

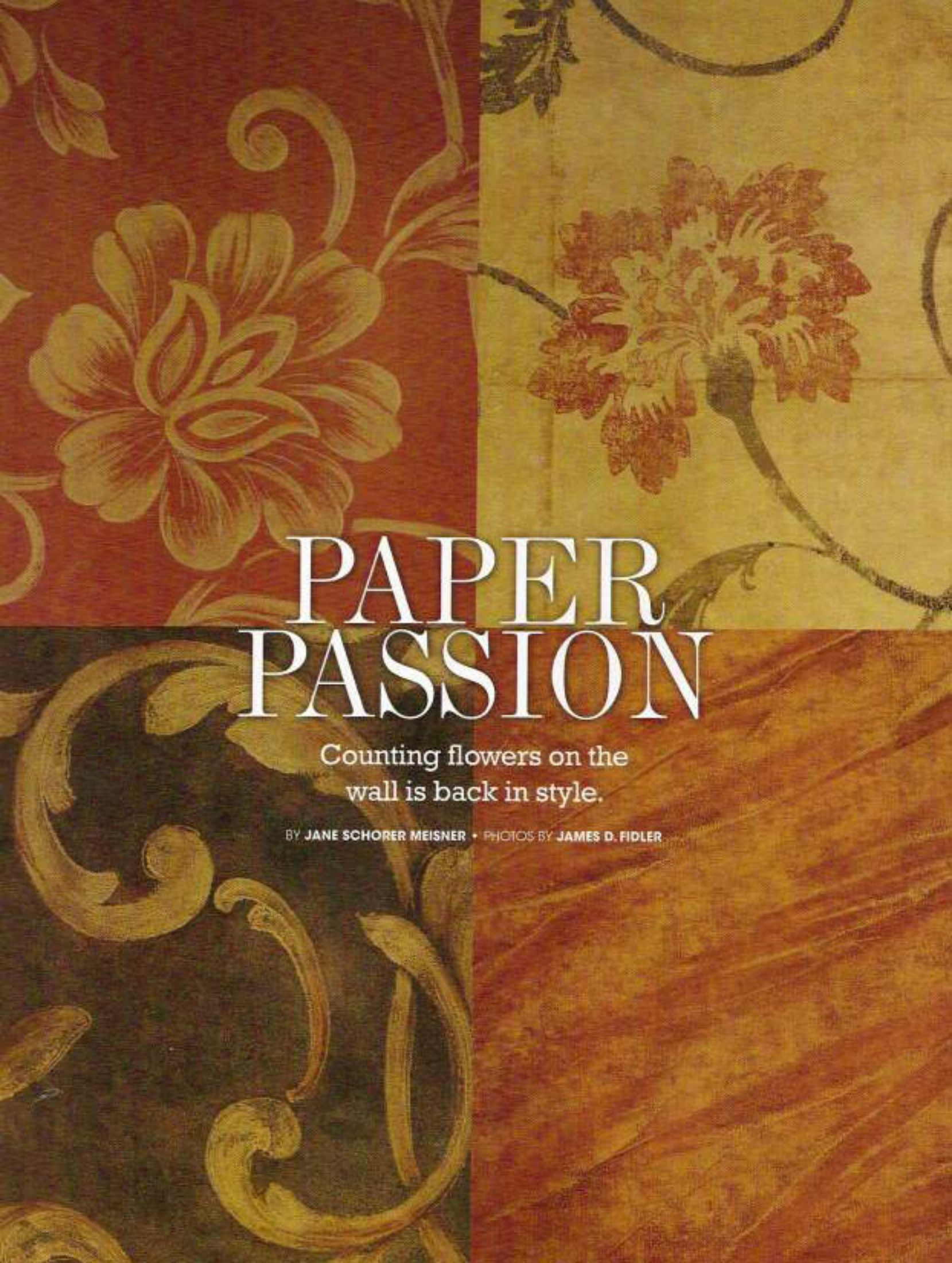
DES MOINES HOMESTYLE

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A STONE VASE
OR BACKYARD
SCULPTURE ...

ART FOR
EVERYONE



PAPER PASSION

Counting flowers on the
wall is back in style.

BY JANE SCHORER MEISNER • PHOTOS BY JAMES D. FIDLER



Decorators want to say one word to you, just one word: Wallpaper.

"Over the past few years, the wallcovering industry has grown exponentially," says decorator Amanda Reynal of Reynal Interiors in Des Moines. "There are more choices available than ever before."

That includes tapestries and grass cloths (made of plant fibers such as jute or hemp) that have been used in home décor for hundreds of years and go in and out of style, she says.

"Eighteenth-century American homes often had rooms with walls covered in hand-printed papers," Reynal says. "Many of these old techniques are being revived, and old

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Top: Designer Amanda Reynal used zebra print in a small bar area to create a cozy niche. Opposite: Trendy wallpaper patterns from Sherwin-Williams. Right: Reynal designed a laundry room with cheery hand-printed wallpaper from London.





Red grass cloth wallcovering not only installs a warm, inviting look, but it also adds dimension to a room. "Sometimes with deep colors or highly saturated colors, it's hard to achieve depth with a flat paint," says designer Amanda Reynal.

documentary designs are being reprinted. Traditional, hand-painted Chinoiserie wallpapers are also experiencing a big revival."

Cutting-edge wallpapers include bold colors, big florals, metallics and patterns that coordinate with fabrics in a room, says interior designer Julie Youngblade, owner of JY Design in Ankeny. And textured papers offer a new twist in faux finishes.

Historically, vinyl wallpapers were a huge no-no for an elegant home, Reynal says. "But today's technology allows vinyls to be much more palatable. There are even great-looking vinyl grass cloths that work beautifully in bathrooms and kitchens."

Popular geometric patterns and large-scale damask prints put walls at the forefront of a room's design scheme and often require quieter rugs and fabrics, Reynal says. "I would avoid using a bold pattern in a room with a lot of wall space,

as it could overwhelm the eye and dominate the room."

But a pictorial and colorful paper can serve as art, eliminating the need for pictures hanging on the walls, Reynal says.

"Sometimes, when people are a little conservative and don't want to get crazy with their upholstery fabric or their draperies, a less expensive way to approach adding pattern to a room is the wallpaper," Youngblade adds. "They're probably not going to change their upholstery as quickly as they're going to change their walls."

Youngblade says she shies away from the "focal wall" concept, in which only one wall is papered. She prefers to paper an entire room or highlight one architectural detail.

"Maybe it's a wraparound staircase or it could be niches, where you do the inside," she says. "Use



'A wallpapered room can set the tone for decorating schemes throughout the home.'

wallpaper in a more playful way."

In order to use wallpaper effectively, it should be in tune with the period of the home as well as the colors and decorating, Reynal says. "Often, a wallpapered room can set the tone for decorating schemes throughout the home and create a dynamic shell for the rest of the furnishings."

In addition to wallpaper, easy-to-apply wall decals ranging from sports logos to cartoon characters, colorful flowers and zoo animals are now popular.

"Parents like them because they can move them

from place to place when the kids get tired of them," says Mia Herron, decorative products specialist at Sherwin-Williams paint store in Clive. "Kids have short attention spans, and when they get tired of 'Blues Clues,' they can take them off and have something else."

But Youngblade cautions homeowners not to overuse them.

"The words and phrases you see a lot of today are OK, but in moderation," she says. "I think sometimes people get carried away with them all over the house. I used one near my cat food that says, 'Here, kitty, kitty!' It adds some whimsy and tells people something about who I am."



Because wallpaper has had such a resurgence, new "boutique" companies are cropping up with a host of hand-painted or hand-printed designs, Reynal says. Many popular designs offer a retro look from wallpapers of yesteryear.