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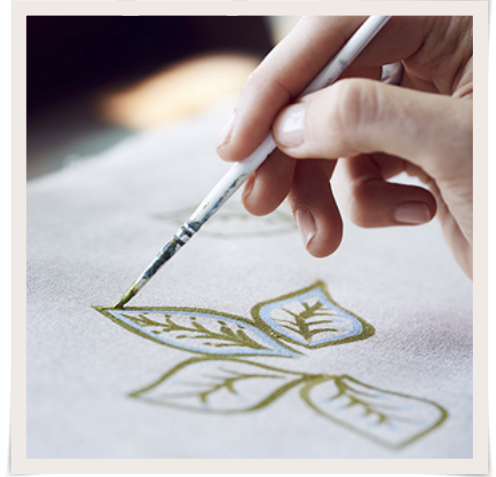


London-based ceramicist Kaori Tatebayashi sculpts a *Narcissus poeticus* in clay, taking care to mimic the flower's innate imperfections.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
LISA LINDER

CRAFT

Spring



Four artisans immortalize the natural mystique of flowers with blooms made from paper, plaster, clay, and intricate appliqué.

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The Woodland Textile Artist

“I was always pressing flowers, taking long walks in the forest,” says London-based fabric artist **Natasha Hulse** of her childhood on her family’s estate in Breamore, England. After stints as a digital textile designer, she found a way to reclaim those sylvan days through her 3D botanical linen appliqué. Hulse hand-paints, cuts, and embroiders individual petals, stems, and leaves, then attaches them, bloom by layered bloom, to headboards, lampshades, and other furnishings. Commissioned work is often deeply personal; one recent piece featured the client’s favorite primroses and cosmos, as well as fabric she’d inherited from her mother. These layers, Hulse says, “become a sacred thing.” natashahulse.com



HERE AND PREVIOUS PAGE: Hulse begins each work, like her folding screen and headboard (shown at the Ham Yard Hotel in London), by painting onto linen; she adds fabric for depth and texture before embellishing with French knots and cross-stitches.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALUN CALLENDER.

Featuring Roman Hemstitch and Cosmo. matouk.com



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Gupta in his Brooklyn studio with his California tree poppy (at left), dusted with turmeric “pollen,” and purple clematis, misted with talcum powder-textured paint. BELOW LEFT: A crepe paper lotus in a handmade vessel

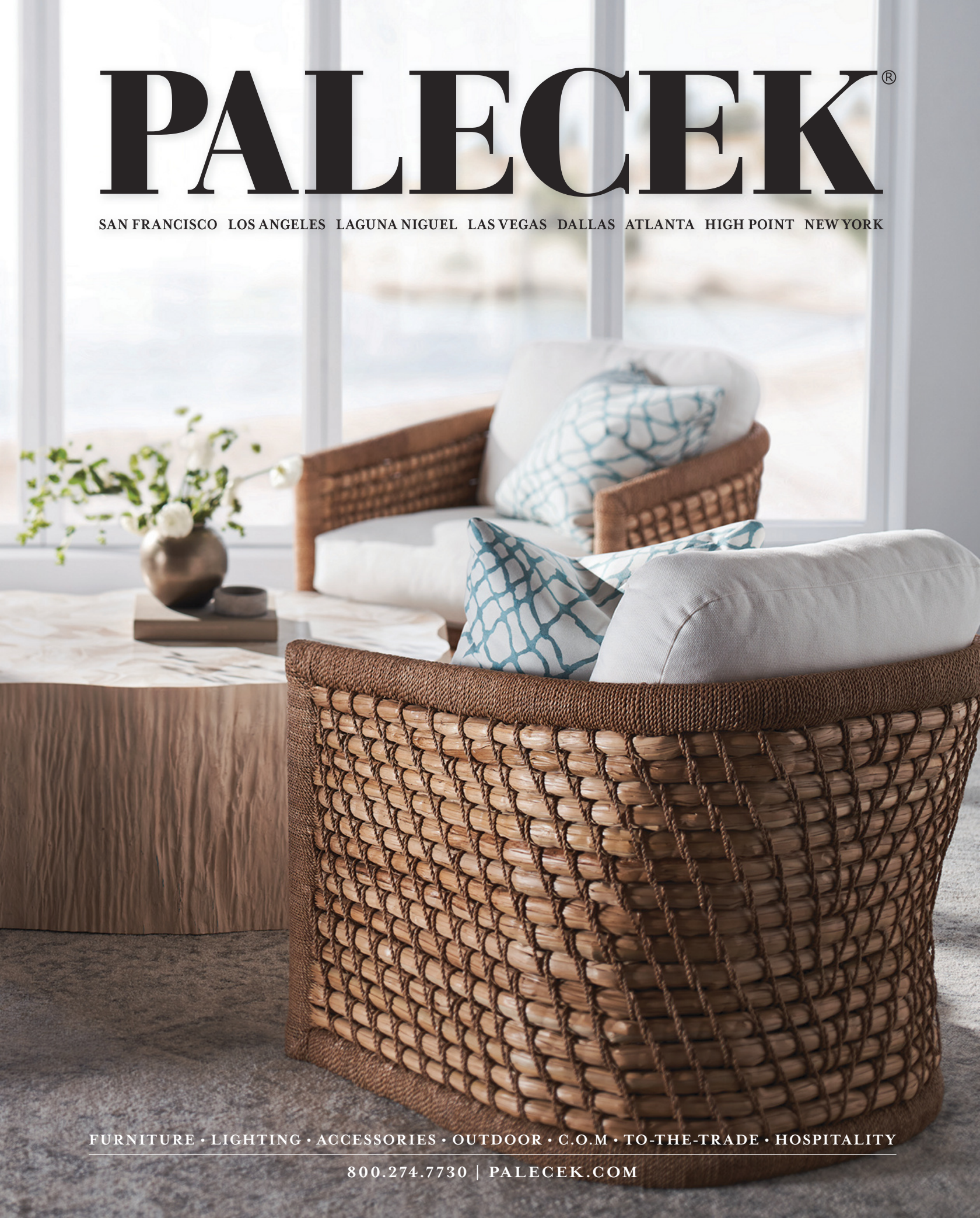
PORTRAIT BY CHERYL MUKHERJI; ARTWORK COURTESY OF SOURABH GUPTA.

The Architect of Flowers

As a child in India, **Sourabh Gupta** brought life to his yardless house by planting cuttings in pots he shaped on a turntable fashioned from a bicycle wheel. “I saw how I could create something from nothing,” says the Brooklyn-based, Parsons-trained architect and designer, who employs that resourcefulness to craft exquisite paper botanical specimens—from lotuses to lilies of the valley—using little more than scissors, glue, and tape. Among his many fans is Tory Burch, who commissioned him to embellish her 2019 Met Gala gown. Though Gupta’s pieces are startlingly lifelike, accuracy is not his goal. “It’s more about the romance of the flower.” sourabhguptadesign.com

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The Specimen Sculptor

“With ceramics you stop time—and this feels even more powerful when you can stop the clock on something that once had life,” says **Kaori Tatebayashi**, a London-based ceramicist born into a family of Arita, Japan, merchants and whose own thriving garden supplies most of her subjects. Modeling by hand and using few instruments, Tatebayashi sculpts ethereal unglazed white stoneware flowers such as hellebores and hyacinths so precisely wrought they could be scientific specimens. “It felt like a revolutionary act not to use glaze. But removing color means you can really see the forms and can often seem that you’re looking at ghosts.” kaoriceramics.com



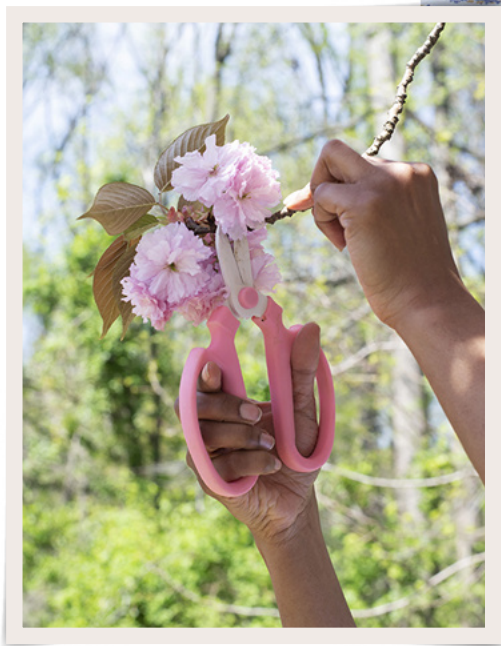
A climbing installation of foxgloves, field poppies, sweet peas, and bindweed is crafted of sculpted stoneware, which Tatebayashi (inset) fires unglazed to accentuate the flowers' natural forms.



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Robinson (right) molds her plaster reliefs by pressing flowers into clay, stripping the excess, then layering with plaster. She created the pink relief (below) from cherry blossoms she foraged in New Jersey's Chapel Avenue park.



The Petal Preservationist

Pennsylvania-based artist **Ronni Robinson** doesn't require perfection from the plants she uses to mold her delicate plaster reliefs. "If a bug has eaten through a leaf or a stem is broken, I love that." Inspired by a small bas-relief flower she spotted in Philadelphia's Barnes museum, Robinson taught herself to craft her "floral fossils" by pressing foraged blooms such as anemones and cherry blossoms into clay, then painstakingly removing the detritus with tweezers before layering the pieces with white and tinted plaster. "People who view my work often say it's the first time they've really noticed the details of a flower. That excites me." ronnicole.com