

INTERIOR DESIGN[®]

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face time

woven in time

Celebrating 65 years at the loom, textile icon Hanne Vedel has secured a place in Danish design history

Even a pandemic can't slow down this 87-year-old. In early September, weaving artist Hanne Vedel was a star presence at Copenhagen's 3 Days of Design fair, one of the first industry events to go live—IRL—since COVID-19 hit. Her one-of-a-kind rugs were exhibited at a pop-up show mounted by Kjellerup Væveri, the mill that produces Vedel's minimalist upholstery fabrics (including those covering the Finn Juhl chairs at the U.N. Trusteeship Council Chambers in New York). Not to mention the octogenarian still works the loom daily as creative chief of Spindegården, the studio founded by famed weaver Paula Trock in 1948 and helmed by Vedel since 1970. Over the decades, Vedel has maintained the atelier's celebrated legacy of handcraftsmanship and cemented its commercial success via industrially produced textile collections. Along the way, she's collaborated with some of the most prominent modernist luminaries—Juhl, plus Grete Jalk and Hans J. Wegner—and today counts the Danish royal family and clergy members among her devoted clientele.

Vedel's signature style stands the test of time: solids and stripes rendered in a bold, happy palette grounded by muted tones and skillfully constructed of wool, cotton, or silk. Renewed interest in mid-century Danish design and sustainable production methods have boosted demand for—and shed a global spotlight on—her oeuvre. We caught up with Vedel, who is based in the southern town of Aabenraa, to hear how she got her start—and where she's headed next. ➤

Weaving artist Hanne Vedel of the celebrated Danish studio Spindegården.



How did your career begin?

Hanne Vedel: My sister saw a newspaper ad posted by a lady who was looking for an apprentice weaver. I called and told her I'd studied the craft in folk high school (Scandinavian version of continuing-education classes) and that my grandma had also sewn and weaved. Later, I went to study at the School of Arts, Design and Architecture in Finland under Kaj Franck and Uhra-Beata Simberg Ehrström.

What was the most important thing you learned under those luminaries?

HV: Kaj told me that you should only put your best

work into production and it must always be of top-most quality. Only the best is good enough.

What came next?

HV: While there, I got a job at the Swedish-Finland Textile Archive. In the early 1950's, I returned to Denmark and started working with Paula Trock and eventually started my own studio.

You later ended up taking over Trock's studio. Which other collaborators have inspired you?

HV: The sculptor Erik Heide, with whom I often work on ecclesiastical textiles, such as antependia. Because we know each



Clockwise from top left: Vedel at her loom in the 1960's. Galleri Feldt's display of her wool, silk, and linen rug at Design Miami/ Basel 2016. Paul Volther's 1958 PV daybed, now produced by Klassik Studio, upholstered in Blans, Vedel's wool-cotton for Kjellerup Væveri. Blans-upholstered Finn Juhl chairs in the Trusteeship Council Chamber of the U.N. Conference Building, New York. **Opposite, clockwise from top left:** Vedel's rug at the Klassik Studio showroom in Copenhagen during 3 Days of Design. The 87-year-old artist, who still weaves daily. Her double-sided rugs, handwoven of wool.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF THE ARCHIVE; HANNE VEDEL; COURTESY OF GALLERI FELDT; COURTESY OF KLASSEK STUDIO; HANS OLE MADSEN/COURTESY OF ONECOLLECTION AND HOUSE OF FINN JUHL

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF KJELLERUP VÆVERI; CT PRODUCTIONS; SVEN DALL (3)

other so well, we know what we want—and how to execute it. Another inspiration has been conservator-restorer Jens Johansen. He's a craftsman, like me, so we discuss things. He's in his 70's and retired, but he still recommends my work to many churches.

You have woven alter hangings and chasuble vestments for churches throughout Denmark. How do you design for sacred sites?

HV: I look at the existing details and try to make something that complements and lifts the surroundings. It's important to find colors that fit the space yet are timeless. I also only collaborate with a few people, such as Erik,

Jens, and the embroiderer Gunhild Eeg, because we work so well together and share the same standards.

What weaving techniques are you best known for?

HV: At Spindegården, we produce double-woven rugs in wool originating from breeds of old Nordic sheep. The technique makes it possible to produce a reversible rug: decorative stripes on one side and solid on the other, offering two designs in one. Not many, if any, others do this in Denmark.

Who handles your textile production?

HV: Rugs and custom designs are handwoven at Spindegården by Elin Bjerregaard and me. Uphol-

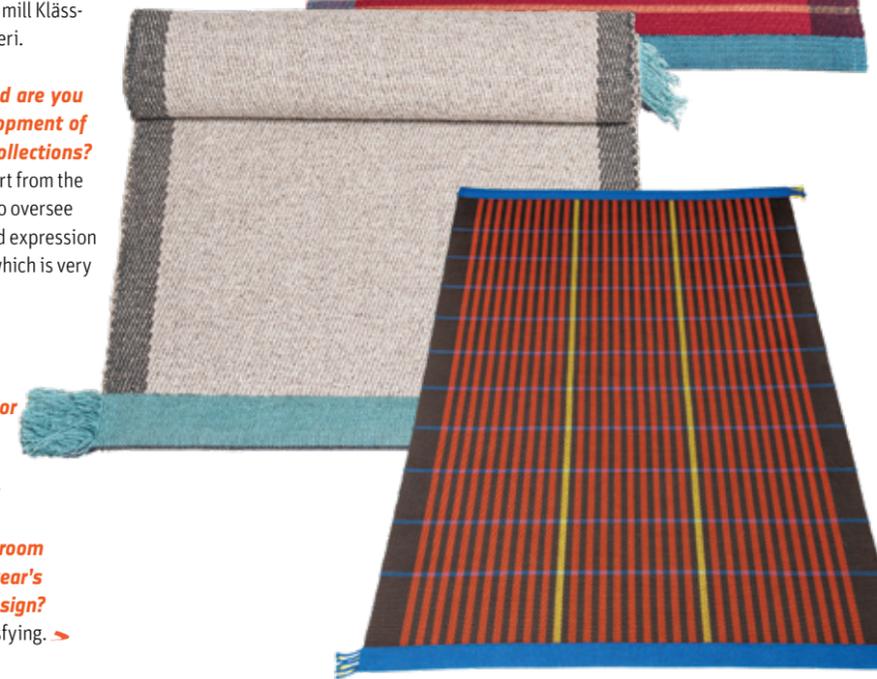
stery fabrics are produced industrially by Kjellerup Væveri in Denmark, and the home textiles by Swedish linen mill Klässbols Linneväveri.

How involved are you in the development of new fabric collections?

HV: Very. Apart from the design, I like to oversee the quality and expression of the yarns, which is very important.

How was it being the guest of honor at Kjellerup Væveri's exhibition at the Klassik Studio showroom during this year's 3 Days of Design?

HV: Very satisfying. ➤





I don't usually attend the fair, but Kjellerup asked if they could show my rugs alongside their collections of upholstery fabric.

What are some current projects?

HV: I'm working on new upholstery designs for Kjellerup and in discussions with Galleri Feldt in Copenhagen regarding a possible exhibition next year. I would also like to find a mill that can weave my rugs.

What's the secret to your long-lasting success?

HV: There's no secret, other than dedication and the fact that I'm always seeking the best solution. I've also been lucky enough to meet people with whom I've had great collaborative working relationships and have very skilled employees...and a long life. —Ashlee Beard

CROSSlines



Clockwise from top left: Swatches of the wool-cotton Blans. Juhl's Japan sofa, chair, and footstool, all upholstered in Blans, at the House of Finn Juhl showroom in Copenhagen. Vedel at her Spidegården headquarters in Aabenraa, Denmark. Linen towels for Klässbols Linneväveri named after her granddaughters Anne, Marie, and Line.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF KJELLERUP VÆVERI; COURTESY OF ONECOLLECTION AND HOUSE OF FINN JUHL; CT PRODUCTIONS; CARL-ERIK WILLMAN/KLÄSSBOLS LINNEVÄVERI