

British design aficionado Lucia van der Post, who later travelled from London to Sydney to view the Broadhurst archive, agrees.

'I was enormously impressed,' she says. '[They] have that timeless quality that all the best design has – and what I particularly like about them is that they have a personality, a certain zest and vivacity of their own. I think her designs will live on.'

Broadhurst's international profile kept growing. Selfridges department store in London began retailing ten-metre rolls of Broadhurst wallpaper for £160 each. One – a bamboo, printed in brown and gold, caught the eye of US film director Fenton Bailey, who sent his interior designer, A.J. Bernard. A.J. Bernard is now a die-hard Broadhurst devotee. 'I like the graphic nature of them,' he says of *The Egrets*, *Horses Stampede*, *Circles and Squares*, *Milano Tapestry* and *Yvan's Geometric*. 'Aside from *Horses Stampede*, which almost defies description, I find the others to be timeless designs capable of melding into any number of applications,' he adds. 'They have a classic appeal that works well in either art deco, modernist or contemporary settings but never seem to be kitsch.'

When Bernard discovered that Broadhurst was creating designs between 1959 and 1977, her range of styles made sense. 'That period was such a pastiche of everything that had come before, so it doesn't surprise me that her creations range the gamut from formal traditional (*The Cranes*) to op art (*Tortoiseshell Stripe*),' he says. 'In the sixties, there was a resurgence of art nouveau and art deco that carried on right through the seventies. Add in a bit of Warhol and Pantone, and there you have it. At the same time, there was a desire for glamour and all things Louis XV and XVI ... I think Florence's patterns just helped bridge the gap.'

Back in Australia, David Lennie invited other designers to make applied use of Broadhurst designs handprinted at Signature.

The result: everything from funky patterned rugs to cushions, bags and lampshades and Broadhurst-covered chairs. Broadhurst wallpaper



Modern designers are having a field day with Broadhurst, using her patterns across interiors, clothing and accessories [above and opposite].

COURTESY SIGNATURE PRINTS
[OPPOSITE TOP LEFT AND MIDDLE];

FUNKIS [OPPOSITE TOP RIGHT];

GREG NATALE [OPPOSITE RIGHT];

KATHERINE [OPPOSITE BOTTOM LEFT]





began re-appearing in nightclubs and bars. Sydney's Ladylux nightclub used *Florentine Tapestry* in a vibrant red printed across metallic silver paper. Clothing stores such as Allannah Hill, Oroton, Mimco and Leona Edmiston became showcases for other fantastically flamboyant Florence Broadhurst designs, and innovative interior decorators began having fun with the range for their high-end clients.

Another early adopter was the Melbourne-based designer Nicky Zimmerman, whose women's wear is stocked in stores from Harvey Nichols in the United Kingdom to Bloomingdales and Saks in the United States. Like Akira, Zimmerman had never seen Broadhurst's work before, even though she trained in design and textiles in Australia. She had never even heard of Florence Broadhurst. Zimmerman also believes the widely ranging work has one single handler. Yes, the range is dizzying but it 'definitely looks like it has the handwriting of one person, even though there can be a print of a giant peacock bird and next to it you can be looking at a small optical geometric type of print,' she says. 'They still have a feeling, or a flavour that you would recognise.'

Zimmerman selected *Steps*, *Hibiscus* and *Aubury* to work with on her cheeky beachwear. The humour and the scale appeal to her. 'It's a bit kooky but beautiful,' she says. 'I think that is typically Australian – a bit wacky. There is a sense of fun with it. It doesn't have a serious feel to me.'

Tim O'Connor, a Sydney-based fashion designer, was also having fun with the Broadhurst range. Ever since he heard about the archive in 2000, he used one design a season and in 2003 he incorporated the striking *Bamboo* pattern into a collection inspired by the 1950s. 'I went all cream background and did a bright-yellow, very Liz Taylor-type dress with court shoes in bright blue plus a blue print on the white background with yellow shoes, and then a pink on white,' he says. 'It was very bling in terms of the colour. We also did a more commercial range in jerseys, and long dresses in a darker red on a pink and more tonal, not so in your face. It all just walked out of the store.'



Sydney interior designer Greg Natale decked out an entire inner city home in Broadhurst's Steps [opposite], winning a Belle/Space Apartment of the Year award. Melbourne designer Matthew Butler took a flat-pack approach to Broadhurst, exhibiting his seat/table/boxes [above] in Australia, Japan and Italy.