

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

THE INTERNATIONAL DESIGN AUTHORITY

MARCH 2017



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1. NATHALIE FARMAN-FARMA ON THE TERRACE OF HER NEW STUDIO IN LONDON'S CHELSEA NEIGHBORHOOD.
2. ANDRINOPLE, FARMAN-FARMA'S TAKE ON AN 1850S RUSSIAN FABRIC.
3. THE AUREL COTTON IS BASED ON A 1920S PRINTED RUSSIAN TEXTILE.



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4

Folk Revival

Décors Barbares' *Nathalie Farman-Farma* gives new purpose to centuries-old textile designs

When Nathalie Farman-Farma purchased a ravishing 19th-century Russian fabric in 2000, her first thought was a rather practical one: to make pillows. "Objects become so much more interesting when they're put to use," says the French-raised, London-based collector and designer, who recently moved into a charming new Chelsea studio. "The problem with old textiles is that after six months of people sitting on them, they fray; the fiber is too dry."

Farman-Farma's solution: Reimagine them. Since 2010 she has been printing enchanting fabrics inspired by her favorite folk traditions from Eastern Europe and northern Asia—Turkmen robes, Russian pinafores, Slavic embroidery—under the moniker *Décors Barbares*. For the Andrinople print, she had elements of that crimson Russian pattern redrawn and transferred onto a cotton that was then dyed Turkey red using an ancient technique.

Next, she notes, "I'm thinking of doing something based on this skirt I saw in Krakow." She pulls up an iPhone photo of a buoyant white getup decorated with sweet red flowers. "Wouldn't it be great as café curtains?" That's the way Farman-Farma works—function first. "I always ask myself two questions," she says. "Does it make me dream? And, How would I use it?" *decorsbarbares.com* —HANNAH MARTIN



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4. FOLKLORE, PRINTED ON A HEAVY COTTON-LINEN BLEND, NODS TO TRADITIONAL RUSSIAN DESIGNS.
5. FARMAN-FARMA CALLS HER NEW STUDIO A LABORATORY OF DECORATING IDEAS. "I NEVER MAKE A FABRIC THAT I WOULDN'T PERSONALLY USE," SHE SAYS.