

FIT FOR A queen

WITH THE NEW ROYAL COLLECTION BY DESIGNERS GUILD, LIVING LIKE ROYALTY DOESN'T SEEM SUCH AN IMPOSSIBLE DREAM.



The settee's gold frame is complemented by the rich emerald of the jacquard silk damask upholstery. All the silk cushions in the collection have the crest embroidered in gold.

We might not be able to live in Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle, but at least now we can live like royalty. The new Royal Collection of fabrics and wallpapers by Designers Guild gives even mere commoners a chance to decorate their homes like royals, in a style which has been directly influenced by the sumptuous interiors of their palaces.

This is thanks to a unique collaboration between Designers Guild and The Royal Collection, which manages the official residences of the queen of England. To create a collection rich in history as well as in colour, ornamentation and texture, Tricia Guild and her team of three designers were given access to an extensive archive of historical fabrics and wallcoverings. They also personally visited Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle to study the interiors. The proceeds from the collection will be used to support the conservation of these royal residences.

As grand as the palaces themselves, but interpreted using Designers Guild's signature colours and pattern palette, this first in a





Lush in ornamentation, the jacquard cut velvet fabric which hugs the sofa seat was inspired by a silk damask in the Throne Room at Buckingham Palace.

DESIGNERS GUILD MARRIED ROYALTY'S OLDEST TRADITIONS WITH ITS FASHION-FORWARD PERSPECTIVE FOR THE NEW RANGE.

continuing series of fabric collections presents a truly resplendent range of jacquard woven silk damasks, richly embroidered silks and beautifully flocked wallpaper. Colours are rich and refined, ranging from regal crimson, emerald and shades of wedgwood blue to the pale beauty of mink, stone, sable and golds.

We glimpse the rarified surrounds of royalty through patterns inspired directly by materials

found in the royal residences and its archives. Motifs have been gleaned from a range of materials as diverse as a 19th century Royal Wilton carpet in Buckingham Palace, to ornate sculptured pelmets found in the Windsor archives and bed hangings in the King's bedchamber at Windsor Castle. As a nod to their heritage, the collections are named after prominent architects, designers and personalities of that time in history. >

top Resplendent in crimson, this room features the circular-patterned Oriol jacquard silk damask. above Designers Guild created a collection fit for blue bloods but still in-tune with modern trends.



The flocked Hawksmoor jacquard silk velvet, inspired by a pattern discovered in the archive at Windsor, is matched with the Charlotte Wedgwood embroidered cushion.



The Verity Emerald embroidered cushion (left) and the Campanile Stone silk jacquard with fringe. (below)

We talked to Tricia Guild, the creative director and founder of Designers Guild for her take on The Royal Collection.

WHAT WAS YOUR REACTION WHEN YOU WERE APPROACHED TO DESIGN THIS COLLECTION? We were delighted, although do note that the collection is not for the (royal) residences but has been inspired by them.

WHAT WAS THE BRIEF GIVEN TO YOU? There was no brief from Buckingham Palace – we were in charge of the design and had to submit our ideas to the Royal Collection for approval. I wanted to create a collection that befitted its royal name but had an enduring appeal.

WHAT DID YOU USE AS A STARTING POINT FOR DESIGN? We were fortunate enough to have a private tour of Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle which was hugely inspiring. We were also allowed to look at the archive at Windsor which includes treasures from four centuries – again incredibly inspiring.

WAS THE DESIGN PROCESS DIFFERENT FROM YOUR USUAL COLLECTIONS? It was different in that we had to think in a different way. Designers Guild has its own handwriting, and we had to find a new identity for The Royal Collection too. The colours are different, they have a much more classical appeal.

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE ROYAL RESIDENCES? I was struck by the grandeur and scale of Buckingham Palace and also the fact that there was so much colour.

WHAT WERE YOUR MAJOR CONCERNS IN DESIGNING THIS COLLECTION? I was very keen to do the collection justice. I was aware that it had to befit its royal status, but I was also very aware that it had to be beautiful and commercial as well. That is a fine line to tread. I have always used classically inspired fabrics in a contemporary way.

CAN YOU ELABORATE ON THE COLOURS YOU CHOSE AND WHY YOU CHOSE THEM? The colour palette is directly inspired by what we saw in the palaces – from muted creams and naturals through to the emerald green taken from The Green Drawing Room at Buckingham Palace to the scarlets and crimsons of Windsor.

DID YOU GET ANY FEEDBACK FROM THE QUEEN OR ROYAL FAMILY ON THE NEW COLLECTION? I know that the Queen has seen the collection and likes it. ●

Designers Guild is exclusively available at Romanez. #02-03 Sime Darby Centre, 896 Dunearn Road. tel: 6463-9330.