital print on cotton influenced by artefacts from the Gillespie, Kidd & Coia collection.



Assemblage of work in progress by Alan Gallacher. Pic © Alan Gallacher

"It is not unusual for designers in industry to trawl archives for inspiration, especially when a brand requires to be awakened," observes Stephen-Cran, who pins the focus on contemporary angles rather than historical artefacts.

"In a sense this is exactly what each participating designer has been asked to do for this exhibition – to give new life to the institutional brand of GSA

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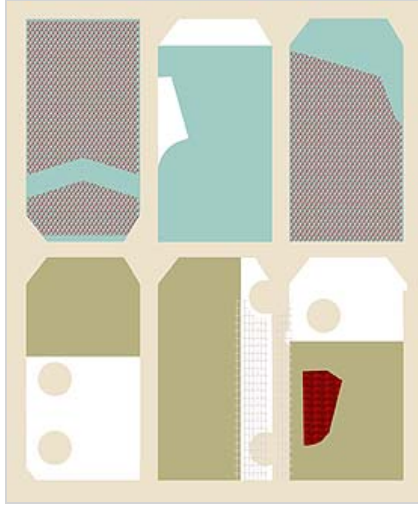


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concealed in its repositories.”

Print croquet on paper  
by Joanna Kinnersley  
Taylor. Pic © Joanna  
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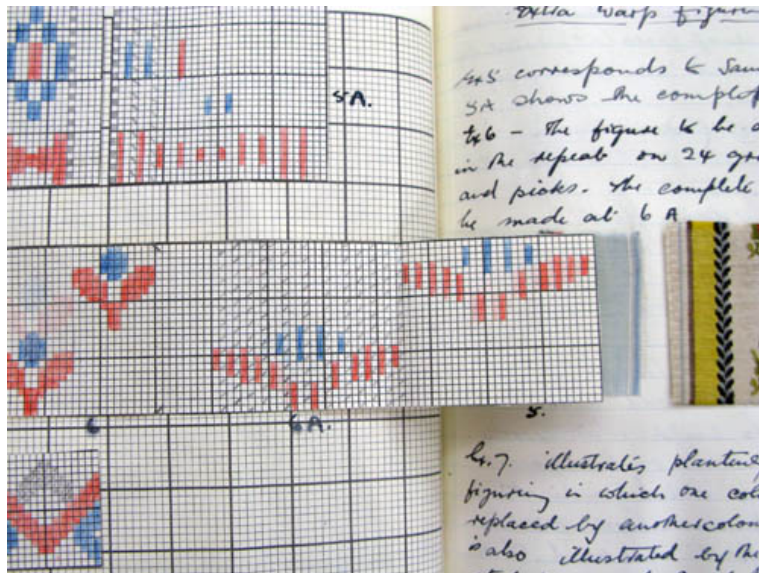
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### Textile Archives Awaken New Inspiration

17/02/2009



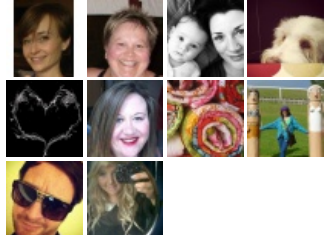
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To celebrate the recent opening of Glasgow School of Art's new archives and collections centre, fifteen design academics, researchers and technical staff from the school's department of textiles were invited to unlock and explore the conceptual and creative possibilities of reinterpretation and appropriation.

This new work is currently on show in Awaken, an exhibition showcasing the new work and demonstrating a diverse range of approaches to contemporary textile design.

Many previously unseen items have been used by participating designers as inspiration for their projects. The collection providing a range of departure points including: handwritten and typescript documents, sketchbooks and drawings, prints, architectural plans, printed ephemera, as well as textile, clothing and costume related pieces. Particularly interesting are the divergent creative journeys taken by designers unknowingly using the same starting point.

The exhibiting artists are Christie Alexander, Leigh Bagley, Elaine Bremner, Helen Britt, Vicky Begg, JR Campbell, Juliet Dearden, Alan Gallacher, Chloe Highmore, Joanna Kinnerly-Taylor, Beca Lipscombe, Alan Shaw, Clair Sweeney and Susan Telford.

The exhibition is open in the Mackintosh Gallery at Glasgow School of Art, 167 Renfrew Street, Glasgow G3 6RQ from 24 January to 28 February 2009.

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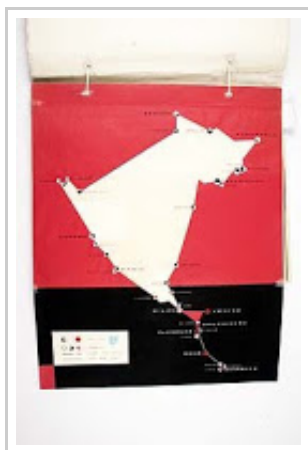
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# ARCHIVES AND AUTEURS

MONDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2009

## Awaken awakened: project & process - research seminar

'Awaken awakened: project & process' was a research seminar at the Glasgow School of Art based upon an exhibition 'Awaken' which is on at the School of Art until 28 February 2009. For the exhibition designers based in the Department of Textiles and CAT (Centre for Advanced Textiles) were invited to reinterpret archive materials from the Glasgow School of Art Archives and Collections Centre for current and future textile and design work.



© The Glasgow School of Art

*John Walter Lindsay's travel journal is almost 60 years old*

The seminar was chaired by the exhibition curator, and programme leader for the Textiles Department, Jimmy Stephen-Cran, with contributions from a number of the artists involved, along with the Art School Archivist, Susannah Waters. Issues raised and discussed during the seminar included the idea of the experience of encounter with the archive, questions over originality and authorship, and the use of personal archives and found objects in the creative process. The artist's talks were all very interesting, particularly as they all seemed to have quite different experiences of the encounter with the archive.

Susannah Waters, and a number of the artists, commented on the

TWITTER



Kathryn

**KathrynHannan**

**KathrynHannan @LittleLauriej @charliebeatnik** Me too! Thank you for having me! Back home now & hearing on full blast! X  
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**KathrynHannan @SarahRNeely I** know, it's been ages! I'll let you know when I book my next trip to Glasgow. X  
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**KathrynHannan @LittleLauriej @leamingtonwine** ooh sounds like a great idea for a cold Saturday afternoon!  
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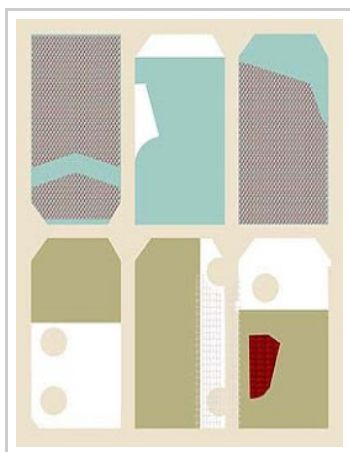
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PROFILE

difficulty of the initial visit to the archive. With such a vast amount of potentially useful and interesting material how do you find a starting point. For me this highlighted the importance of the archivist as a facilitator, suggesting possible materials of interest, and being able to offer their knowledge of the collections to assist the artist in narrowing down the type of material they would like to look at. One thing which really came across in the seminar was the amount of inter-departmental co-operation between the Archive, the Textile Department and CAT, in order to make the artists work possible, and make the exhibition a success.



© Joanna Kinnersley Taylor *Print croquet on paper*

I think Susannah raised a very interesting point when she contrasted the artists use of the archive with that of the more usual visitor to the archive - the historical researcher. Not only do artists use the material in different ways but they would also look at and categorise it differently. So, to quote an example Susannah used, a series of posters of events at the art school were catalogued according to their content, e.g. 'degree show poster 1977' fashion show poster 1968', the artists were generally more interested in the style of the poster, the colours, design layout, than the content and context. This idea of different user groups benefiting from different types of cataloguing is something I have also had to consider whilst cataloguing the Lindsay Anderson Collection. The project I work on is in collaboration with the Film, Media and Journalism department and I have found it very beneficial to consult with other team members from that department when I was compiling my subject index. This ensured that the index would be accessible and relevant to them in their research and, we hope, to other film and media academics. Obviously you cannot catalogue a collection purely with one particular user group in mind but it has been very useful to have the insight of film and media academics at hand and I imagine that the same can be said in the case of the GSA archive and its

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use by these talented artists and teachers.

Something which I've been thinking about a lot recently is the idea of personal archives, people creating their own archives as they go along, whether consciously or unconsciously. This related to my own work cataloguing the Lindsay Anderson Collection but it was also an issue that was raised during this seminar. I noticed that when Joanna Kinnersley Taylor was talking about her project she mentioned that a starting point had been an old map she had up on her wall. It was also noted during the seminar that the artists used their own objects, in particular items they had found and collected over the years, as inspiration for the project. This blend of personal, informal archives with the institutional archive is something that strikes me as being very different to the type of research that archives are normally used for, where context and source are all important. I also liked the idea of the CPJ's (Creative Process Journal's) which the artists worked on as they went along, documenting their design process and the development of their ideas. These CPJ's are works of art in their own right and could one day be valuable archival items for other artists and researchers.

I'm not sure if it's just because I'm looking for it, but it seems to me that archives are being used in an increasing variety of ways to re-imagine and invigorate ideas about the value of the Archive. Opening up the archives to re-interpretation and re-examination by artists/film makers/academics seems to be something I'm hearing about more and more, though like I said maybe it is just because I'm looking for it?

POSTED BY KATHRYN AT 17:09 

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### AWAKEN EXHIBITION AND SEMINAR (2009) →

This collaborative design-led research project between GSA's Textiles Department, Archives and Collections Centre, Centre for Advanced Textiles (CAT) and Exhibitions Office, examined the conceptual possibilities of reinterpreting archive material for contemporary and future textile related contexts.

Staff from GSA's Department of Textiles used items from the School's archives and collections as a starting point for developing new work. The resultant exhibition ran between 24 January - 28 February 2009 and showcased a diverse range of approaches to contemporary textile design, with each project demonstrating the idiosyncrasies of the creative process related to using archives as source material.

A seminar was hosted to accompany the exhibition in order to further examine the influences, processes and factors which can impact on the creative process when working from archive material. The seminar also explored the broad themes, contributory factors and questions which emerged from the project as it developed and matured.

For more information click [here](#)

(<http://www.culture24.org.uk/art/craft/textiles/art64654>).

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MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2009

## awaken: an exhibition of new textiles inspired by the Archives and Collections at The Glasgow School of Art



This exhibition, running between 24 January - 28 February 2009, showcases a significant body of new work produced by staff from GSA's Department of Textiles. A diverse range of approaches to contemporary textile design are on display, with each designer using items from the School's archives and collections as their starting point. Each project demonstrates the idiosyncrasies of the creative process related to using archives as source material. Particularly tantalizing are the divergent creative

journeys taken by designers unknowingly using the same starting point.

More information on the exhibition can be found at GSA's website

Image: Daisy M Anderson's Textile Design Notebook (c1931-35)

Image credit: Joanna Kinnerley-Taylor (c) The Glasgow School of Art

Posted by Glasgow School of Art Library at 1:34 PM

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## Conference Papers Featuring the Awaken Project and Awaken GK&C Digital Textiles Collection

Britt, H., Stephen-Cran, J. & Bremner, E. (2013) Awaken: Contemporary Fashion and Textile Interpretation of Archival Material. Futurescan 2: Collective Voices, Sheffield Hallam University, 10-11 January 2013.

Britt, H. & Stephen-Cran, J. (2013) (forthcoming) Textile Design Utilisation of Archive Resources and the Creative Process Journal Method. The 7th International Conference on Design Principles and Practices. Chiba University, Japan, 6-8 March 2013.

Britt, H. (2013) (forthcoming) Inspirational Archives: Examining Utilisation by Textile and Fashion Practitioners. Textile Society: New Research Strategies II. Wellcome Collection, London, 16 March 2013.