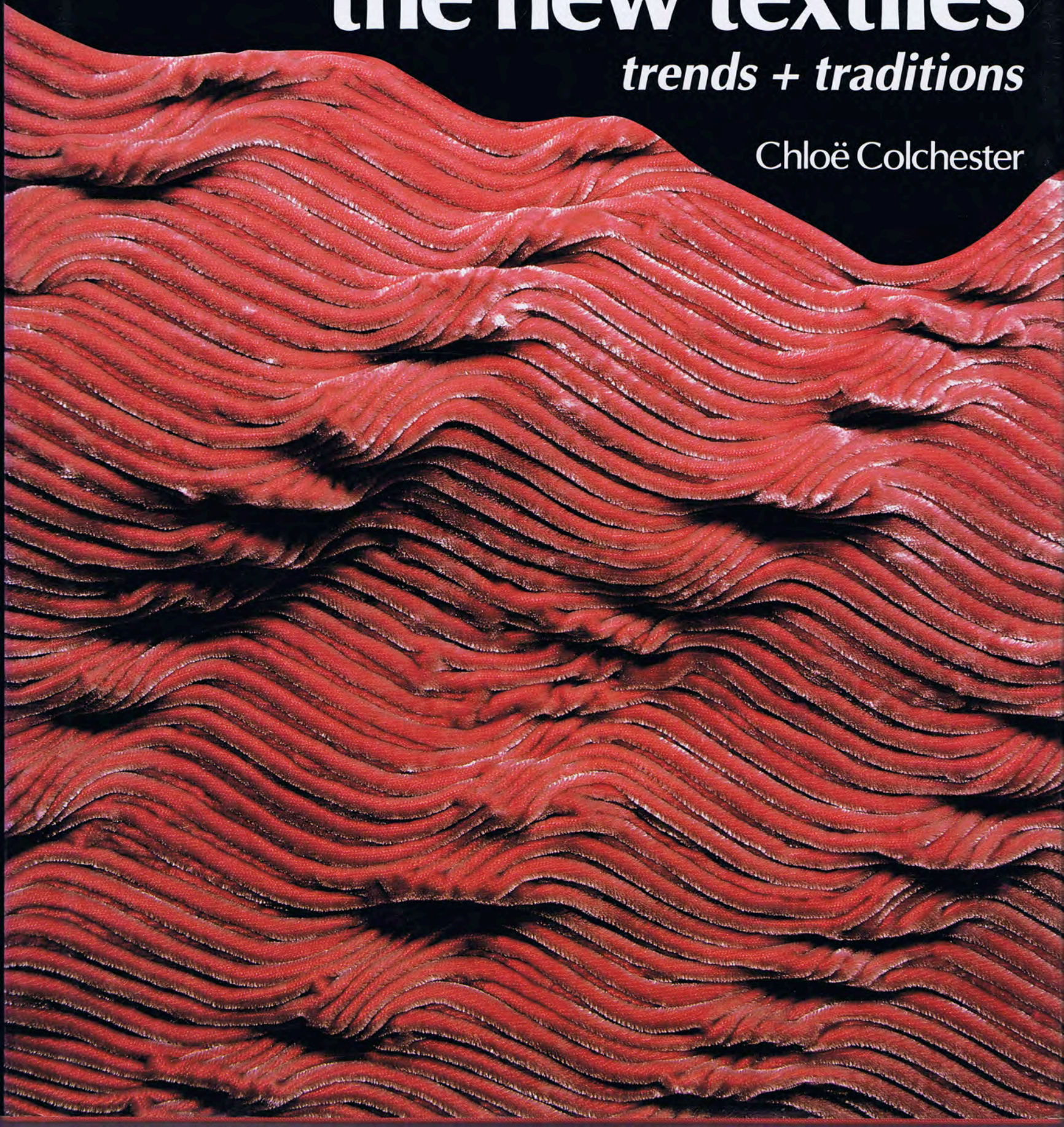


the new textiles

trends + traditions

Chloë Colchester





55 Discharge-printed silk
Victoria Richards
UK, 1987

56 Discharge-printed silk
Victoria Richards
UK, 1987

57 Discharge-printed
velvets
Joanna Gordon
UK, 1990





58 Discharge-printed silk
(using procion dye)
Victoria Richards
UK, 1987

59 Discharge-printed
velvets
Joanna Gordon
UK, 1990

60 'Rockets'
Screen-printed silk
Georgina von Etzdorf
UK, 1987

'Tempest'
Screen-printed damask silk
Georgina von Etdorf
UK, 1990



were conducted using recycling and techniques for creating surface patina and depth. The layered print emerged as a decorative fabric equivalent to the distressed, oxidized surfaces favoured by British 'one-off' furniture makers such as Ron Arad and Tom Dixon. Working for Katherine Hamnett and John Galiano, the London-based Venezuelan designer Luiven Rivas Sanchez embroidered amorphous amoebic shapes over camouflaged prints of 1970s pin-ups. The rigorously craft-based West Surrey College of Art produced several generations of students, notably Joanna Gordon and Victoria Richards, who repetitively screen-printed and bleached their fabrics to create dense, painterly prints with shifting surfaces and depths – 'distressed' versions of conventional English chintzes.

For many of these designers who set up on their own, securing an adequate market for their esoteric designs presented a problem. Of the few textile designers who did manage to put their business on a firm financial footing, Georgina von Etdorf was the only one to establish a substantial overseas market for her finely crafted designs. Working within the more conventional British idiom of romantic naturalism, her painstakingly constructed patterns such as 'Fritillary' (1985) and 'Tempest' (1990), which each took a year to perfect, were more accessible to overseas buyers from America and Italy who felt that their finesse offered value for money. By the end of the 1980s this approach to quality was an attitude that the British fashion designers, educated by several years of exposure to the fashion market, had come to share.