Jacqueline Groag
Textile and Pattern Design
Wiener Werkstatte to American Modern
Geoff Rayner, Annamarie Stapleton and Richard Chamberlain
Antique Collectors Club £25 (pbk)

Jacqueline Groag began her career under the Wiener Werkstatte in Vienna and went on to design and produce hand printed fabric lengths for many of the leading Parisian fashion houses (Chanel, Lanvin, Worth, Schiaparelli and Paul Poiret) before becoming one of the most influential textile designers in Britain after the Second World War. Although not a household name, her upholstery moquette for London Transport seating on buses and tube trains in the 1970s – with its rectangles of orange, yellow ochre, brown and black – is instantly recognisable to both visitors to and residents of the capital. This was just one of many commercial commissions undertaken by Groag that enhanced modern Britain throughout her career. The general public also bought her work in droves, snapping up the fabrics and wallpapers she produced for companies such as John Lewis, Liberty of London, David Whitehead, Edinburgh Weavers, Sandersons, Warenite and Formica.

Groag died in London in 1986 at the age of 83 but this book is packed with full colour plates of her work, which remains remarkably fresh even in 2010. This is a timely, fascinating and inspirational tribute to a designer who helped shape post-war Britain beautifully.

Clockwise from left: A modified version of Groag’s textile design for the Rayon Design Centre produced commercially by David Whitehead in 1951. Original artwork for a design in 1929. After the Festival of Britain, David Whitehead produced a version of Groag’s textile for the Information Centre on rayon, which was a hit with the public. Upholstery moquette for London Transport Stock; Art and Industry cover, October 1942, a design by ‘Madame’ Groag.