

CAROLINE PATERSON

The interior designer speaks to **Emma Mills** about the factors that have inspired her work



Left: Caroline Paterson

Below left: Barn conversion with a specially coloured geometric flatweave from Christopher Farr

Below right: A hall runner after a design by Caroline Paterson for a London house

Caroline Paterson, founder of Caroline Paterson Interiors, London, has a design style that can be described as eclectic and versatile, and works on both contemporary and traditional interior projects.

How did your career begin, and how has this shaped your design style?

In the Furniture Department at Christie's in London, which included rugs and carpets, followed by experiencing the other side of the art trade at London's Hazlitt, Gooden & Fox gallery. Although the gallery mainly specialised in Old Masters and 19th century French drawings and paintings, they held annual exhibitions of interior watercolours and oils from the 18th to 20th centuries. I was hooked.

How do you use textiles and carpets?

Textiles and carpets are a passion. It's difficult to define how I use them as so much is instinct and depends on the brief, space, architecture, etc. Different textures together create interest.

How do you choose your fabrics, and what is the style of your bespoke furniture and rugs?

My fabrics are sometimes chosen as a result of a rug, or an antique textile. We look for inspiration every day, something to ignite the flame. Furniture sometimes comes later,

or it can dictate the pace early on if it is a special piece the client already has, and if it works well with the period of the house. Often we design bespoke pieces for projects.

Who or what inspires you?

My total inspiration was working with Chester Jones, who was then one of the senior partners of Sybil Colefax and John Fowler. He was instrumental in teaching me about scale, design, colour, and texture, and was extremely knowledgeable about rugs. He and his wife, Sandy, designed many carpets for projects. He is also a great furniture designer, and taught me to open my eyes wherever I was. Inspiration is all around us.

Where do you source your materials?

Nowhere in particular, although I have a few favourites such as Claremont, Cloth, and Tissus d'Helene, to name a few brilliant but very diverse sources.

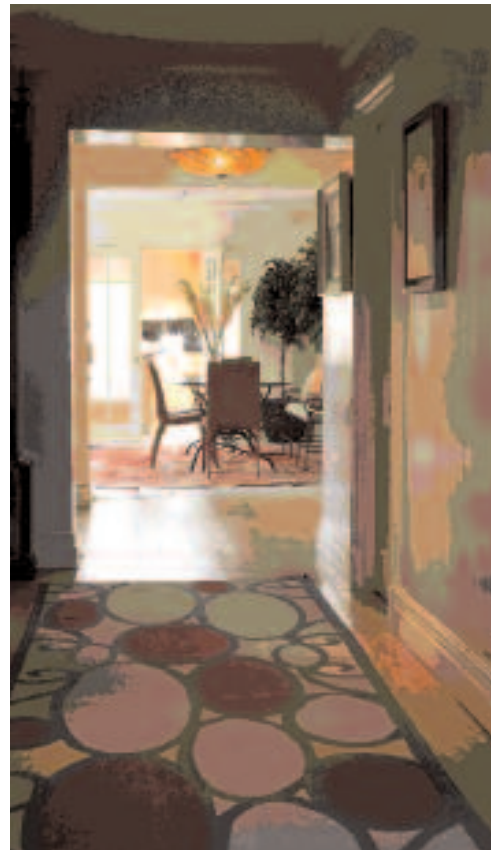
Where do you shop?

Nothing is more exciting than when I discover a shop off the beaten track in an unfamiliar town or city, although Paris never disappoints!

Who do you design for?

Largely for private clients all over England, Scotland, and occasionally abroad.

www.carolinepatersoninteriors.co.uk



Photos: Rachel Smith