



CURTAIN FABRICS' NEW IMPETUS

WARWICK

SOFT COLOURS AND A GREATER USE OF PRINTS ARE AMONG THE LATEST TRENDS FOR CURTAIN FABRICS THAT ALSO REFLECT CUTTING EDGE OPTIONS USING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY FOR CUSTOMISED PRODUCT OR ADVANCED TECHNIQUES TO CREATE NEW TWISTS ON TRADITIONAL FORMS LIKE LACE. DAWN ADAMS REPORTS.

CUTTING EDGE DESIGNS

Sheers that look more like linen and naturals are emerging in the collection to be released shortly by South Pacific Fabrics. "When people talk about sheers, they often think of granny's old lace over the kitchen sink," says Sydney showroom manager Simon Cormack. "But there are new contemporary laces coming through that are starting to look very linen like and natural in Trevira."

Linen looks and naturals continue to be strong in the market but there is growing room for colour, bold and softer, to take market share. While the majority of Australians remain loyal to neutral options, their opportunities to be more experimental with their choices are growing as suppliers push the boundaries of in terms of pattern and texture.

Included in impending releases from Charles Parsons is Tropicana, a wonderfully casual digital print. Tropicana is a breath of fresh air, a floral pattern created in a bold painterly style. The abstract flowers are printed in beautiful strong hues, creating a strong contrast to the clear crisp background. Impressive as a drapery option, Tropicana also has impressive rub test results and can confidently be used as an upholstery product too. Melaleuca, Coober Pedy and Kalgoorlie are a much anticipated collection of semi sheer cloths. This story of designs have a natural, earthy appearance which is complemented by the many benefits of a polyester cloth. Sun resistance, longevity and easy maintenance are all convincing reasons for a stress free drapery purchase. On trend and timely, this new collection will sit comfortably alongside the company's already proven and popular semi sheers Flaxton and Sierra.

Also in the firm's offering will be the Jean Paul Gaultier designed Lelievre fabric in printed cotton sheers, which Cormack describes as "stunning" and "beautiful". "Metallics will also stay strong and I am recommending them," he says. "In Sydney, everyone is after a linen and natural look for a beachside effect. But for a more inner city job where you might want more glamour, metallics are coming through." Embroideries are emerging in cream, off white or natural while other labels like the cutting edge Dedar brand is playing with the concept in a bolder way. "Dedar might use a natural background with a rust colour embroidery that pops out at you," Cormack says. In a different interpretation of a lace look, Lori Weitzner is using a technique to embroider on a piece of paper that is later dissolved leaving only the embroidery for effect. "The end result is quite intense and looks art and craft," Cormack says. "It's like a pocket weave with cuts, open flaps and looks hand made or like origami."



WARWICK

WATERCOLOUR EFFECT FROM SEKERS

The new Sekers collection will feature pastels strongly in its prints, particularly the 'gelato' colours, according to Basford Brands managing director Wayne Leslie.

"We're also seeing the gelato colours in ladies' fashion, they're softer and subtle," he says. "Lemons, oranges and even the mauve seen in the UK but they're almost like watercolours. They're much more liveable; they don't tend to dominate a whole room."

Modern geometrics are coming through in pattern, again in softer designs. Leslie stresses the need to offer fabrics suitable for Australian conditions, suggesting the more vibrant colours that might suit a grey and dark cold winter's night in Paris would be too strong for Australian and New Zealand conditions.

Sekers is also reflecting a strong trend to natural fibres and environmentally friendly finishes. For example, 'Naturals' is made from Belgian Linen and cotton for a luxurious handle and beautiful drape.

"We are also about to release under the Sekers brand, Coast, a collection of printed cottons, stripes and beautiful Australian made plain," he says. "It is a large collection, very 'Martha's Vineyard'. Sekers has also secured the exclusive distribution for Australia and New Zealand for a number of leading European fabric editors." More details will be provided closer to the release date for those ranges.

Leslie describes the ranges coming through for its entry price level collection, Filigree, as reflecting quality and taste. "They're really smart in nice fashionable colours," he says. "There is an opportunity to present a selection that is well priced to help consumers make decisions in an election year." Soon to be launched are the Grayson, Marlow and Cromwell ranges that can be used together as they complement one another. They are designed to provide classic looks in current colours for a retail price under \$20. Also available are two new coloured sheer ranges Southport and Kingston, both 3 three metre continuous, for a retail price under \$25.

BOLDER COLOURS FROM WARWICK

A shift to bold colour is evident in the latest selection of curtain fabrics from Warwick Fabrics Australia. "We're bringing out a bold multi-coloured chevron hand painted in our studios," says senior designer Margot Warre. "Our designer produced a watercolour print and we have been able to digitally print it in Australia." The hand painted 'Kinetic' print also coordinates well with the Compel Collection in satine with embroidery.

"There is a return to a clean freshness in the interiors colour palette and a move away from dark rooms," Warre says. "And people are starting to embrace print; we're seeing it in interiors blogs and magazines. They're not afraid of colour."

The latest linen look offerings also take into consideration the desire for washable, easy care fabrics. "A return to drapes is evident as people see their benefits, that they offer insulation, warmth and give a room character and personality," she says.

Also in the range are bold geometric designs and multi-colour and contemporary florals in selections like Lumley and Pilsbury. "We have quite a brave new colour palette," she says. "The Benjamin Bradley selection, for example, has a textured palette in silver tones rather than beige neutrals."



WARWICK

MAURICE KAIN GOES FOR COLOUR

Colour is definitely a trend coming through in the market, according to Maurice Kain general manager Michelle West. She confirms customers want to inject 'a splash' of colour into their interiors.

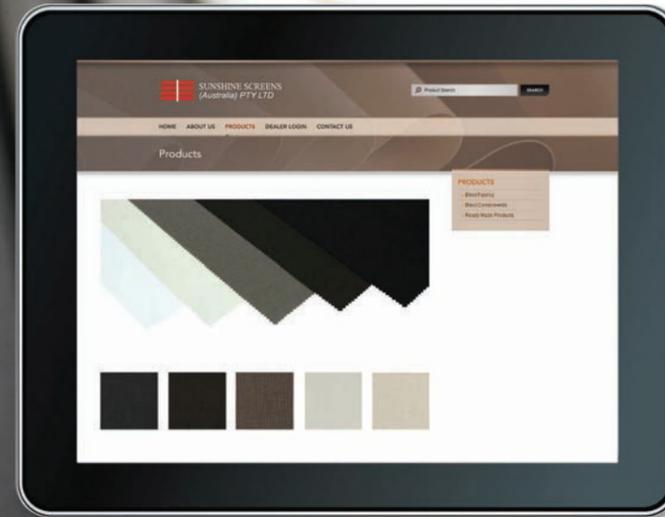
To meet that demand, the firm is releasing this month the Festival range, consisting of four striking printed 100 per cent cotton fabrics. "Colours range from muted tones of mineral and grey through to uplifting shades of berry, aqua and yellow," she says.

In contrast, the Divine collection offers a wide variety of colours in a plain weave in a natural linen look for excellent drapability. Recently released is Vintage featuring a ribbon stripe with tone-on-tone colour and sheen.

West describes Oxley and Rushmore as new collections 'at the other end of the spectrum' with more traditional characteristics. "Available in softer more pastel tones, the two are polyester, cotton jacquards that complement and coordinate with each other," she says.

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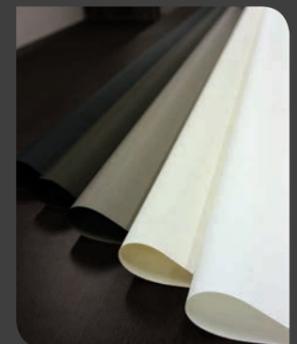
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Among the latest offerings is a selection of six designs inspired by travels to Uzbekistan and created by Rysenbry's daughter Saskia. "The Far East is rich with decoration and tribal motifs," Rysenbry says. "Saskia visited many shrines, temples, mosques and markets which were a wealth of inspiration."

Also about to be released is a range of curtain fabrics for children. "We're working with a young designer with lovely ideas," he says. "We like to think we're very different and that we design locally for Australian homes." The company has appointed sales agents throughout Australia and is active in social media to spread the word about its offering.

"Before we started the business, I was looking around for new opportunities," he says. "Digital printing has come a long way in the last 10 years and was viable technology so I decided to take the plunge."

CURTAIN FABRIC EXTENSION AT BRICOS

The Bricos Group is expanding its offering to include curtain fabrics that coordinate with its selection of matching translucent and blackout roller blind options. National sales manager Mark Wood describes the introduction of the new Summit range as a natural extension to the business. "We had already been selling, and continue to market, lining to the curtain industry," he says. "And a lot of our retail customers do blinds as well."

SPARKK A TREND SETTER

The customised curtain fabrics being produced by Sparkk are attracting interest from interior designers and architects, with their efforts recently mentioned in the Colourways forecast looking at emerging trends. Started by former Mokum owner Edwyn Rysenbry two years ago, Sparkk produces designs that can be manipulated to customise them for individual clients.

Rysenbry says people often return to place new orders after their first experience with the process. "Once they've tried it a couple of times, they keep coming back and they love it," he says. "Colour is the main thing that we change to customise fabrics but we are also able to alter scale and to railroad."

The opportunity to offer a coordinated range of fabrics suitable for blinds and curtains had presented for some time and its viability was confirmed through market research. "Everyone we spoke to took to the idea," he says. "And the feedback we're hearing is very good."



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“We like to think we’re very different and that we design locally for Australian homes.”

Some seven blackout colours and five translucent will be available for roller blinds as well as five matching curtain colours. “We’re aiming at residential and commercial applications for this style of product,” he says.

“And we will offer standard swatching and long curtain hangar-style swatches because the two sectors sample differently.”

WOVEN JACQUARD FROM WILSON

A new woven jacquard collection called Moselle will be released next month by Wilson Fabrics after the success of its Yvette range. This collection consists of two coordinating designs, Scroll and Plain, both fully reversible. “We have designed the hanger to showcase both sides of the fabric as they give distinctly different looks,” says marketing manager Jennifer Donnelly. One side is quite natural in look while the other has a more luxurious appearance.

Available in seven of the most popular colours, Moselle also comes in new fashion shades such as celery, in a light green and gold effect. Around 270gsm, this fabric is made from a combination of cotton and polyester to achieve a beautiful drape.

Also planned for April release is the new Liana coated jacquard drapery range. “We have taken inspiration from our key selling ranges and recent trends to develop this designer coated jacquard,” Donnelly says.

Liana, consisting of 21 colours and featuring a trailing leaf design woven into a striae background, is woven in a mix of polyester and cotton and coated with quality foam coating.



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