
Textile design is a fast-paced global market dictated by style and technology, yet patterned and adorned textiles are centuries old. Today’s successful designer must understand the history of textiles as well as anticipate forthcoming trends in fashion and interior design. Textile Design will help the beginning student designer learn the discipline’s past while keeping an eye on its future.

Author Dr. Simon Clarke is a textile designer particularly interested in exploring digital design. As well as being an internationally exhibited artist, he is a Senior Lecturer in Printed Textile Design and the Pathway Leader for the MA in Textile Design at University College Falmouth (UK). His studio and classroom practices blend beautifully in this thorough overview of the history, aesthetics, technology, and production of textile design.

Each chapter in Textile Design reviews a major topic in the discipline. The book begins, naturally, with a broad survey of the historical and cultural influences of textile design. Clarke then proceeds to discuss the main methods of textile production: printing, weaving, and mixed media. Each technique warrants its own chapter with attention paid to how changes in technology, particularly digital, have affected production. Three key chapters follow the sections on technique: Design Principles, Creating a Collection, and Education and Employment. The first two include the brainstorming and business aspects of the field, discussing elements such as color predictions and planning a presentation of various designs as a unified collection. The Education and Employment chapter acts as a guide through a typical degree program, developing a portfolio, and exploring career opportunities. The addition of such material creates a bridge between studio practices and industry, making Textile Design a comprehensive resource.

The text is very easy to read and does not require a start-to-finish approach. The reader may skip through chapters and subsections, wandering away from the text to focus on the images and then back again. Nearly every page has at least one high-quality color glossy image that acts as visual addendum to the text. Creating a secondary narrative, a reader could merely browse the images, with explanatory captions, to generate an added understanding of textile design.

Clarke compliments the range and depth of topics covered in Textile Design by including a thorough glossary and further reading. Brief lists of international textile galleries and museums, trade fairs, and textile design programs in higher education round out this text to an excellent reference.

Textile Design is highly recommended for academic libraries as a concise introduction to the textile and fashion industries. Because Clarke has included an historical overview as well as a myriad of current production trends and activities, readers will find themselves returning to Textile Design again and again.

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