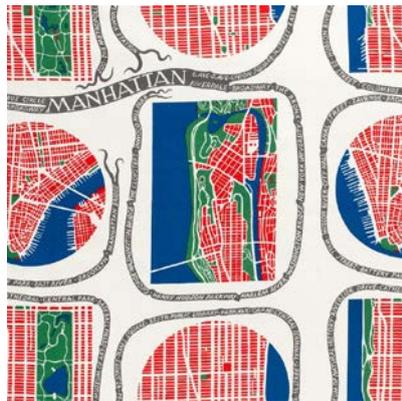
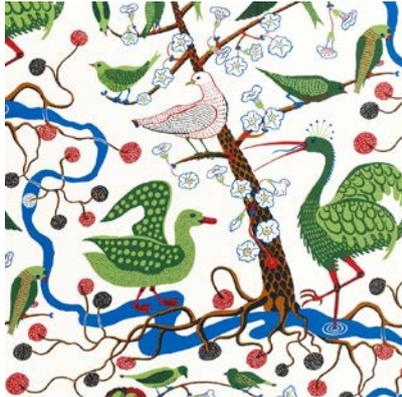


## JOSEF FRANK Patterns–Furniture–Painting

28 January – 7 May 2017  
[ftmlondon.org/exhibitions](http://ftmlondon.org/exhibitions) #joseffrank



- Fashion and Textile Museum is proud to present the first-ever UK exhibition dedicated to the designer and artist Josef Frank (1885-1967)
- *JOSEF FRANK Patterns–Furniture–Painting* focuses on Frank's vibrant textile designs and places this work in an art historical context
- Josef Frank's groundbreaking interior design ideas with Estrid Ericson and the design and furnishings company Svenskt Tenn are featured with room sets and furniture
- A large number of watercolours by Frank, a previously unknown side of the designer's creativity, are presented in the exhibition and in a new accompanying publication.

The Fashion and Textile Museum is proud to present the first ever UK exhibition dedicated to the architect, designer and progressive thinker Josef Frank(1885-1967), in association with Millesgården, Stockholm.

Internationally renowned and influential, Frank is best known for his amazingly bright, bold fabric and wallpapers and his distinctive furniture designs for Svenskt Tenn. These iconic designs will be seen alongside previously unknown watercolour paintings.

The Austrian-born architect moved to Sweden in 1933, where he found expression for his colourful brand of modernism, working with Swedish designer and entrepreneur Estrid Ericson on 2,000 furniture sketches, 160 textile prints, glassware, metalwork and interior design ideas. Together they helped define what is now regarded as Swedish Modern.

In his textile patterns, Josef Frank creates worlds that stand in stark contrast to the reality of the interwar period and World War II. The lower galleries focus on Frank's eponymous textile designs, his ability to create complete visual worlds inspired by nature with designs that are dominated by beautifully coloured birds, butterflies, plants and floral shapes. His patterns are filled with an optimistic energy, even where highly abstracted and suggest the abundance of the world and human possibilities, a world of dreams where species intertwine and differing types of flowers grow side by side.

Furniture designs are displayed alongside textiles, framed wallpaper and carpets, including a Florabyrå (floral chest of drawers). Here we see Frank's unique combination of functionalism with decoration as the simple mahogany form is transformed by elegantly decoupage floral prints. Frank's freer take on modernism went against the tide. When others advocated a simple monochrome functionalism, Frank included the colours and forms of nature, arguing that decoration added richness *"The monochromatic surface appears uneasy, while patterns are calming, and the observer is unwillingly influenced by the slow, calm way it is produced. The richness of decoration cannot be fathomed so quickly, in contrast to the monochromatic surface which doesn't invite any further interest and therefore one is immediately finished with it."*

In 1951, Josef Frank and Estrid Ericson were commissioned to design the interior for a newly built house in the grounds of Millesgården in Stockholm; Millesgården was the home of the sculptor Carl Milles. The garden house called *Anne's house* was to be the official residence of Anne Hedmark, who was Milles's secretary. Plans, drawings and photographs of the interiors of Anne's house recreate the interiors showing the textile designs and furniture in situ.

Not only did Frank design a vast number of fabrics and furniture, he was also a watercolourist, which is less known. In the later part of his life, he completed more than 400 watercolour paintings. The watercolours on display in the Mezzanine Gallery depict his travels, landscapes, cityscapes and still lives and are notable for their distinctive style, which is restrained and delicate.

Josef Frank was born into a Jewish family and trained and worked both as an architect and as a designer in Vienna. He was a committed socialist, designing the first Werkbund Estate. As a partner in a successful interior design firm in Vienna, he designed both houses, interiors and furniture as well as fabric patterns before moving to Sweden. He was a functionalist, but his ideas about designing living environments challenged orthodox functionalism. He felt that a home should feel cosy and comfortable and above all be adapted to the wishes of the residents. With soft sofas, hardwood and fabrics with natural patterns in a multitude of colours, the home could truly become a haven and a place for recuperation.

Celia Joicey, Head of the Fashion and Textile Museum, said:

“Josef Frank’s textile patterns are design classics: his brilliant use of colour, sense of scale and surreal organic forms have remained in fashion for over 70 years. Frank’s collaboration with Estrid Ericson at Svenskt Tenn in Stockholm is a fine example of how working in a design partnership can create a stronger individual style.”

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXHIBITION PLEASE CONTACT:**

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**Notes to editors**

1. ‘Josef Frank Patterns – Furniture - Painting’ is at The Fashion and Textile Museum from 28 January – 7 May 2017.
2. The Fashion and Textile Museum is at 83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF. For further information about FTM and its activities visit [www.ftmlondon.org](http://www.ftmlondon.org)
3. Museum opening times: Tuesday–Saturday, 11am–6pm; Sunday, 11am–5pm; Late night Thursday until 8pm; Last admission 45 minutes before closure. Ticket prices: £9.90 adults\*, £7.70\* concessions, £6 students and free entry for under 12s (\*including Gift Aid).
4. The book *Josef Frank – The Unknown Watercolours* (ISBN 978-91-87397-32-5) accompanies the exhibition. Published by Nicotext, RRP £30.
5. **About Fashion and Textile Museum:**  
The Fashion and Textile Museum is the only museum in the UK solely dedicated to showcasing developments in contemporary fashion, as well as providing inspiration, support and training for those working in the industry. Founded by iconic British designer Zandra Rhodes in 2003, the museum is part of Newham College London – one of Europe’s largest further education colleges.

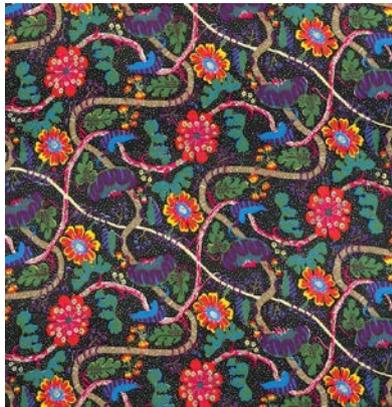
**About Millesgården**

Millesgården can be termed a work of art in its own right, a nicely balanced stage design of terraces, fountains, stairways, sculptures and columns, coupled with a diversity of vegetation and an immense vista across the waters of Värtan from the rocky heights of Herserud.

It was in 1906 the sculptor Carl Milles bought a plot of land on the island of Lidingö, and in 1908 he had a house and a studio built here. Carl and Olga remained in this lovely home until 1931. A magnificent donation by Carl and Olga Milles established, in 1936, the Carl and Olga Milles Lidingöhem Foundation. Millesgården was first opened for the general public in the closing years of the 1930s. Millesgården is still run by the foundation, which includes representatives of the Swedish Government and the Municipality of Lidingö. This unique setting, one of Sweden’s foremost tourist attractions, welcomes thousands of visitors every year. It is open all the year round and the intention is for the museum, aided by exhibitions and activities of various kinds, to continue in the visionary spirit of Carl Milles himself.

**Press images**

A selection of press images is illustrated below.



**Josef Frank Mirakel, 1925–30.** Designed in Vienna for Haus & Garten and later produced by Svenskt Tenn. The designer William Morris and the English Arts and Crafts movement provided a rich source of inspiration for Josef Frank. The fabric 'Mirakel' (Miracle), which was created in the 1920s, references patterns designed by Morris. In shape and colour, Frank's fabric is clearly modern: the colours are almost luminescent due to Frank's choice of contrasting colours, such as blue against orange and red against green on a black background.

**Josef Frank, Manhattan, 1943–45** © Svenskt Tenn. Designed in New York for Svenskt Tenn. Most of Josef Frank's patterns are inspired by nature. Manhattan is one of the exceptions. The map of New York has been transformed into a stylised pattern inscribed into two circles and two rectangles. The street grids on the various parts of the island are shown as white lines against a red background.

**Josef Frank, Butterfly, 1943–45** © Svenskt Tenn. Designed in New York for Svenskt Tenn. Josef Frank drew from nature and also learned about it by reading field manuals. This pattern was inspired by the book *Butterflies of America*. Colourful butterflies of all sizes flutter across a landscape where flowers are growing in irregular clusters on land interrupted by small streams of water.



Josef Frank, Watercolour, 1933 . The Franks left Vienna in 1933, in the year Adolf Hitler came into power, to move to Sweden

Josef Frank Watercolour between 1953-67, © Anna Sievert. After the war, Frank found inspiration on his trips to Italy, Spain and France.

Josef Frank, Untitled, Still life with flowers © Michael Splat.



The dining room in Anne's house, Millesgarden. Fitted with Josef Frank furniture by Estrid Ericson © Millesgarden.

Inside Anne's House, Millesgarden - fitted with Josef Frank furniture by Estrid Ericson © Millesgarden