



The Gainsborough Silk Weaving Company Ltd

MARCH
2008



BLESSED AT St PAULS

Following our lead story from the 2007 news letter, we are nearing the end stages of the St Paul's Cathedral project, with the final stage currently in production. We were recently privileged to take part in the blessing of the opulent finished vestments, just before Christmas in the historical Cathedral. The image above shows designers and friends of the church holding the garments up for the church's blessing. The fabrics were designed by Marie Brissou a graduate from Central St Martins who is based in France and made frequent trips to London to oversee the project.

PAUL SMITH STRIPE



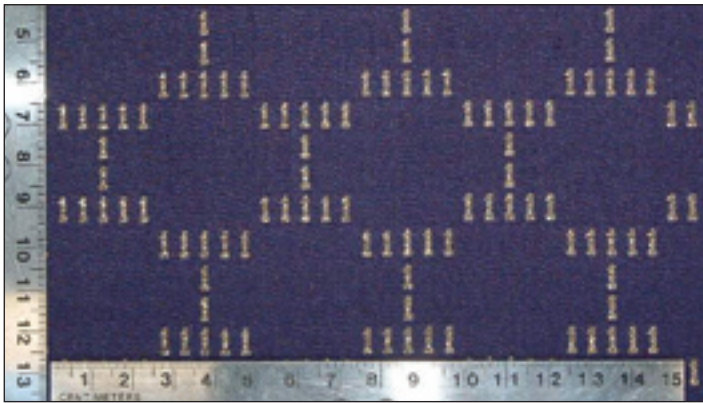
The fashion Label, Paul Smith, have continued their link to Gainsborough over the last year with the development of their famous Technicolor stripe into furnishing fabric. The design was particularly challenging with the inclusion of 37 colours, it was without doubt the most complicated stripe we have ever produced. The distinctive stripe and the amazing colours

really stand out even though some of the stripes are only 8 threads thick. We then took the striped layout and produced the fabric with a damask design incorporated in a different colour to create a stunning fabric for use in the Paul Smith shops throughout the world. The fabric is available at Paul Smith, 9, Albemarle Street, Mayfair, London, W1S 4BL

MIXING WITH THE STARS



GAINSBOROUGH has continued the recent trend for involvement in the big screen. In the summer of 2006 we were contacted by a costume designer Sammy Sheldon to participate in the design process of the outrageous costumes for the winter blockbuster *Stardust*. The award winning film featured appearances from Robert DeNiro and Rupert Everett alongside Ricky Gervais and Michelle Pfeiffer and was released in October 2008. We were tasked with weaving a stunning fabric of miniature roman numerals on a plain background based on the costume design for the princes; this was achieved using sterling silver yarn to emphasize the number in a small scale within a silk satin background. Several designs and numerals were produced for the leading princes. The amazing colours and overall effect looked stunning on the big screen and truly did the princes and the film justice.



Fromental

“We’re honoured to be partnering with the world’s finest quality weavers and we are very excited to add our creative flair to such historic works” said Tim Butcher, Fromental’s Creative Director.

High End interiors house, Fromental have unveiled a range of fabrics in collaboration with Gainsborough at last years 100% design show in Earls court. Fromental’s pioneering hand painted and hand embroidered silk wallpaper collection launched just two years ago at 100% design 2005 have been extremely well received internationally. The collaboration extends the ethos of providing the clients with the most desirable item you can apply to a wall. The exclusive set of fabrics aimed at the luxury interiors market will be woven in house at Gainsborough’s mill in Suffolk, England. The Fromental showroom in St Johns wood, London is open for viewings by appointment only. Please call 0208 9608899.

DESIGN SCOPE

Following improvements to our design system last year, we are now producing fabric simulations of customers designs. This provides a life like image of the design before deciding whether to go ahead with a trial of a particular design or colour. The computer print outs are very realistic and replicate the weave structure of the design and the yarn colours used to produce a very effective simulation. As you can see in these images the fabric simulation is almost identical to the actual woven fabric. The print out can be very useful to assist in the decision making process. Please contact Neil Thomas for further information.



We understand that our clients are exacting and extremely demanding in terms of their requirements for the finest furnishing fabric and we aim to exceed their expectation. The quality control starts with the yarn selection. Our cottons are Egyptian and we use long staple fibres from the highest grades available, our silks are farmed in China and again we buy the best qualities available. The yarn then goes into the dye house where we have been colouring yarns for the last 20 years. We use a mixture of old fashioned dyeing techniques with modern solutions and dyes to achieve an optimum yarn for colour fastness and weaving. We firmly believe in dying the yarn in bank form, rather than package dying to ensure we maintain consistency in colour and strict control over the luxurious quality.

We understand that colour is paramount to our clients and in most cases we exceed the customer's expectation for colour duplication for a specific design. We are very proud of our colour matching capabilities both on small and larger quantities of yarn. We have been given some odd colour references in the past, including an autumnal leaf, flaking paint chips as well as a pen top! We have renovated the colour matching process with the addition of new digital technology and the utilisation of new dyes. With over 20 years experience of dying our dye house manager uses knowledge, a keen eye for colour and digital information to match the most subtle colours and shades to fulfil our client's requirements. Having the dye house situated next to the weaving shed in Suffolk enables us to be extremely responsive to demand and facilitate quicker lead times.

YOU CAN fibres from
HAVE ANY our silks
COLOUR in China
YOU LIKE! available.



Return of Flower Power

If you have visited our website within the last year you will notice one of our case studies featured the reproduction of an orange chequered design for the re-upholstery of a VW Camper Van. As you can see the finished result was perfect and the client was pleased to be able to return the Van to his parents in the condition it would have been supplied in over 40 years ago.



SQUINT

'It's all about showcasing beautiful fabrics'

We are privileged to be able to work with some truly innovative designers, many wanting to see their design concept in woven fabric and starting with a design from scratch. Others, such as Lisa Whatmore of Squint prefer to look at fabrics we have woven over the last 105 years and give them a new twist. Lisa is one of the leading lights in the East End design scene and takes old antique furniture pieces and dresses them in pieces of antique fabrics and off cuts from our storeroom of over 3000 pieces, the finished furniture normally retails through Liberty's in London for prices up to £3,500 and sell like hot cakes. The Observer said Lisa's pieces are the perfect combination of two new trends: a desire for furniture with a narrative and a new enthusiasm for the exuberant colour palette offered by vintage textiles. Selvedge magazine see Squint as further evidence of a long overdue fabric renaissance, particularly for pattern and textured fabrics. Lisa is fascinated by the background of the fabrics and makes everything to fulfil her own tastes. In her words "It's all about showcasing beautiful fabrics". The current collection can be seen on Liberty's 4th floor and their showroom, 3 Redchurch Street, London E2 7DJ

NEW YARNS

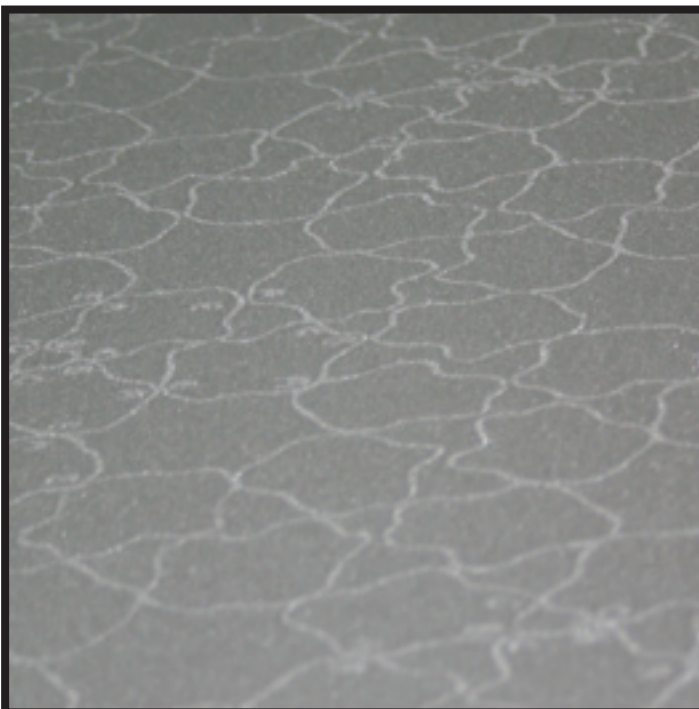
Over the last 12 months we have continued our testing of new yarns this year using both natural and man made fibres for trials and future collections.

Weaving fabric with bamboo, alpaca and cashmere has been an interesting challenge, the results are stunning and the fabrics have a distinctly different feel to normal silk and cotton combinations. We have also been experimenting with light reactive yarns, as you can see to the right. The yarns are incorporated within a design so that they don't have much prominence in normal daylight, but when the light is switched to pure Ultra Violet, the optic white yarn in the design stands out and almost glows. The other picture shows yarn that reacts again when exposed to UV light but when the light goes back to normal the yarn has changed from white to a specific colour. You can see in the picture, the yarn was incorporated within the warp layout and when exposed to UV light changes to its designated colour. The commercial application is mainly for the contract market for nightclubs and restaurants, but the effect is stunning and broadens the design scope for further testing to be carried out in 2008. For further details please contact Neil Thomas.



Sir Aaron Klug

We are currently in the process of developing a fabric to commemorate the work and lifetime achievements for Sir Aaron Klug, Chemistry Nobel Prize winner in 1982, for his work on three dimensional structures in viruses and mapping the combinations of the proteins. The project arose from our long standing association with designer Philippa Brock from Central St Martins School of Art and Design, London, and incorporates some innovative man made yarns to create an interesting 3 dimensional textured fabric. Sir Aaron Klug visited the factory recently to watch the work being trialed and was very impressed with the design and the process, as well as the combination of the old production techniques mixed with the modern design technology.



21

Twenty-one inch fabrics

Following extensive trialling and development the 21" loom is now fully operational and can be used to reproduce in perfect detail the narrow width fabrics most suitable for use in historic restorations. The converted loom has been re-engineered specifically for weaving 21 inch wide fabrics which replicates the hand woven width used historically for ease of reach when hand weaving.



WEB IDEAS

The website has been up and running for a while and is due for an upgrade; if any customers have any ideas or requests to be incorporated within the website, then we would be pleased to hear from you. Please contact Simon Hobson