Jacqueline Groag, Textile Design
Geoffrey Rayner, Richard Chamberlain, Annamarie Stapleton
(Antique Collectors’ Club, £25)

This absorbing tribute to Jacqueline Groag, who died in 1986, begs the question of how someone so significant in mid-twentieth-century pattern design in Britain can be so little heard of here today. From the Forties onwards, her work was much in demand for furnishing and dress textiles, laminates, carpets and wallpapers, not just in domestic settings but also in ships, planes, buses and trains – indeed, one of her last commissions, in the mid Seventies, was London Transport’s distinctive upholstery moquette. Jacqueline was born in Prague in 1903, moving in the Twenties to Vienna, where she studied under the Secessionist designer Josef Hoffman, and began her career. She and her Jewish architect husband fled to Britain in 1939 and were soon being championed by leading figures in London’s design coterie. After the dreary war years, the nation was especially receptive to Jacqueline’s lively, modern patterns, whether representational – often in the form of stylised flowers or her favourite wooden-doll motifs – or abstract. This book reveals her exceptional talent, which was drawn on to promote British design in the decade after 1946, heavily influenced the popular ‘Fifties’ style, and found considerable favour in the States. Leonie Highton

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