

Maharam Celebrates Twenty Years of Collaboration with Paul Smith

This fall marks twenty years of collaboration between the British designer Paul Smith and Maharam.



Metered Stripe, 2023
Indoor/Outdoor Seating

Metered Stripe explores stripes of varied widths, densities, and tones across a dimensional surface reminiscent of needlepoint. Offered in two different scales, it is Smith's first textile with Maharam engineered for both indoor and outdoor use.

This fall marks twenty years of collaboration between the British designer Paul Smith and Maharam. Guided by mutual trust, the longevity of the continually evolving design endeavor is a testament to the ongoing creative commitment of both studios. Events in Australia and a book designed by Maharam Media will celebrate the decades-long collaboration throughout fall 2023.

Paul Smith and Maharam initially met in 2002 when Smith discovered Maharam's reissue of Gio Ponti's 1930 textile *I Morosi alla Finestra* (The Lovers at the Window) during a Gio Ponti retrospective at the Design Museum in London. Smith's request to repurpose the figurative silk window covering as a jacket lining initiated a conversation that led to the application of Maharam's archival textiles to shoe, hat, and bag designs.



Dedicated to interdisciplinary exchange to deepen the design studio's creative range and excited by Smith's limitless curiosity, Maharam invited him to design a textile of his own. *Bespoke Stripe*, featuring vibrant multi-colored stripes embedded in a quintessential menswear pinstripe, was introduced in 2003 as the first upholstery textile of the collaboration.

Over the past twenty years of close dialogue and exchange, the collaboration has generated more than forty designs for upholstery and wallcovering alike. Ranging from a plethora of inimitable signature stripes to adaptations of Smith's flea market finds, each of Smith's designs begins with an interest in reinterpreting classic motifs through idiosyncratic applications of pattern, color, and scale.



“Maharam has been a real pioneer in its field for over 100 years – and I consider it a privilege to have spent the last twenty of them working with their dedicated team,” says Paul Smith. “There’s an art to creative collaboration, and their endless energy and enthusiasm have undoubtedly made this one a success.”

“Working with Paul for the past two decades has been such a privilege,” says Maharam’s senior vice president of design, Mary Murphy. “Paul and the entire team possess boundless passion, curiosity, and creative spirit. I deeply value our friendship, which is grounded in mutual trust and commitment to exploration that can only come with time.”

Over the years, Smith and Maharam have also partnered on numerous furniture projects, exploring the impact of color and pattern on furniture ranging from iconic classics and handsome vintage pieces to sleek contemporary designs. To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Hans J. Wegner’s birth in 2014, Smith and Maharam collaborated with Carl Hansen & Søn on a limited-edition collection that applied upholsteries Big Stripe and Stripes to classic Wegner designs, including the Shell Chair. In 2018, Smith and Maharam paired textiles with designs from the Herman Miller Collection, bringing Smith’s alternately tailored, whimsical, and artful approach to enduring midcentury designs.



Throughout the fall, Maharam will celebrate the anniversary with events in Australia and a book of Smith’s designs published by Maharam Media. In Australia, events in Melbourne and Sydney will feature Artek Stool 60s by Alvar Aalto upholstered in a selection of Maharam textiles by Paul Smith. This coincides with the stool’s ninetieth anniversary and Maharam’s twentieth year of business in Australia. Simultaneously, Maharam Media has designed a book that highlights twenty designs from the collaboration, spanning both textiles and Maharam Digital Projects. An introduction by Murphy, photography by Nick Ballón at Smith’s office, and illustrations by graphic artist and Maharam collaborator Andy Rementer capture Smith’s characteristic playfulness and originality.

About Paul Smith

Paul Smith’s ability to combine a flair for eccentric detail with a dedication to the highest standards of craftsmanship has made him among the most successful fashion designers in British history. In business for fifty years, Smith continues to be an integral part of every aspect of the company as both chairman and designer, producing collections sold in over seventy countries worldwide. With an enthusiasm for wide-ranging cultural references and idiosyncratic combinations of pattern and color, applied

with understatement, Paul Smith expresses a truly contemporary aesthetic.

About Maharam

Founded in 1902 in New York, Maharam is a leading creator of textiles for commercial and residential interiors. Recognized for its rigorous and holistic commitment to design, Maharam embraces a range of disciplines from product, graphic, and digital design to art and architecture. Maharam textiles are included in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Stedelijk Museum, among others. Maharam is the recipient of the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum Design Patron Award for its longstanding support of art and design.

For more information, contact press@maharam.com.

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