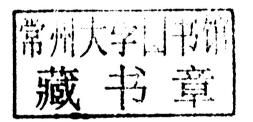


THE PRINTED SQUARE

Vintage Handkerchief Patterns for Fashion and Design

Nicky Albrechtsen



Nicky Albrechtsen is a costume designer and stylist who trained in textile design. Her resource studio, Vintage Labels, supplies vintage fashion and everything it encompasses to fashion studios and design professionals seeking inspiration from period textiles and clothing. The collection includes garments selected for their print designs, knitwear, beadwork and silhouette. vintagelabels.co.uk

First published in the United Kingdom in 2012 by Thames & Hudson Ltd, 1814 High Holborn, London WC1V 7QX

The Printed Square: Vintage Handkerchief Patterns for Fashion and Design Copyright © 2012 Thames & Hudson Ltd, London
Text copyright © 2012 Nicky Albrechtsen
All photographs of individual handkerchiefs by Drew Gardner

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, recording or any other information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-500-51609-6

Printed and bound in China by C&C Offset Printing Co., Ltd

To find out about all our publications, please visit www.thamesandhudson.com. There you can subscribe to our e-newsletter, browse or download our current catalogue, and buy any titles that are in print.

CONTENTS

- 6 INTRODUCTION
- **DESIGNS OF THE DECADES** 14

26	Red
46	Orange
64	Yellow
82	Green
100	Azure
124	Blue
150	Pink
172	Purple
194	Beige

Brown 228 Black and White

210

- CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DECADES 246
- 248 WHERE TO FIND HANDKERCHIEFS
- CONSERVATION, STORAGE AND ALTERNATIVE USES 251
- 254 HANDKERCHIEF FABRICS AND FINISHING
- 254 BIBLIOGRAPHY
- PICTURE CREDITS 255
- **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** 255

THE PRINTED SQUARE

此为试读,需要完整PDF请访问: www.ertongbook.com



THE PRINTED SQUARE

Vintage Handkerchief Patterns for Fashion and Design

Nicky Albrechtsen



CONTENTS

- 6 INTRODUCTION
- **DESIGNS OF THE DECADES** 14

26	Red
46	Orange
64	Yellow
82	Green
100	Azure
124	Blue
150	Pink
172	Purple
194	Beige

Brown 228 Black and White

210

- CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DECADES 246
- 248 WHERE TO FIND HANDKERCHIEFS
- CONSERVATION, STORAGE AND ALTERNATIVE USES 251
- 254 HANDKERCHIEF FABRICS AND FINISHING
- 254 BIBLIOGRAPHY
- PICTURE CREDITS 255
- **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** 255

INTRODUCTION

or admirers and collectors, handkerchiefs are an abundant source of historical lacework, embroidery and embellishment. The early twentieth century was a particularly innovative and inspiring period of design, stimulated by the popularity of the printed handkerchief as an essential accessory. Unconstrained by prevailing fashions, fit and function, designers of handkerchiefs channelled all their energies into



Color is the most important factor in design generally, and in handkerchief design specifically. Tammis Keefe, Craft Horizons, 1952



The handkerchief has played a vital role in the traditions of social etiquette throughout history. The Romans dropped a handkerchief known as a mappa to signal the start of the Circensian games, while their emperors carried handkerchiefs that were ornately embroidered and fringed with gold as a sign of prosperity and position. In the Middle Ages, jousting knights proclaimed a lady's favour by pinning her handkerchief or scarf to their sleeve. In the more recent



past, the French military leader Napoleon Bonaparte is said to have carried his wife Joséphine's *mouchoir* whenever they were apart as a token of affection.

From pieces of linen found in Egyptian tombs to the functional 'napkins' and 'muck-minders' of the Renaissance era, the handkerchief gradually evolved from a utilitarian object into an ostentatious and elaborately decorated piece of cloth. In Europe, men and women carried a *couvrechef* – a French term meaning 'head cover', from which the English word *kerchief* derives – as a fashion accessory as early as the fifteenth century. Sprinkled with cologne, it was used coquettishly for flirtatious and romantic gestures: letting it drop to the ground, for example, was an invitation for friendship; twirling it in both hands indicated indifference; the gentle mopping of one's forehead was a sign of being watched; and drawing a handkerchief across one's cheek signified love.

Renaissance decoration took the form of simple drawn threadwork and delicate embroidery. In Tudor England ladies gave luxurious 'handkerchers' edged with handmade lace to their male admirers, who displayed them in their hats. Handkerchers were fashioned to match collars and cuffs in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, with elaborate decoration on both sides. These small fashion accessories were valued items and often documented in wedding trousseaus, wills and inventories. Henry VIII left fifteen dozen, embroidered in silver and gold, on his death in 1547.

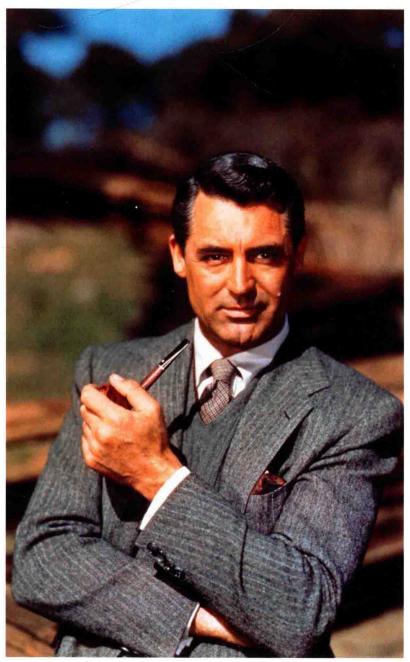
Page 2: A young woman creates a risqué outfit from her collection of handkerchiefs in this illustration from the early erotic magazine La Vie Parisienne, 7 October 1922.

Page 4:
This vibrant Art Deco handkerchief shows the richness and three-dimensional quality that was often achieved in patterns despite the limitations of early printing techniques.

Opposite, clockwise from top left: Fred Astaire, c. 1930s; Cary Grant, late 1940s; Brigitte Bardot, c. 1960s.







此为试读,需要完整PDF请访问: www.ertongbook.com



In the seventeenth century, as the practice of snuff-taking grew in popularity among the aristocracy, handkerchiefs became not only more decorative but also more vibrant. The deep colours and ornate patterns of imported cottons from India and the Far East were ideal for so-called 'sneeze-catchers' (large oblong or oval handkerchiefs) since they masked the brown stains caused by snuff.

In the ostentatious royal court of late eighteenth-century France, fashions were famously elaborate and extravagant, setting the tone for the rest of Europe. On 2 June 1785 Louis XVI, encouraged by his wife Marie Antoinette, who had become tired of all the different shapes and sizes of handkerchief used by her courtiers, passed a law decreeing: 'The length of handkerchiefs shall equal their width throughout my entire kingdom.' Gradually the format of handkerchiefs was simplified: squares of varying sizes became standard, regardless of whether a handkerchief was intended as a fashion accessory or was purely functional.

With the practice of using engraved copperplates from 1770, and the introduction of the roller printer almost fifteen years later – both pioneered by Thomas Bell of Scotland – textile-printing processes became more advanced. The use of printing machines to apply colour to fabric improved both the efficiency of the process and the execution of the pattern, transforming textile production and design. Printed designs became a quick

and inexpensive method of adding pattern to cloth. Handkerchiefs depicting famous portraits, maps, coach fares and timetables began to appear. Caricatures poking fun at politicians or notorious stories were particularly popular on men's handkerchiefs, while designs on children's hankies tended to be attractive, informative and educational – qualities that continued until the 1950s.

During the nineteenth century, handkerchiefs became somewhat more sophisticated in design. By the mid-century, English women of the upper and rapidly growing middle classes favoured elegantly embroidered white handkerchiefs, often monogrammed and edged with machine-made lace, while a gentleman was rarely seen without a plain dark or white handkerchief in his breast pocket, echoing the sombre fashions of the Victorian era. With the death of a loved one, all members of the household were subject to the strict rules of mourning, which required a woman to remain in full mourning – to dress entirely in black and wear a veil – for one year and a day on the passing of her husband.

Above: French actress and cabaret singer Yvette Guilbert, c. 1890.

Opposite:
Although this
nineteenth-century
handkerchief depicts
a romantic scene,
pictorial examples
from the eighteenth
and nineteenth
centuries were
often informative
or commemorative
and much larger
than later designs.

These restrictions extended to the type of accessory she used, including handkerchiefs, which were either black or white edged in black embroidery. Queen Victoria had many mourning handkerchiefs made following the death of her beloved husband, Albert, in 1861, and popularized their use.

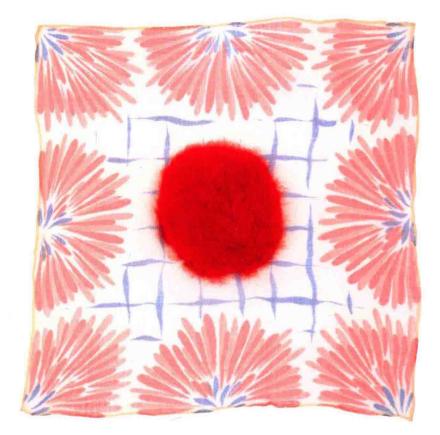
The great advancements in manufacturing, production and industrial design that marked the early decades of the twentieth century earned this era the name of the 'machine age'. Form and function heavily influenced design and pattern, which concentrated on surface decoration rather than the intricate craftsmanship of the Victorian era and the Arts and Crafts movement. The fusion of artistic influences that embraced the flowing lines of Art Nouveau and the abstraction of Art Deco, and referenced art from Japan, Egypt and Central America (specifically the Aztecs) resulted in a diversity of textile design that had never been experienced before. Every taste could be indulged from the variety of patterns on offer, and handkerchiefs were no exception.

Upper-class women often carried two handkerchiefs: one for use, which remained hidden, the other for show. By the 1920s, these 'dress' handkerchiefs were frequently made of expensive fabrics such as chiffon or silk. Wealthy women had a handker-



chief for every occasion: plain and simple for the morning; printed and decorative for afternoon tea; and extravagant for dinners, theatre outings and balls. There were special handkerchiefs for sports such as tennis, horse riding and golf, and a particular favourite might be saved for Sunday best.

A humorous article in *Vogue* magazine, published in July 1922, touches on the importance that was attached to this diminutive fashion accessory in the Roaring Twenties: 'Handkerchiefs and reputations are exceedingly easy to lose. Both are lost in about equal numbers daily. All the reputations lost are very good ones – and the more irretrievably lost they are, the better they were. The handkerchiefs lost should be better. Imagine a lady saying, "My reputation is gone, but I



don't care. It wasn't any good." Yet that is exactly the attitude she takes toward a lost handkerchief."

Some of the powder-puff handkerchiefs of the 1920s and 1930s were particularly exquisite. An earlier article in the New York Times (1911) concerning a ruling on customs duties for imported goods provides a detailed description: 'The merchandise consisted of hemstitched silk handkerchiefs about nine inches square. In the centre a circular piece of silk is applied by a double row of stitching through which runs a draw cord or string. To the circular piece of silk is attached a disc of down which is intended to be used as a powder puff. After using the puff the down may be concealed from view by the use of the draw cord'

Forerunners of the modern compact, these powder-puff handkerchiefs were manufactured in industrial cities such

as Bradford, Huddersfield, Manchester and Macclesfield in northern England, at a time when the United States imported the majority of its printed textiles. (Macclesfield was one of the main producers of handkerchiefs between the 1920s and 1940s and now houses a museum with an extensive archive of printed designs.) The ruling cited in the article centred on whether the item was classified as a handkerchief or a powder puff: handkerchiefs were liable for import tax, while the powder puff was exempt. Although these luxury items are described as having had a drawstring, most of the examples that survive today have none: the handkerchief was simply folded over the puff to stop the powder from spilling over the contents of a handbag.

With the technological advancements of the 1920s and 1930s came the golden age of Hollywood. Dressed by leading couturiers, the stars of the silver screen were idolized by fans who imitated their style and fashions. Screen sirens such as Marlene Dietrich,

A powder-puff handkerchief, c. 1920. Usually made from silk chiffon, the powder puff came into use at the turn of the twentieth century.

Greta Garbo and Katharine Hepburn were the embodiment of Hollywood glamour in outfits by celebrated designers such as Madeleine Vionnet, famed for her sensual bias-cut and chiffon dresses featuring her signature handkerchief hemline. Home sewing was a common pastime and, although handkerchiefs tended to be relatively inexpensive to buy, many women made their own to complement particular outfits. Style icon Dietrich led the way, exhibiting a soft chiffon handkerchief in the breast pocket of a tailored jacket. She is said to have had small squares of chiffon stitched into her pockets to add sex appeal to the masculine-style clothing that she favoured.

Mail order provided an essential service for many families living in an age when travel was expensive and inadequate. Many department stores, especially in the United States, produced catalogues that were lavishly illustrated, with whole pages devoted to the intricate handkerchief patterns available. The American catalogue *Bellas Hess* had particularly beautiful illustrations, often featuring handkerchiefs with the bold, daring geometric designs of the Art Deco movement advocated by fashion designers such as Jeanne Lanvin, Sonia Delaunay and Paul Poiret.

In 1924 the American company Kimberly-Clark launched Kleenex disposable tissues, originally marketed as a wipe for cold cream and make-up removal. Endorsed by Hollywood film stars, they caught on very quickly. The introduction of pretty pastel colours and a shift in advertising strategy a few years later encouraged the practice of using a Kleenex tissue as a disposable handkerchief.

The paper restrictions of the Second World War limited the manufacture of Kleenex for this purpose, so this disposable handkerchief was used instead as a sterile dressing for wounds. Traditional handkerchiefs, on the other hand, became popular gifts during this period of austerity and sometimes carried messages of endearment. It was not uncommon for soldiers serving abroad to send handkerchiefs embroidered with romantic messages to their sweethearts back home. Other messages were politically motivated: in England, where two handkerchiefs could be purchased with one ration coupon, handkerchiefs were issued based on designs for propaganda posters.

Post-war design in general moved away from the exploration of decadent and elaborate style and decoration. The aftermath of the Second World War brought a need for realism and functionality with sympathetically streamlined aesthetics in all genres of design. However, handkerchiefs continued to be sought after as small, personal expressions of style and sustained their appeal, owing in part to the array of attractive designs and colours available. Modern manufacturing and printing processes allowed





for endless variations in design. The striking red Lipstick handkerchief, ideal for blotting the pillarbox red made fashionable by film icons, was a mainstay of many a handbag in the 1950s. Again, a star of the screen, Joan Crawford, is said to have been the inspiration for the Lipstick handkerchief. While dining out in a Hollywood restaurant with a film producer, she was reportedly mortified by the scarlet smears left on her white handkerchief and duly ordered red ones from her dressmaker.

While women would rarely go out without a handkerchief in their bags, men wore theirs openly: a man in a suit would not dream of being seen in public without a pocket square tucked into his jacket. There were numerous types of fold to choose from, from the 'presidential' (with the square folded at right angles to fit the pocket) to the 'puff' (which, as the name suggests, is loosely folded to create a rounded shape).

Department stores devoted whole sections to the sale of traditional handkerchiefs, adorned with floral prints, souvenirs, commemorative items, animals, film stars and cartoons. Two American manufacturers, Burmel and Kimball, regularly competed for advertising space in *Vogue* and promoted their latest designs through campaigns such as 'Handkerchief of the Month' and 'Flower of the Month' respectively. The post-war

Above left: Marlene Dietrich. Above right: Joan Crawford, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1960.

handkerchief was transformed into a commercial product. There were handkerchiefs for special occasions, including Mother's Day, Easter and Christmas. Others were used as an advertising tool to promote holiday destinations and cultural events. The 1951 Festival of Britain, both the 1939 and 1964 New York World's Fairs, and the coronations of Edward VIII and Elizabeth II were all commemorated on handkerchiefs.

The mid-1950s witnessed an advertising boom that fuelled a burgeoning consumerism. Seductive images encouraging the purchase of particular products were projected through the new media of television, glossy magazines and giant billboards. American consumers were introduced to 'Little Lulu and Her Magic Tricks', an undisguised advertising ploy: disposable Kleenex tissues were sold attached to a book in which Lulu instructed children in the art of performing magic tricks with tissues. Little Lulu's smiling cartoon face typified the new mood of 1950s graphic design, characterized by happy, friendly animations designed to inspire confidence in the consumer – a style that influenced the increasingly commercial floral and geometric textile designs of 1950s fabric handkerchiefs.

However, by the late 1950s, sales of traditional handkerchiefs had begun to dwindle, driven by public health campaigns advocating the use of disposable tissues. Kleenex, meanwhile, perhaps buoyed by the short-lived fashion in the 1960s for paper dresses and disposable underwear, continued to flourish. As the new disposable culture prevailed, handkerchiefs gradually returned to being viewed as purely functional objects, no longer enjoyed for their design and decoration.

Although the fabric handkerchief has widely lost its status, some traditional associations have survived. In Japanese culture the cotton handkerchief known as a *tenugui*, printed in an assortment of designs, is a common gift between acquaintances; as in days gone by, it is used for mopping heads and wiping hands rather than blowing noses. Meanwhile, in many countries of the western world, a handkerchief remains a traditional accessory for a man in a tailored suit. In the words of American menswear designer and author Alan Flusser, 'Leaving a breast pocket unattended is like trying to spell "classic" without the "class".'