

DESIGN ART ARCHITECTURE INTERIORS DECORATING ENTERTAINING TRAVEL

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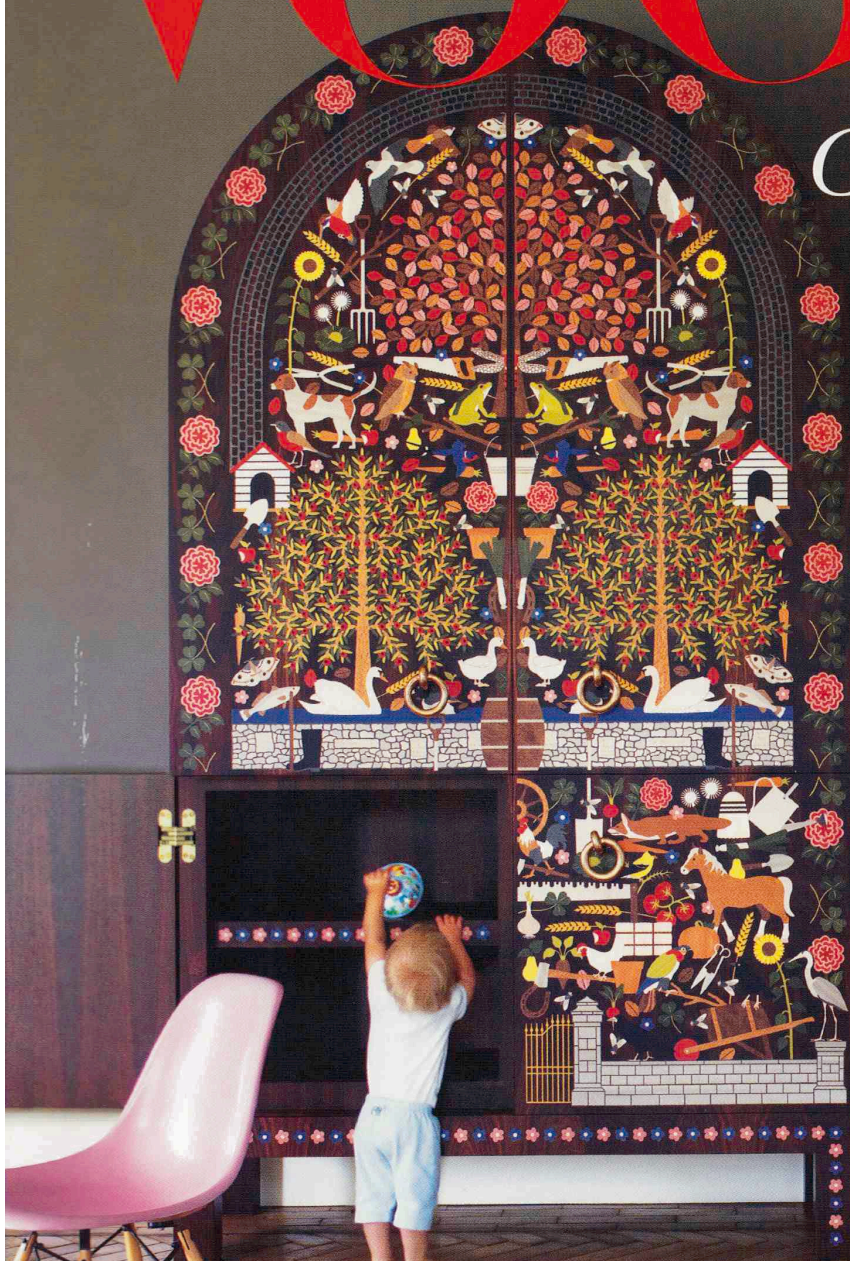
AUSTRALIA

COLLECTOR'S
EDITION

guest edited by
British design icon
Ilse Crawford
whose creative ethos

**being
human**

*is about design that
puts people first*



PLAYING WITH TRADITION
IN A REGENCY HOME, P160

UK £6.50 VOL.45 NO.3



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**CITY
GUIDES**
MEDELLÍN, MADRID
AND ROVING GOURMET
FOOD IN LOS ANGELES

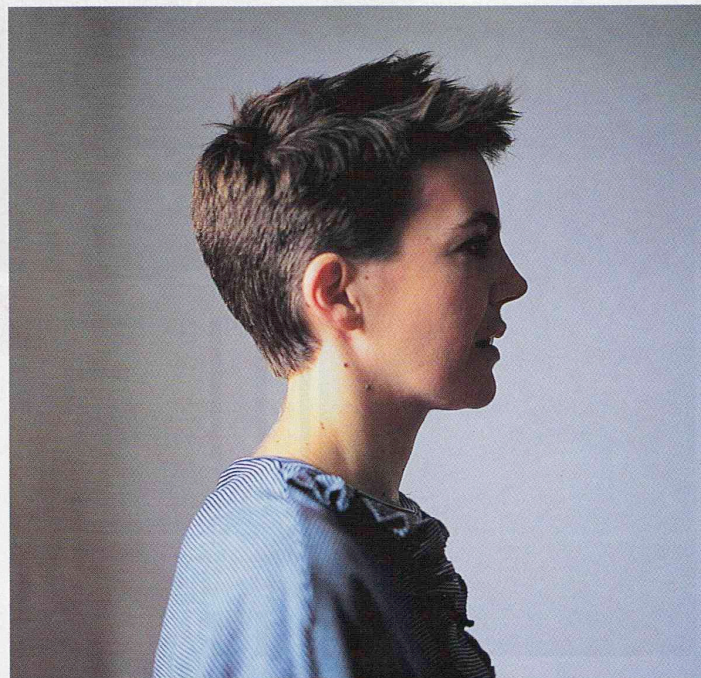
BEAUTIFUL CHAOS: THE NEW YORK LOFT OF NEW ZEALAND
ARTIST MAX GIMBLETT • SWEDEN'S ENDURING DESIGN APPEAL
• FROM DANGER ZONE TO DESTINATION: MEDELLÍN, COLOMBIA

OUR FATER
 WHO ART N HENDON
 HARROW ROAD BE HY NAME
 HY KINGSTON COME HY WMBLEDON
 N ERTH AS IT IS N HENDON
 GIVE US THIS DAY OUR BERKHAMSTEAD
 AND FORGIVE US OUR WESTMNSTERS
 AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO
 WESTMNSTER AGANST US
 LEAD US NOT NTO TEMPLE STATION
 AND DELIVER US FROM EALING
 FOR HNE IS HE KINGSTON
 THE PURLEY AND THE CRAWLEY
 FOR IVER AND IVER
 CROUCH END

IAN DURY THE BUS DRIVER'S PRAYER 1994

the strong type

Master typographer Frith Kerr brings a mesmerising beauty to text, elevating the written word to a work of art.



GOOD MORNING

MELROSE AND MORGAN

GROCEER
GLOUCESTER AVENUE NW1
GRIEL PLACE NW2
LONDON



IN THE MASTERFUL typographical hands of London graphic designer Frith Kerr, letters of the alphabet not only spell out words; the way in which she forms the letters themselves lends whole new layers of narrative and meaning to her work. The process of finding the right typeface, says Kerr, head of the recently formed graphic design collective Studio Frith (following 11 years in partnership with fellow Royal College graduate Amelia Noble as Kerr Noble), involves an extensive undertaking of research, discussion and thought long before any design hits the page.

"The typefaces we choose, often hunted down through old printing libraries like London's St Bride, or handcrafted exclusively by us for a client, implicitly reflect our journey to find the heart and definition of a brand's identity," she explains. There is a sense of something much more than simply creating letters and pictures for a swing tag or exhibition poster. "We'd never want someone to have to work hard to understand the typeface's form, but it's important that there's always an added depth of background to it," she enthuses.

The Granby typeface she used for hip London grocer and eatery Melrose and Morgan was first cut in 1930 by the Sheffield foundry Stephenson Blake. "The owners wanted to convey a sense of Melrose and Morgan being like a proper English grocer, selling proper English things, and we liked the way the letters felt as if they were slightly stepped [to allude to the traditional grocer's

stepladder]," she explains. It was an instant success. Transforming a font with heritage in such a modern way quickly marked anything emblazoned with the M and M insignia as tasteful and desirable.

She had fun with it, too, playing with the typeface to create bold, witty banter on limited-edition canvas bags which, once sold, prompted the commission of an entirely new set of 'word' totes. "Words like 'nuts', 'trifle' and 'honey' obviously relate to grocery items," Kerr says, "but customers often choose particular ones to reflect their own personalities. The project has developed an unexpected, subtle and yet humorous dialogue."

It's this enjoyment of ongoing collaboration (Frith has worked with many of her clients for years) and a distinctively underplayed cleverness that saw her beautifully transform Ian Dury's *Bus Driver's Prayer* (a parody of the Lord's Prayer) into a sell-out poster for the London Design Festival in 2009, and drop down the bars in letters such as 'A' and 'H' to reflect the 'stitch in the ditch' quilting technique in exhibition signage she created for the Victoria and Albert Museum's *Quilts* retrospective last year.

There is also a sweet sense of nostalgia to her work, and yet, for Kerr, "it's about embracing that sense of the past, using it as inspiration, but reinventing it in a modern way". Creating a specific typeface from scratch reflects the many connections between the client and their history. >

PREVIOUS PAGE, BELOW: FRITH KERR, HEAD OF STUDIO FRITH, WHICH FORMED IN 2009; TOP: KERR'S VERSION OF IAN DURY'S *BUS DRIVER'S PRAYER* FOR A LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL POSTER IN 2009. IT SOLD OUT INSTANTLY. THIS PAGE, ABOVE: A PICNIC PROMOTIONS POSTER FOR LUXURY NORTH LONDON DELICATESSEN MELROSE AND MORGAN. WITH SIMPLE TYPOGRAPHY EMBLAZONED ON PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS AND SHOPPING TOTES, A WITTY DIALOGUE BETWEEN GROCEER AND CUSTOMER COMES ALIVE. BELOW: THREE POSTERS FOR THE CHISENHALE GALLERY, PART OF STUDIO FRITH'S REBRANDING FOR THE CUTTING-EDGE EXHIBITION AND ARTIST STUDIO SPACE IN LONDON'S EAST END.

IMAGES COURTESY OF STUDIO FRITH AND KERR NOBLE ILLUSTRATION: NINA CHAKRABARTI (PICNIC POSTER) TEXT: FIONA MCCARTHY

