

Maharam Introduces Pepitas, Mexidot, Alphabet, Roman Stripe, Broken Stripe, and Millerstripe Rug by Alexander Girard

This fall Maharam expands its Textiles of the 20th Century™ series by reissuing six designs by Alexander Girard across three applications—two upholsteries, three wallcoverings, and one handwoven rug. The grouping reintroduces many of Girard’s most enduringly relevant designs from his time as founding Design Director of Herman Miller’s textile division—1952 to 1973—and was developed primarily using references sourced from their archive and headquarters in Zeeland, Michigan.

Core to this offering are two upholstery patterns that Girard designed eleven years apart, but which jointly epitomize his belief that design should be simple, timeless, and useful. During his tenure at Herman Miller, Girard spoke of a desire to create “staples,” which often led him to favor simple geometric forms. Pepitas (1952) enlists one of Girard’s most cherished motifs, a pointed ellipsis formed by the intersection of two disks with the same radius, overlapping in such a way that the center of each shape lies on the perimeter of the other. This motif—said to represent unity within duality in sacred geometry—is used across multiple Girard patterns, from drapery to wallpaper.

By contrast, Mexidot (1963) was conceived as part of a series of handwoven stripes called Mexicotton, which Girard developed with a resource he encountered during a trip to Mexico to purchase artifacts for his growing folk art collection. Drawn to the vibrant combination of handmade textures woven with simple structure in clear colors, Girard continued to collaborate with these artisans for the rest of his tenure at Herman Miller. In reproducing this textile, Girard Studio was adamant the updated version be produced with reduced environmental impact and at an accessible price to reflect the material simplicity of the original. Describing this approach, Girard Studio says: “Sustainability and material quality have always been important considerations in the work we do with Maharam, but now more than ever we are striving to create products that enhance the built world around us while making minimal impact on the earth. This new collection is especially exciting in its use of post-consumer recycled and renewable materials.” The Maharam Design Studio ultimately landed on a finish-free plain weave whose recycled spun yarns emulate the natural look of the original cotton while meeting contemporary standards for high-traffic seating.

Looking to vertical surfaces, Alphabet (1952), Roman Stripe (1952), and Broken Stripe (1952) were originally silk-screened wallpapers that have been re-engineered as contract wallcoverings using a digital print technique on a non-PVC substrate. In order to retain the careful draftsmanship and vibrancy that distinguish the originals, each layout was carefully traced and color-calibrated by the Maharam Design Studio. To further ensure the versatility of these patterns across both residential and commercial application, Girard Studio specified that a cellulose substrate be used as the foundation of each print, lending them added warmth and tactility.

This introduction is punctuated by the introduction of Millerstripe Rug (1973), modeled after an upholstery textile of the same name originally reissued by Maharam in 2002. Curious to explore the potential of this

universal stripe in a different medium, Maharam and Girard Studio experimented with multiple dimensions and materials before landing on a handwoven wool twill that depicts the original polychromatic layouts at exactly double their original scale. The resulting striped rugs complement the cotton dhurries Plus (1960), Steps (1960), and Check (1956), reissued in 2018, whose irregularly dyed duotone patterns are rendered in matte cotton. Millerstripe Rug, by contrast, takes advantage of wool's dynamic absorption of color to create rich, high contrast hues and compositions underscored by a hand-stitched border across two set sizes—6' x 9' and roughly 8' x 10'.

Describing the cumulative effect of this new grouping of textiles, Girard Studio says: “From an aesthetic perspective, we are thrilled to continue building awareness about the diversity in Girard’s vast stable of designs. Classic but unexpected at the same time, these upholsteries, wallcoverings, and rugs offer an understated but still distinctly Girard flavor.”

Maharam has reissued thirty Girard patterns to date as part of its ongoing Textiles of the 20th Century™ collection, which is committed to faithfully reproducing the textiles of great designers of the past, including those of Josef Hoffmann, Verner Panton, and Gio Ponti, among others.

Maharam is proud to sponsor the landmark retrospective Alexander Girard: A Designer’s Universe. Organized by the Vitra Design Museum, the exhibition is on view at the Franz Mayer Museum in Mexico City through August 2021.

Click [here](#) to learn more and download images.

<https://news.hermanmiller.com/2021-09-13-Maharam-Introduces-Pepitas,-Mexidot,-Alphabet,-Roman-Stripe,-Broken-Stripe,-and-Millerstripe-Rug-by-Alexander-Girard>