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On the Wall: Wallpaper by Contemporary Artists

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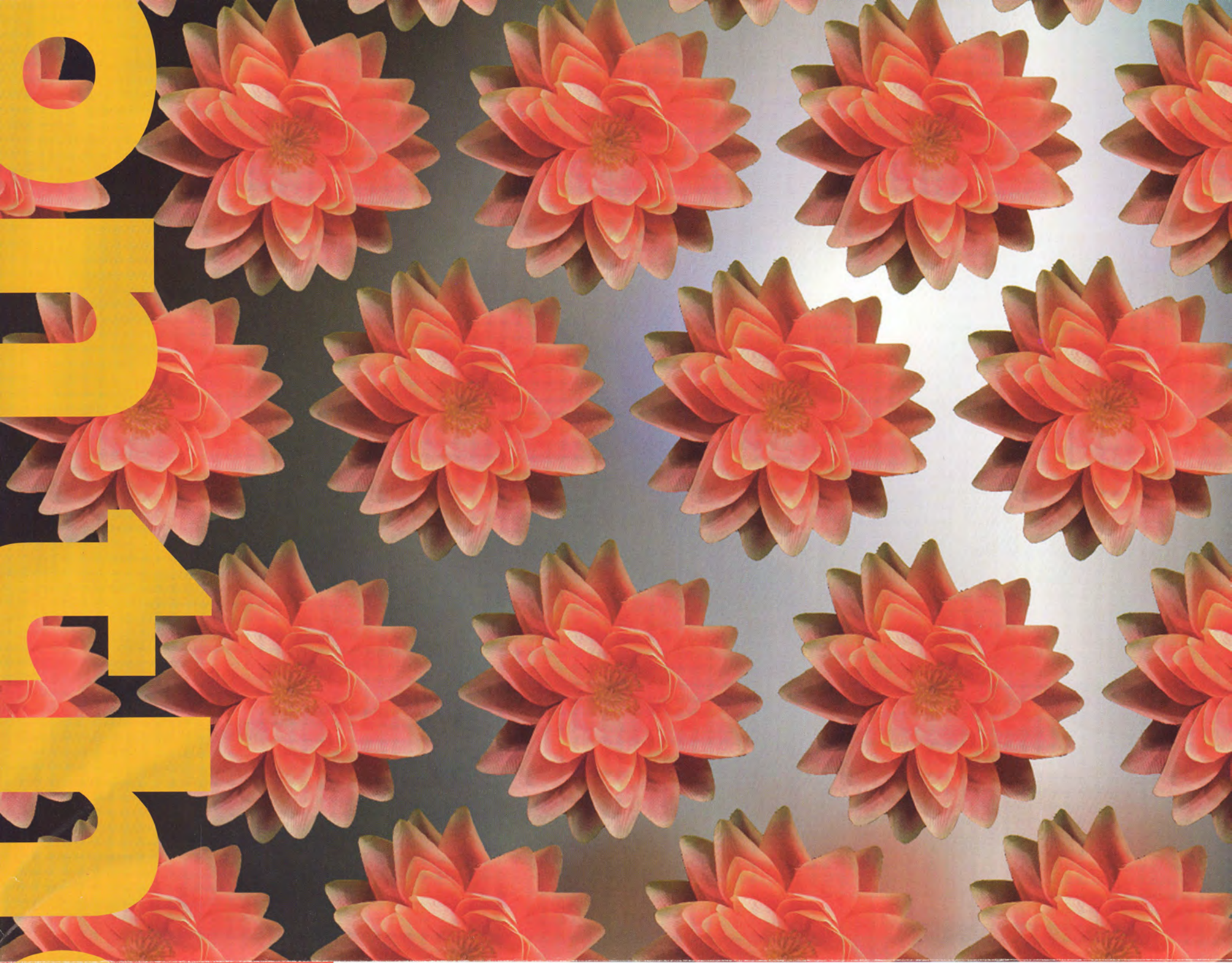


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on the wall *wallpaper by contemporary artists*

February 7 – April 20, 2003

ARTISTS

Ann Agee
John Baldessari
Matthew Benedict
Brian Chippendale
Adam Cvijanovic
General Idea
Robert Gober
Rodney Graham
Renée Green
Jenny Holzer
Jim Isermann
Virgil Marti
Jane Masters
Takashi Murakami
Joan Nelson
Paul Noble
Jorge Pardo
Francesco Simeti
Do-Ho Suh
Christine Tarkowski
Andy Warhol
Carrie Mae Weems
William Wegman

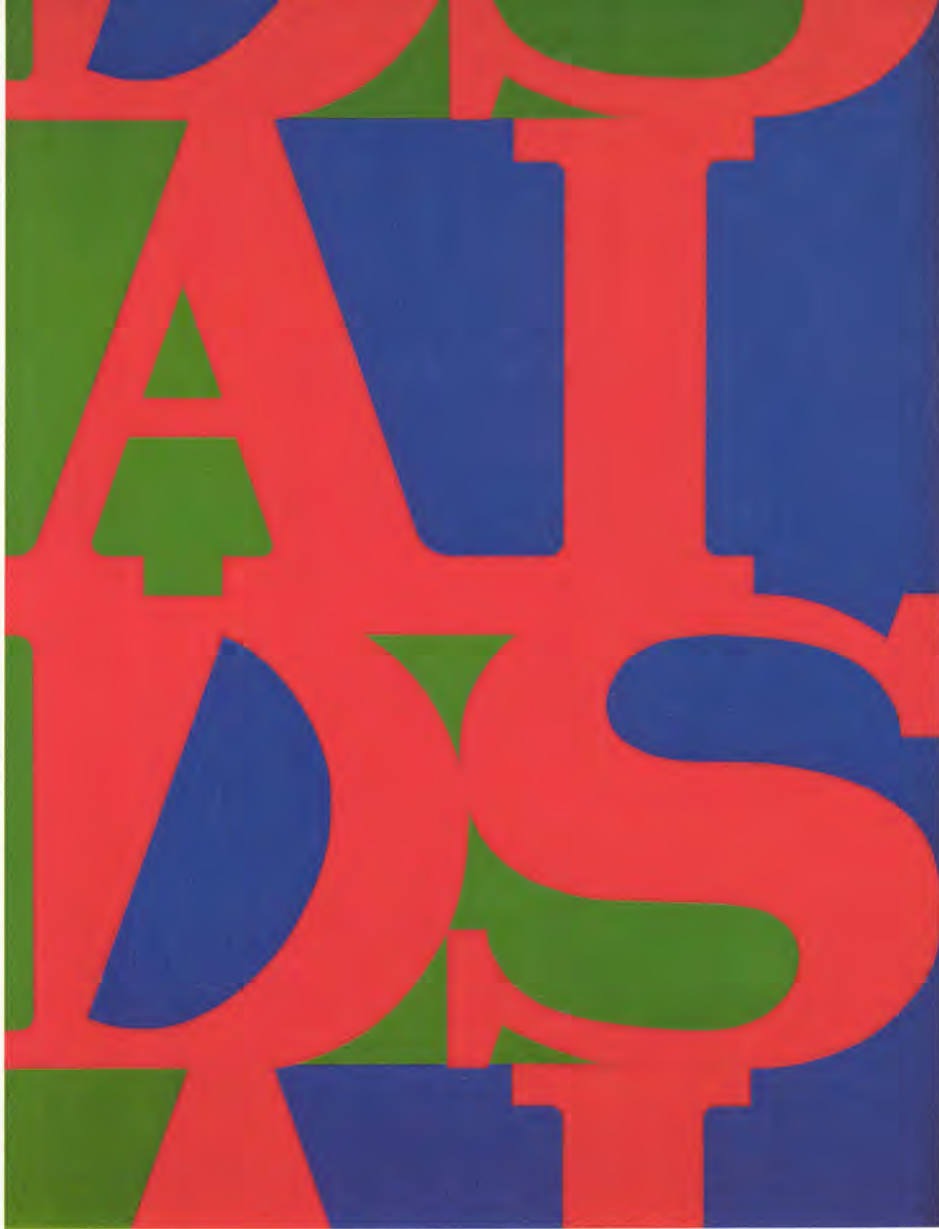
Wallpaper was once ubiquitous and is still common in domestic settings, but it has rarely been given the same kind of attention bestowed on fine-art objects or other applied arts. Nonetheless, many artists – from Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) to William Morris (1834–96) and Andy Warhol (1928–87) – have created wallpaper and considered this activity to be a significant endeavor.

Despite the move away from ornamentation over the past century in both the fine and applied arts, a number of artists trained as painters, sculptors, and postmodern conceptualists seem to find in wallpaper design an opportunity to return to recognizable imagery and content. How ironic that as the status and popularity of commercially produced wallpaper declined during the twentieth century and the taste for neutral grounds grew, fine artists have come to find the possibilities of wallpaper liberating.

The cross-pollination of design and art or of functional and nonfunctional forms is a complex topic currently of vital interest to a new multinational generation of artists. It is also at the heart of the mission of Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), which trains students in “drawing, painting, modeling, and designing, that they may successfully apply the principles of art to the requirements of trade and manufacture” (Founders’ statement of purpose, March 22, 1877). RISD’s Museum acquires works in all areas of art and design and is home to an important collection of historic wallpaper with particular strength in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French examples, part of its extensive collection of European and American decorative arts.

On the Wall presents wallpapers by twenty-three artists: a wide-ranging group of works from Andy Warhol’s now-classic *Cow Wallpaper* of 1966 to site-specific installations by Virgil Marti, Francesco Simeti, Adam Cvijanovic, and Brian Chippendale created for The RISD Museum exhibition. This selection is only a partial representation of artists trained in the fine arts who are currently adapting and transforming the traditions of wallpaper. Some take advantage of the latest digital technologies, while others continue to employ screenprinting (in commercial use since the nineteenth

wallpaper by contemporary artists



above: **General Idea**
Courtesy of AA Bronson

below: **Carrie Mae Weems**
Courtesy of P.P.O.W. Gallery, New York

century) or the hand painting of earlier Chinese and French papers (eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries). Content ranges from such current sociopolitical issues as AIDS, race relations, and the recent war in Afghanistan to explorations of architectural space, as well as a purely decorative approach. Precedents include but are not limited to the work of Cynthia Carlson and others associated with the Pattern and Decoration movement of the late 1970s and early 80s.

Repetition – whether of recognizable images or abstract elements – is at the heart of most wallpaper designs; but the use, meaning, and interpretation of repetition may vary from intentional banality, as images recur endlessly, to mindlessness and free association (as elevated by the surrealists), and to even more exalted values associated with mass production as a democratic ideal. Gertrude Stein asserts the positive value of repetition as she simultaneously disavows its very existence. She posed the question for herself. “Is there repetition or is there insistence? I am inclined to believe that there is no such thing as repetition.” Heightening the attention paid to the most basic details of everyday life may sometimes result in miraculous word patterns, such as Stein’s deceptively simple “A rose is a rose is a rose...,” or in visual statements similarly concise, elegant, and endlessly reproducible. On the other hand, Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s unnamed protagonist in *The Yellow Wallpaper* (Old Westbury, New York: 1973; first published 1893) progresses quickly from postpartum depression to full-blown madness when confined day and night to a wallpapered room by her well-meaning physician husband, the “sprawling and flamboyant” patterns her only companion and source of interaction.

Another critical consideration regarding repeat patterns is background versus foreground. Fine artists usually aim to produce objects that are the focus of attention, whether on a museum wall, in a public setting, or in a private home; but wallpaper is not framed or put on a pedestal. It is meant to unify or enliven an environment as just one of a number of elements. The wallpaper designer has a difficult task: to create patterns that are interesting enough to be noticed and to produce the desired ambiance, but that are not so striking as to detract from the furnishings, artworks, and architectural features of a room. Too often, wallpaper becomes the visual equivalent of Muzak, inoffensive but banal as it infiltrates everyday living and work spaces. One exception is the panoramic wallpapers produced by firms such as Zuber and Company (Rixheim, France, 1790– present), which were much sought after during the nineteenth century and to a lesser degree at present. Printed by hand from hundreds – even thousands – of different woodblocks, these expansive landscapes reflected the European passion for travel to exotic places from the Far East to the American West and the tropics of Latin America. Executed at great expense for grand houses, they were meant to be the focus of attention, as a mural painting would be.



Adam Cvijanovic’s *Space Park*, created for this exhibition, was inspired by the Zuber scenic wallpapers. Based on National Air and Space Administration (NASA) photographs but painted by hand in about forty-five colors on Tyvek, a late-twentieth-century material used for building construction as well as mailing envelopes, the work may be removed from the wall for adaptation or reuse at another site. Tourists viewing a Space Shuttle launch (from a waterfront park in Titusville, Florida) with recreational vehicles in the foreground is clearly a contemporary subject, but the tops of palm trees high in the gallery allude to *El Dorado*, one of the most famous nineteenth-century scenic papers (designed ca. 1848; two panels are on view in the Museum’s Works on Paper Gallery). A cloud of exhaust from the rocket connects the earth to infinite space, as Cvijanovic links the daily lives of ordinary observers to expanses of the natural environment.

When wallpaper is exhibited in a museum or art gallery, it usually comes to the fore rather than remaining in the background. **Andy Warhol** first presented his iconic *Cow Wallpaper* in 1966 at the Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, without anything else in the room. In 1971, he showed it at the Whitney Museum, New York, as a backdrop (in red on violet instead of the original pink on yellow) for an installation of his own paintings. Appropriating an image that recalls the cow used to advertise Borden’s milk in the mid-twentieth century, this repeat of seemingly larger-than-life heads “constituted a deadpan attack on the sacred cows of high art and taste” for which “wallpaper – an irredeemably ‘popular’ art form – was the perfect vehicle.” (See *Apocalyptic Wallpaper: Robert Gober, Abigail Lane, Virgil Marti, and Andy Warhol*. Columbus: 1997, p. 34.) Subsequently, in 1974, Warhol exhibited a large group of his Mao paintings against a wallpaper featuring purple ovals with the Chairman’s face on a white ground.

General Idea’s red, blue, and green AIDS wallpaper, which is an “infected” version of Robert Indiana’s LOVE logo, was originally printed in poster format. The AIDS paper is meant to be installed as a background for the group’s other works or to be seen in well-trafficked public spaces, thus underscoring the prevalence of the disease and how it has infiltrated contemporary life. **Do-Ho Suh**’s *Who Am We?*, featuring a grid of tiny faces of the artist’s friends and family, is similarly designed as background for his other work. Unlike Warhol and General Idea, whose patterns read loud and clear from a distance, Suh’s repeated images require close viewing to discern individual faces rather than an overall pattern that reads as texture. **Carrie Mae Weems**’s *Looking High and Low*, a stylized black-and-white pattern of a female figure enmeshed in a jungle of vines and palm or fern fronds, was created for the gallery walls of an installation that included a large folding screen, photographs, and ceramic plates from the artist’s “Africa Series.” Weems, who was searching for her own roots in Africa, appropriated this pattern from the endpapers of the first edition of George Bernard Shaw’s much read book of 1933, *Adventures of a Black Girl in Her Search for God* (see *Carrie Mae Weems*. Philadelphia: 1994, p. 13). The endpapers and illustrations were designed by wood engraver John Farleigh (British, 1900–65). When published, both text and artwork caused a sensation.

A number of artists in the exhibition look back to historical precedents, but update and/or subvert their content. **Renée Green**’s red-and-white *Mise en Scène: Commemorative Toile* takes the two-color format commonly used in France for *toile* (printed cotton fabric) wall coverings from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the present. Amidst allegorical groups of gods and goddesses, pastoral scenes, and floral motifs typical of *toiles*, but altered in some cases, she inserts historical images of anticolonial uprisings. One of the vignettes was derived from an engraving published in 1805 of the hanging of French officers by the Haitian army of former black slaves during the revolution of ca. 1800–04. The hangings were



in retaliation for atrocities committed by the French army. Green thereby makes visible and forces the viewer to confront past events that are all too often disguised, suppressed, and unacknowledged.

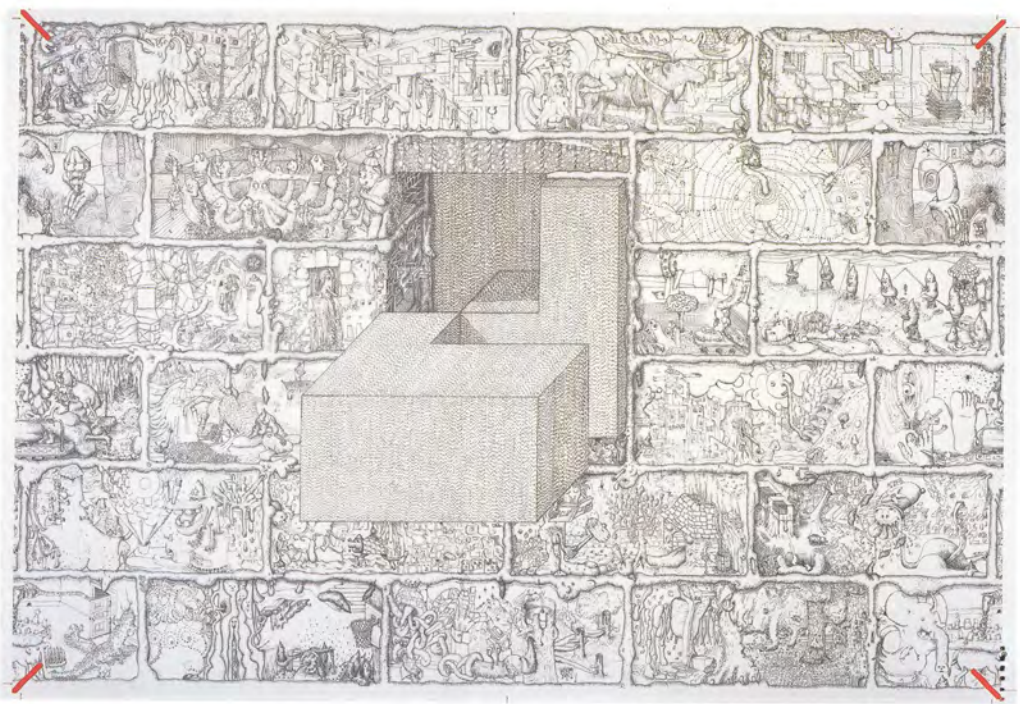
Francesco Simeti pursues a similar path in his installation for *On the Wall*. Starting from a late eighteenth-century French wallpaper fragment in The RISD Museum’s collection, which features Chinese garden and landscape motifs (acc. no. 34.888), he inserted images of Afghani refugees washing clothes in a river and weighed down with bundles as they flee, as well as Afghani men on bicycles holding bunches of balloons to sell during the U.S. intervention in their country. This pattern, entitled *Arabian Nights* (also the title of the entire installation), and a background pattern called *Are You Ready?*, featuring a crowd of refugees surging toward the viewer, have been created using recent newspaper photographs. Simeti subtly interweaves these images so that it is difficult to distinguish a bucolic landscape from a political disaster, thus underscoring how we tend to repress the horrors of war even though the images of displacement and death may be all around us. We see them, but they do not register. Simeti, a citizen of both Italy and the U.S., moved to New York in the early 1990s, lived there for seven years, and recently relocated to Sicily. He was struck by how much more removed Americans are from political events than Europeans seem to be. His work changed dramatically during his stay in the U.S. from joyful sculpture to digital work based on environmental and political disasters (conversation with the artist, June 2002).

A nineteenth-century lithograph from a French children’s book is the source for **Rodney Graham**’s *City Self/Country Self* wallpaper, which was produced and originally shown in conjunction with a video projection of the same name. Graham has transposed his own likeness onto the faces of the two characters in the original print – an urban dandy and a provincial rustic who is being booted in the rear by the city slicker. Although set in Paris in the 1860s, the image recalls the humorous caricatures of eighteenth-century British artist Thomas Rowlandson, known for creating witty watercolors and prints and also wallpaper.



top: **Adam Cvijanovic**
Installation at The RISD Museum
(with portion of Jim Isermann’s project at left)
Courtesy of the artist and
Bellwether Gallery, Brooklyn

above: **Do-Ho Suh**
Courtesy of the artist and
Lehmann Maupin Gallery, New York



top: **Paul Noble**
Courtesy of nest magazine and nest products

center: **William Wegman**
Courtesy of A/D Gallery, New York

above: **Takashi Murakami**
Courtesy of Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York

William Wegman adapts the format of the traditional wallpaper border, a narrow horizontal band most often placed high on the wall; but he replaces the usual decorative motifs with a frieze of his well-known Weimaraners playfully contorted to shape the letters of the alphabet from A to Z. Wegman's wallpaper also recalls the English pictorial alphabets designed for children's book illustrations and tableware, popular since the nineteenth century.

Humor and cartoonlike styles characterize the creations of several artists. **Takashi Murakami**, whose work is steeped in classical Japanese painting as well as in Japanese animation, computer graphics, and Western popular culture, has featured his *Jellyfish Eyes* pattern in a series of pink paintings. These green-and-white black-lashed eyes also appear on his anthropomorphized mushroom sculptures and the recurring two-dimensional characters that populate Murakami's fecund fantasy world. In *nobnest zed*,

Paul Noble limits his palette to gray and white (with red accents indicating the registration marks at the four corners of each sheet, here used as a compositional element), but upon close examination the gridlike composition teems with activity. Created as a project for *nest* magazine, this wallpaper is related to the London-based artist's series of graphite drawings entitled *Nobson*, a fictitious town where an alphabet of buildings represents various social functions. Strange animals and human figures participate in indescribable activities in architectural and landscape settings that are imaginative and bizarre. Flemish painters Hieronymus Bosch (1462?-1516) and Pieter Breughel the Elder (ca. 1525-69) meet the comic strip.

John Baldessari's humor is rooted in the conceptual. His *I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art* wallpaper resulted from a project at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in 1971. He sent a proposal to a class of students there, and in response they wrote these words directly on the walls of a gallery in mimicry of the way pupils have been punished

for generations by having to write a sentence repeatedly on the chalkboard. How perfect to convert this message years later to wallpaper, a medium associated with banality and repetition! Baldessari used wallpaper as a primary element in his *RMS WVU: Wallpaper, Lamps, and Plants*. (*New*), a large installation with a shorthand title (Museum für Gegenwartskunst Zürich and Witte de With, Rotterdam, 1998). In each of four simple patterns, a pair of mundane but richly associative objects – a piece of popcorn and a nose, a pizza pie and a clock, a potato and a light bulb, a pretzel and an ear – are incongruously juxtaposed on a vividly colored ground. The individual images are commonplace, but the combinations are unsettling and amusing.

Ann Agee also deals with the mundane, but working by hand is at the core of her practice. *Jello Yellow Calico* is entirely hand painted, from the traditional calico background to the seemingly cut-out and collaged images of packaging for Scott toilet tissue, Wise potato chips, Fluff marshmallow, Chinese and Mexican foods, and other household products, which are arranged into floral patterns. Whereas earlier wallpaper designs often imitated expensive materials such as chintz, brocade, and leather, Agee's appropriation of calico and product logos highlights her preference for what is easily accessible as well as colorful and richly patterned. A group of Agee's porcelain figurines of contemporary men and women is being shown in the Museum's Porcelain Gallery concurrently with *On the Wall*. Dressed in fabulous stripes, plaids, and polka dots and engaged in everything from taking photographs to giving birth, they are another example of the artist's interest in updating seemingly outmoded genres associated with the decorative arts.



Jim Isermann and **Jorge Pardo** are known for works that blur the boundaries between art and design. Individually they have pursued architecture (interior and exterior), furniture, lighting, and carpet projects as well as wall coverings. Whereas Pardo's precursors seem to be the more organic mid twentieth-century designs of Charles and Ray Eames and George Nelson, Isermann is rooted in geometric modular structure passed down from the Bauhaus to minimalism to 1970s supergraphics. Pardo's untitled wallpaper was created for a semipermanent space that functions as a video lounge, kitchen, and reception area at The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia. It features a loosely defined "plaid" of flowing bands of pastel color punctuated by seemingly random gestural black lines. Isermann's wall installation reconfigures silver mylar squares (called decals by the artist) from a project he designed for the Portikus exhibition space in Frankfurt, Germany, in 2000. Adhering to a systematic progression, a pattern of cut-out ellipses proceeds across the wall, moving from solid silver on the left to full circles on the right.

Brian Chippendale studied printmaking and has become well known as the drummer in a music duo called Lightning Bolt. For *On the Wall*, he has constructed a three-dimensional modular hut wallpapered inside and out, which may actually be entered. Chippendale builds up rich webs of color by screenprinting several layers of ink onto newsprint and then adds collaged figural and landscape elements. **Christine Tarkowski** also explores the potential of wallpaper for architectural exteriors and public sites as well as interior spaces. For *Exposed Stud/Nuclear Sub* from her series entitled "Architectural Targets," Tarkowski proposes to cover the USS Michigan, a ballistic nuclear submarine, with wallpaper that photographically simulates and animates the two-by-four (inch) stud-and-mesh construction of a wall. With an eye to the social, political, cultural, and economic functions of a specific location, Tarkowski has proposed wallpaper for a housing project and a correctional facility, and realized it in an abandoned Woolworth's store and a children's advocacy center, among other sites.

Jenny Holzer's *Inflammatory Essays* have appeared since the late 1970s on storefronts, city walls, and in museums and galleries. Disturbing phrases and sentences are the primary medium through which the artist addresses who has power and how it pervades and impacts our lives, whether overtly or subliminally. Holzer adapts the tradition and format of political posters, but by using a variety of colors and arrangements for large expanses, she merges the visual with the verbal for greater impact. In his *Male and Female Genital Wallpaper*, **Robert Gober** interweaves simply drawn images of the male organ, an androgynous female torso, and other partial figures. In this provocative pattern, Gober underscores how attitudes about sexual identity "become ingrained by a process of repetition and reiteration so insidious and familiar that we neither notice nor question them" (*Apocalyptic Wallpaper...*, p. 38). Wallpaper is also aptly suited to the artist's long-standing interest in domestic objects and the home as sources for childhood memories and formative experiences.

Joan Nelson, who is known for landscape paintings that draw freely on the work of earlier artists from Renaissance masters to nineteenth-century American luminists, is represented by a lush pattern of a pumpkin vine that somewhat eerily snakes its way through an array of variously shaped leaves. In contrast to her paintings, which are usually quite small, the repeat in this wallpaper is five feet long and required twenty-eight screens to produce. Tropical as well as temperate, the plant forms are based directly on nature but are woven together by the artist in ways that would not occur in life. **Jane Masters** luxuriates in the decorative possibilities of symmetrical abstract pattern, creating a new version (in red and pink) of *Groovy*, a dynamic modular repeat that suggests an enlargement of embroidery or lace. At the same time as she pays tribute to pre-industrial craftspersons for their dexterity and commitment, Masters playfully pays homage to Bridget Riley (British, b. 1931) and Victor Vasarely (French, b. Hungary, 1908-97) for their obsessively controlled but simultaneously vibrant Op art paintings.



top: **Francesco Simeti**
Installation at The RISD Museum
(portion of Virgil Marti's project through doorway)
Courtesy of the artist and
Galleria Massimo Minini, Brescia

above: **Brian Chippendale**
Installation at The RISD Museum
Courtesy of the artist

I will not make any more boring art.
I will not make any more boring art.
I will not make any more boring art.
I will not make any more boring art.
I will not make any more boring art.
I will not make any more boring art.
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I will not make any more boring art.



top: **John Baldessari**
Courtesy of Printed Matter, New York

above: **Virgil Marti**
Installation at The RISD Museum
Courtesy of the artist

below: **Jorge Pardo**
Collection of Marion Boulton Stroud

facing page: **Ann Agee**
Courtesy of the artist

Virgil Marti's dazzling room installation features a checkerboard of salmon-pink lotus blossoms screen-printed on silver mylar and interspersed with collaged bonsai driftwood elements that sprout the occasional ranunculus and other exotic flowers. Marti's inspiration runs from the textile patterns of Japanese Nō theater robes and the *chinoiserie*s of the Brighton Pavilion to the kitsch and pop culture of his childhood and adolescence in the 1960s and 70s. Whereas Marti's earlier wallpaper projects explored issues of identity through taste, class distinctions, and the psychology of decorating, he now seamlessly interweaves his current interests in architecture and the history of decorative arts into the mix.

In **Matthew Benedict**'s painting *The House of the Seven Gables*, based on the classic Nathaniel Hawthorne novel (1851), wallpaper provides subject matter as well as style. Depicted in gouache with the flatness and palette of a Zuber scenic paper, a central inset of the gabled house is surrounded by a garland of images that refer directly to the author, characters, and events in the book. The icing on seven gingerbread cookies spells out the curse perpetuated within the dwelling: "God will give him blood to drink." A partial white doorway on the right side of the panel places the viewer in the interior of this macabre wallpapered room.

If Oscar Wilde were on his deathbed today instead of a century ago, perhaps he would have to revise his often cited words: "My wallpaper is killing me, one of us must go." Wallpaper, as currently designed and referred to by contemporary artists, is no longer limited to decorative coverings for the walls of dining room, bedroom, or kitchen. Wallpaper may maintain its decorative function, which is not insignificant or irrelevant, but it may also do much more than that. Artists are extending the styles, techniques, and traditions of wall coverings in works that have personal meaning and at the same time define larger public issues.

Judith Tannenbaum

Richard Brown Baker Curator of Contemporary Art
The RISD Museum

The author has referred to Marilyn Oliver Hapgood's *Wallpaper and the Artist: From Dürer to Warhol* (New York: 1992) and expresses her debt to this valuable resource.





Checklist of the Exhibition

The RISD Museum, Providence
February 7–April 20, 2003

A related exhibition, *On the Wall: Wallpaper and Tableau*, will be on view at The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, from May 9 through August 15, 2003.

Dimensions are given in inches unless otherwise indicated: height (or length) precedes width precedes depth. The term screenprint has been used to describe the technique also known as silkscreen and related processes.

Ann Agee

American, b. 1959

Jello Yellow Calico, 1995

Gouache on rice paper, 180 x 49

Man in Plaid Jacket with Paper Bag, 1997
Porcelain, 9 1/2 h.

Woman with Camera and Pink Skirt, 1998
Porcelain, 7 1/2 h.

Home Birth #2, 2001
Porcelain, 8 1/2 x 12 1/2 x 8 1/2

Woman with Polka-Dot Tank Top and Red Plaid Scarf, 2002
Porcelain, 8 1/2 h.

Woman with Yellow Flowered Dress, 2002
Porcelain, 8 3/4 h.

Courtesy of the artist

John Baldessari

American, b. 1931

Wallpaper for 4 RMS W VU:

Potato/Lightbulb – Blue, 1996

Ear/Pretzel – Pink, 1996

Clock/Pizza – Turquoise, 1996

Nose/Popcorn – Yellow/Green, 1996

Digital color prints on paper, each 39 3/8 x 22 3/8
Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York

I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art, 1971/2000
Screenprint on paper, partial roll: 79 1/2 x 27
Courtesy of Printed Matter, New York

Matthew Benedict

American, b. 1968

The House of the Seven Cables, 1998
Gouache on wood, overall: 7' x 7' 11"
Courtesy of the artist and Bonin and Alexander, New York

Brian Chippendale

American, b. 1973

The Only House I Can Afford in Providence, 2003
Screenprint on paper on wood,
overall: 9' h. x 7' diam. approx.
Courtesy of the artist

Adam Cvijanovic

American, b. 1960

Space Park, 2003
Flasche (acrylic paint) on Tyvek (synthetic sheeting),
overall: 21' x 18 1/2' approx.
Courtesy of the artist and Bellwether Gallery, Brooklyn

General Idea

(collaborative group formed in 1969)

AA Bronson (b. Michael Tims)
Canadian, b. 1946

Felix Partz (b. Ronald Gabe)
Canadian, 1945–94

Jorge Zontal (b. Slobodan Saia-Levy)
Canadian, b. Italy, 1944–94

AIDS Wallpaper, 1989
Screenprint on paper, roll: 180 x 27;
overall: 12' x 9' approx.
Courtesy of AA Bronson

Robert Gober

American, b. 1954

Male and Female Genital Wallpaper, 1989

Screenprint on paper, rolls A and B: 180 x 24 each
Collection of the artist

Rodney Graham

Canadian, b. 1949

City Self/Country Self (wallpaper), 2001

Screenprint on paper, roll: 180 x 27
Courtesy of Donald Young Gallery, Chicago

Renée Green

American, b. 1959

In collaboration with The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia

Mise en Scène: Commemorative Toile, 1993
Screenprint on paper-backed cotton sateen,
partial roll: 101 3/4 x 51 3/4
Courtesy of The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia

Jenny Holzer

American, b. 1950

Inflammatory Essays, 1979–82

Offset print on paper, 17 x 17 each;
overall: 12' x 8'6" approx.
Courtesy of the artist and Cheim & Read, New York

Jim Isermann

American, b. 1955

Untitled (0900), 2000
Cut Mylar squares, each: 24 x 24;
overall: 21' x 23' approx.
Courtesy of the artist and Richard Telles Fine Art, Los Angeles

Virgil Marti

American, b. 1962

In collaboration with the RISD Printmaking Department

Lotus Room, 2003
Room installation with wallpaper and digital decals,
12'6" x 31'7" x 19'2" approx. (irregular)

In collaboration with the RISD Printmaking Department and The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia

Lotus Wallpaper, 2003
Screenprint on Mylar, roll: 50 w.

Courtesy of the artist

Jane Masters

American, b. England, 1962

Groovy: Version 4, 2003
Screenprint on paper, sheet: 20 x 20;
overall: 12' x 8' approx.
Courtesy of the artist

Takashi Murakami

Japanese, b. 1962

Jellyfish Eyes, 2002

Screenprint on paper, roll: 180 x 27;
overall: 12' x 7'9" approx.
Courtesy of Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York

Joan Nelson

American, b. 1958

Wallpaper, 1991

Screenprint on paper, roll: 180 x 30
The RISD Museum, Gift of A/D Gallery 1993.057

Paul Noble

English, b. 1963

nobnest zed, 2002

Offset print on paper, sheet: 19 x 27 1/2;
overall: 9'5" x 5'1" approx.
Courtesy of nest magazine and nest products

Jorge Pardo

American, b. Cuba, 1963

In collaboration with The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia

Untitled, 1999

Screenprint on paper-backed cotton sateen,
roll: 54 w.
Collection of Marion Boulton Stroud

Francesco Simeti

Italian and American, b. 1968

Arabian Nights, 2003

Wallpapered room with suite of furniture and rug,
12'6" x 31'7" x 19'2" approx. (irregular)

Arabian Nights and *Are You Ready?* wallpapers, 2003
Digital print on paper, roll: 19'8 w.
Courtesy of the artist and Galleria Massimo Minini, Brescia

JEAN-BAPTISTE REVEILLON

French, 1725–1811

Imitation of a Toile de Jouy, 1789

(source for *Arabian Nights* wallpaper)

Woodblock on paper, 23 1/4 x 18 3/8
The RISD Museum, Mary B. Jackson Fund
34.888

FRENCH

Suite of Furniture (6 armchairs, 4 side chairs, and settee), ca. 1900

Mahogany, mahogany veneer, gilt brass, and wool/silk tapestry weave (upholstery)

The RISD Museum, Gift of Mrs. Harold Brown
37.127–.138

Do-Ho Suh

Korean, b. 1962

Who Am We? (multi), 2000

Color offset print on paper, sheet: 24 x 36;
overall: 9'9" x 11'5" approx.
Courtesy of the artist and Lehmann Maupin Gallery, New York

Christine Tarkowski

American, b. 1967

Exposed Stud/Nuclear Sub from the "Architectural Targets" series, 1998
Image: gouache on ink-jet print on paper, 16 x 22;
wallpaper: screenprint on paper, roll: 117 x 24
Courtesy of the artist

Andy Warhol

American, 1928–87

Cow Wallpaper, 1966; refabricated for the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, 1994
Screenprint on paper, roll: 180 x 28;
overall: 17'5"–9'5" (h. varies) x 38'6" approx.
Courtesy of the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh

Carrie Mae Weems

American, b. 1953

Looking High and Low, wallpaper from the "Africa Series," 1993
Screenprint on paper, roll: 180 x 26 1/2
Courtesy of P.P.O.W. Gallery, New York

William Wegman

American, b. 1943

Alphabet Border, 1993

Screenprint on paper, roll: 13 1/2 x 360
Courtesy of A/D Gallery, New York



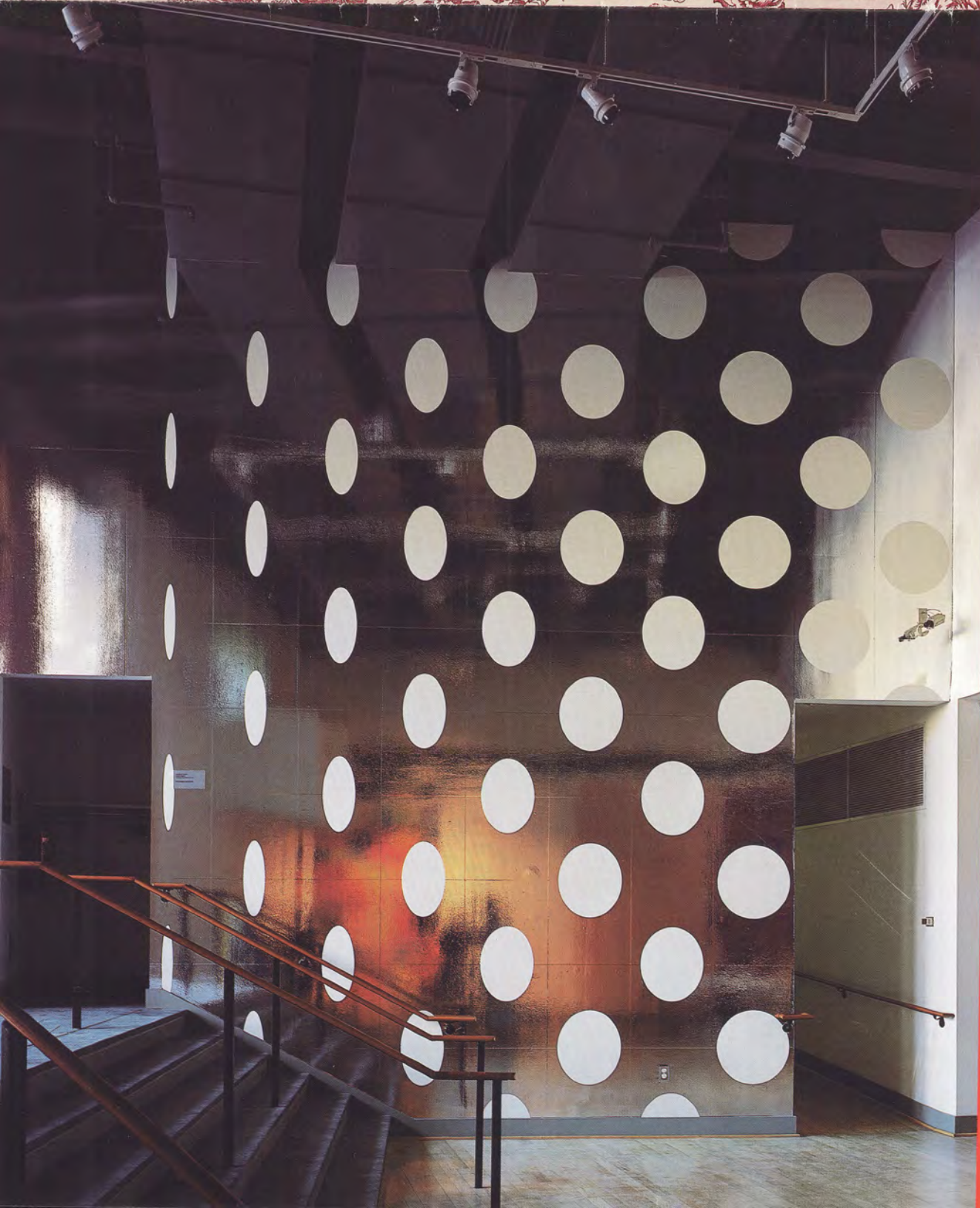
The RISD Museum

Museum of Art
Rhode Island School of Design
224 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903-2723

on the wall

ARTISTS

Ann Agee
John Baldessari
Matthew Benedict
Brian Chippendale
Adam Cvijanovic
General Idea
Robert Gober
Rodney Graham
Renée Green
Jenny Holzer
Jim Isermann
Virgil Marti
Jane Masters
Takashi Murakami
Joan Nelson
Paul Noble
Jorge Pardo
Francesco Simeti
Do-Ho Suh
Christine Tarkowski
Andy Warhol
Carrie Mae Weems
William Wegman



This exhibition is supported by
the Bafflin Foundation and Adler's.



media sponsor

above: Renée Green
Courtesy of The Fabric Workshop
and Museum, Philadelphia

below: Jim Isermann
Installation at The RISD Museum
Courtesy of the artist and
Richard Telles Fine Art, Los Angeles

on the wall

wallpaper by contemporary artists

February 7 through April 20, 2003

This exhibition is supported by the Bafflin Foundation and Adler's.



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Wallpaper is rarely given the same kind of attention bestowed on fine-art objects or other applied arts. Nonetheless, many artists trained in the fine arts have created striking wall coverings – topical and conceptual, as well as richly patterned – and consider this to be a significant endeavor. The exhibition spans the period from 1966 to the present, ranging from Andy Warhol's now-classic *Cow* pattern to gallery installations designed specifically for The RISD Museum.

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Carrie Mae Weems

Looking High and Low 1993

(detail of wallpaper from the *Africa Series*)

Image courtesy of PPOW Gallery, New York

Sunday, February 9, 2:30 pm

GALLERY TALK: On the Wall

Curator Judith Tannenbaum and Associate Professor Andrew Raftery, Printmaking, RISD, discuss wallpaper as a contemporary art form.

Thursday, February 20, 7:30 pm

Gallery Night Providence

ARTISTS SPEAK:

Brian Chippendale and Jane Masters

Chippendale and Masters, two Providence artists, speak about their projects for the exhibition.

Saturday, February 22, 11 am-4 pm

FREE-FOR-ALL SATURDAY:

Off the Wall

Design a futuristic interior and learn screen printing. Keith Munslow provides stories, songs, and cartoons.

Supported in part by the June Rockwell Levy Foundation.

Thursday, March 13, 6:30 pm

LECTURE: Joanne Kasuda-Warner

Joanne Kasuda-Warner, former curator of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, speaks about historic and contemporary wallpaper.

Thursday, March 20, 6:30 pm

Gallery Night Providence

GALLERY TALK:

Brown University Graduate Students

Providing context for *On the Wall*, the exhibition *Historic Wallpapers, 1750-1949* is the result of a Brown University seminar offered in collaboration with the Museum and supported by a grant to the Museum from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Several participating students will discuss the show.

The exhibition is supported by the Felicia Fund and the Sachem Foundation.



Francesco Simeti

Digital design for "Arabian Nights"
wallpaper installation for *On the Wall*
2002-03 (detail)

Image courtesy of the artist

Saturday, April 5, 12:45-5 pm

Walking Tour of Historic Houses

Visit four historic houses along Benefit Street to view original French and Chinese wallpapers with Museum Curators Thomas Michie and Judith Tannenbaum and RISD Professor Andrew Raftery. Limited to 15; advance registration required; \$35 each; call 401-454-6502.

Sunday, April 6, 3-4:30 pm

FAMILY WORKSHOP:

Wild and Wonderful Walls

Create an original wallpaper design for your dream bedroom.

Supported in part by The Carter Fund for Museum Education.