



WITH
FREE CD-ROM:
PATTERN STARTER KIT
INCL. 162 PATTERN-
TEMPLATES

LOTTA KÜHLHORN

DESIGNING PATTERNS

FOR DECORATION, FASHION AND GRAPHICS

LOTTA KÜHLHORN

DESIGNING PATTERNS

FOR DECORATION, FASHION AND GRAPHICS

Edited by Gestalten

Typefaces: Futura by Paul Renner;
Adobe Caslon by William Caslon, Carol Twombly

Translation and proofreading by Wieners + Wieners
Printed by Livonia Print, Riga
Made in Europe

Published by Gestalten, Berlin 2014
ISBN 978-3-89955-515-8

2nd printing, 2014

© Die Gestalten Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, Berlin 2014
© Lotta Kühlhorn 2014

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy or any storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Respect copyrights, encourage creativity!

For more information, please visit www.gestalten.com.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek.

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available online at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

This book was printed on paper certified by the FSC®.



Gestalten is a climate-neutral company. We collaborate with the non-profit carbon offset provider myclimate (<http://www.myclimate.org>) to neutralize the company's carbon footprint produced through our worldwide business activities by investing in projects that reduce CO₂ emissions (www.gestalten.com/myclimate).





REPORT! A Book about Making Patterns

The Pattern in life7

Inspiration

When I Was a Little Kid21

Fashion23

Film25

In the Country27

Flea Markets31

In Line – Like in the Store32

Lists33

Digital Ornamentation79

Hi, Math!81

Taking Things Apart85

Sorting87

Fruits and Vegetables89

Numbers, Letters, Words91

Hornstull99

Going to the Market105

When Patterns Meet111

Ten Do-It-Yourself Projects



The Way I Work

A Report from My Desk36

Color39

Shape44

The Screen and Reality47

One Example of How I Make a Pattern48

Making Patterns55

Wallpaper for Your Computer's Desktop ..116

Dishcloth117

Wrapping Paper118

Cards and Envelopes120

Paint Patterns on Cabinets122

Tray124

Bunting126

Paint Patterns on Your Wall128

Wallpaper132

Patterns on Fabric137

Patterns

Dots67

Stripes69

Check73

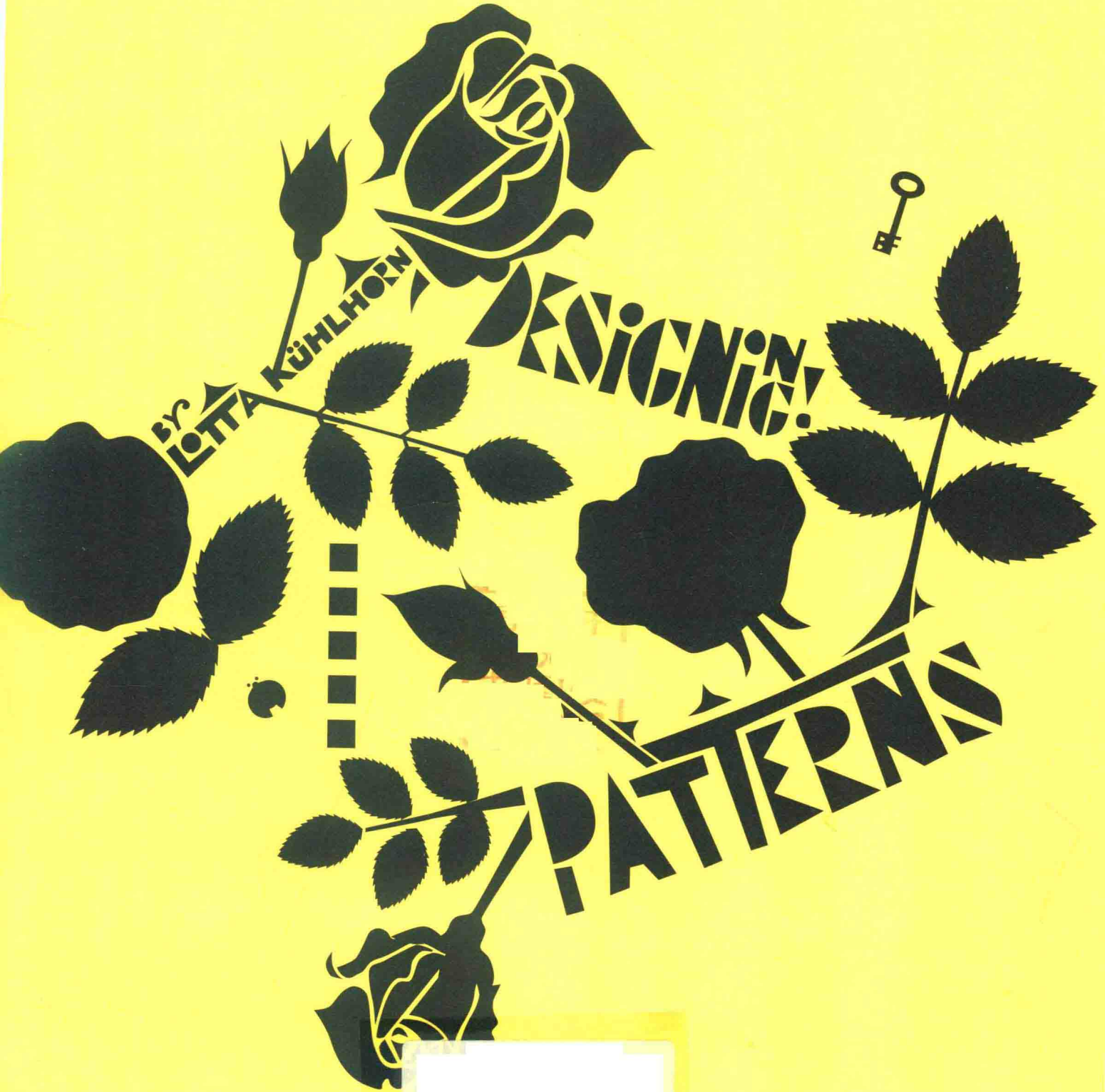
Patterns of Pictures75

Thank You141

Index and Image Credits142







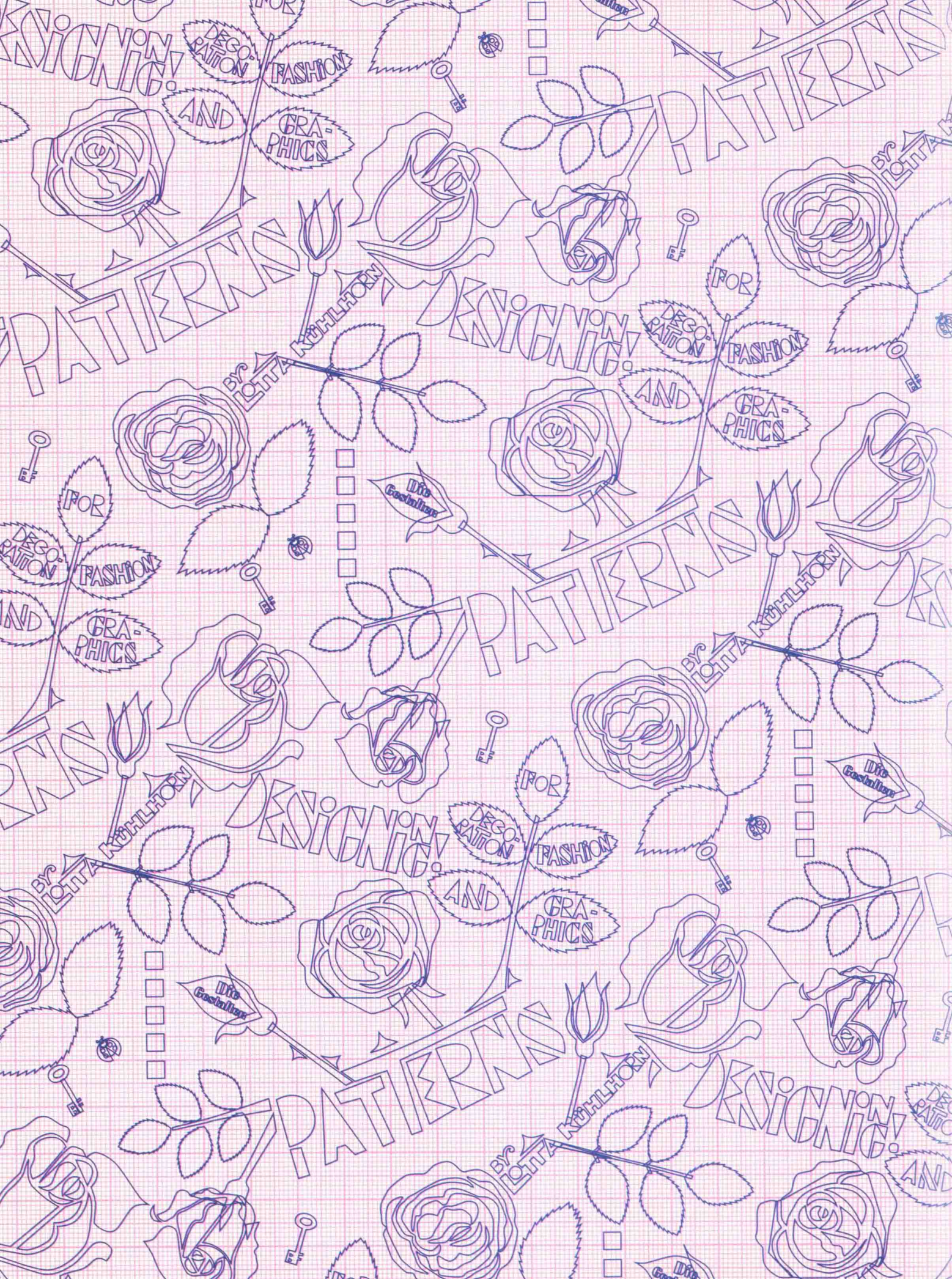
BY
LOTTA KÜHLHORN

DESIGN!

PATTERNS



gestalten



REPORT! A Book about Making Patterns

The Pattern in life7

Inspiration

When I Was a Little Kid21

Fashion23

Film25

In the Country27

Flea Markets31

In Line – Like in the Store32

Lists33

Digital Ornamentation79

Hi, Math!81

Taking Things Apart85

Sorting87

Fruits and Vegetables89

Numbers, Letters, Words91

Hornstull99

Going to the Market105

When Patterns Meet111

Ten Do-It-Yourself Projects



The Way I Work

A Report from My Desk36

Color39

Shape44

The Screen and Reality47

One Example of How I Make a Pattern48

Making Patterns55

Wallpaper for Your Computer's Desktop ..116

Dishcloth117

Wrapping Paper118

Cards and Envelopes120

Paint Patterns on Cabinets122

Tray124

Bunting126

Paint Patterns on Your Wall128

Wallpaper132

Patterns on Fabric137

Patterns

Dots67

Stripes69

Check73

Patterns of Pictures75

Thank You141

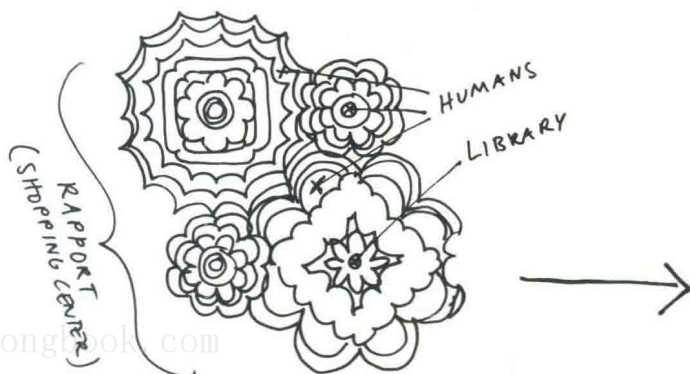
Index and Image Credits142

The Pattern in Life

I BEGAN WORKING as an illustrator and graphic designer with a great interest in textiles. I have always loved patterns and even in my earliest jobs I often chose a kind of “pattern solution.” My ideas usually came more easily once I thought of the motif as a part of a pattern. That it wasn’t a centered motif – that what was going on around the edges was just as important as what was in the middle. That it doesn’t level off at the edges, but rather continues (even if you don’t show the continuation). This way of working gives a special energy and a more easygoing expression.

What I particularly like about patterns is that they can be like an aerial photograph over a community. Houses in all directions. Farms. It can be like a graph, statistics. They can be like a shopping mall in the suburbs. In the pattern on the next spread, the red center in the light pink flower is the library. The yellow and red flowers and the rings in different colors are other stores in the mall. The black background represents the people. Alongside it is the next suburb. It is the next recurrence of the pattern. When I start thinking like this, it really puts me in a good mood. What’s most exciting is when there is a message in the pattern – when the pattern has something to communicate. When I see Egyptian hieroglyphics or when women’s dresses have crosshatched borders then I start thinking that it might mean “this is how many fish were caught in the net this morning.” Or woven African fabrics where each color field corresponds to the season’s harvest. Where the pattern becomes a diary. Or a secret code.

Patterns as a picture of the community, not because it might be important in the real world, but rather because they say something about







the other – what it is to live. I also love that the word we use in Swedish for “recurrence” in the sense of “regular repetition of an image such that it forms a pattern” can mean “story, account” as well.

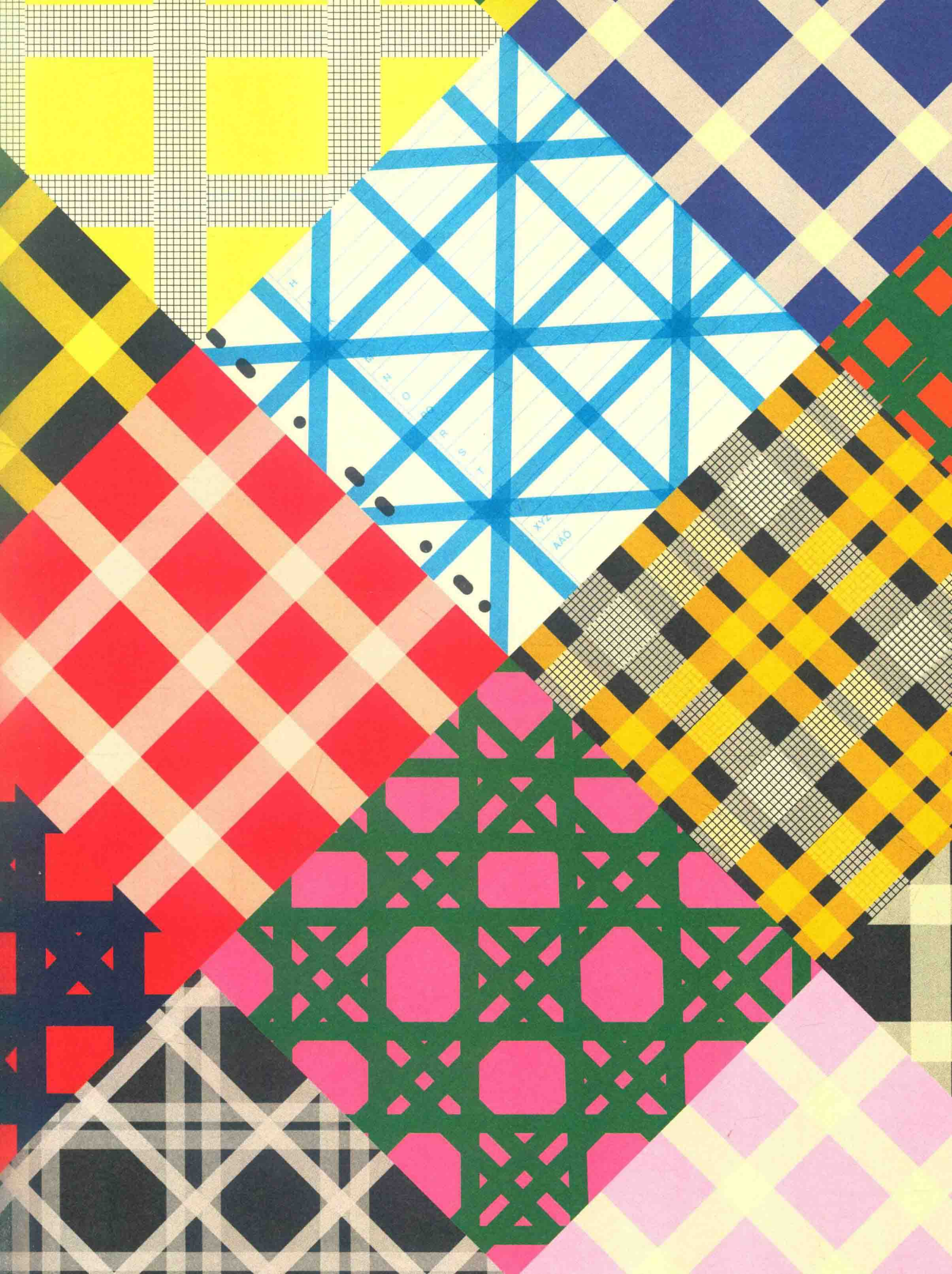
This book is a report from my world. A book about things that inspire me. A book about how I use my inspiration to make patterns. But this book deals just as much with the practical process of how to actually produce a pattern.

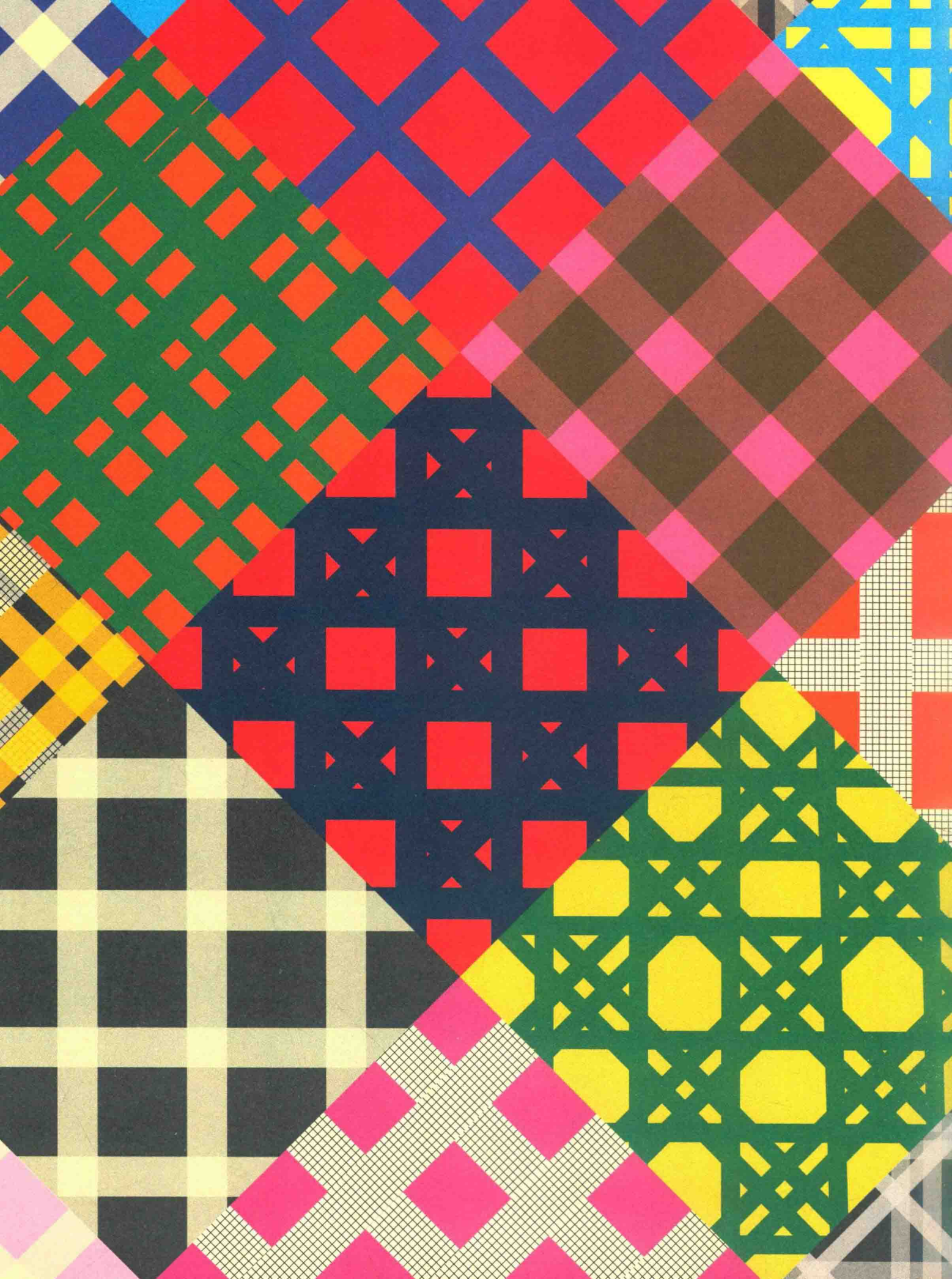
I view nature as a parent that I want to revolt against. Take just about any book about patterns and it almost always traces its roots back to nature. It irritates me that nature is always right and that it is considered more prestigious to reproduce patterns from nature rather than inventing your own motifs. But perversely, it would be strange if I did not start this book by writing about nature because that is where it starts, even for me! I almost get the shivers for going against my own conviction, but here we go:

Sandy ridges on the bottom of the sea. The ripples on the surface of the water. The winding stems, cones, and leaves of hops. The common pine cone. Various leaves and the grains on them. The petal of the columbine, so difficult to reproduce. The winding pattern on the walnut. All the stars in the sky. Peas in a row in the pod. Snow crystals. An oak tree that has lost its leaves and the thoughts of its roots. To stand in a cherry tree filled with ripe cherries. Drops of water. Both when they fall but also the trails they leave on different surfaces. Animals. Fossils and shells. The fur of a cat, and the way it grows like rays of the sun around the nose. Our fingerprints. Billions of different fingerprints.

Something that separates patterns in nature from those on a bolt of cloth, is that they may only repeat for a while, like fingerprints. Nothing is exactly the same – the pattern then morphs into something else. The starry sky ends and turns into a forest on the horizon.

A tree (a picture of a tree), the repetition of a tree = a forest! When the picture of a tree is repeated several times, you end up with a forest. There is no need to keep drawing a tree in different ways. The trees do not need





to be different or unique. Like in real life. The repeated tree becomes more of a *symbol* for a forest. I am so fond of this: the pattern becomes a human *message*. This is the “forest.” This is a “flower meadow.” This is a “group of people.” You can see how it would be to live through the pattern.

When I see pictures from refugee camps or other places in various stages of misery, my eyes are involuntarily attracted to decorative elements. A duvet with flowers. A rug with a rich pattern. A saucepan with a strong print. An injured man on a gurney whose sweater has been cut open to give access to his injury. The sweater has a strong check pattern in strong colors. A man who is held hostage. In the background, there is a lattice door. The pattern of the lattice is intensely beautiful and makes me save the picture because I want to understand how it is constructed

There is an enormous chasm between the decorative aspect of the objects and the people who are suffering. I am unable to understand the suffering unless I have something mundane to compare it with, such as a duvet with flowers on it. I am not sure what this means. Only that it is always there. All these flowery duvets, check sweaters, and decorated things. I am assuming that the duvet was once made to be put on a bed in a room, in a house, in a city or a town under normal circumstances in a different life. That somebody somewhere had the idea to make a nice pattern out of this flower. That somebody somewhere had the thought that these colors will look good together in the check pattern or on the sweater. Or that a beautiful lattice door would look great in this house.

A pattern does not need to represent pretty things like flowers. It can show a completely different aspect of life. Real life – hard, sad, embarrassing life, or just mundane and boring. Maybe for the purpose of showing how life is, like a status update or like a spell. A boring work pattern, where sales people are calling, the technology has broken down. Cables everywhere and trash to be taken out. Broken things. Unfinished things.