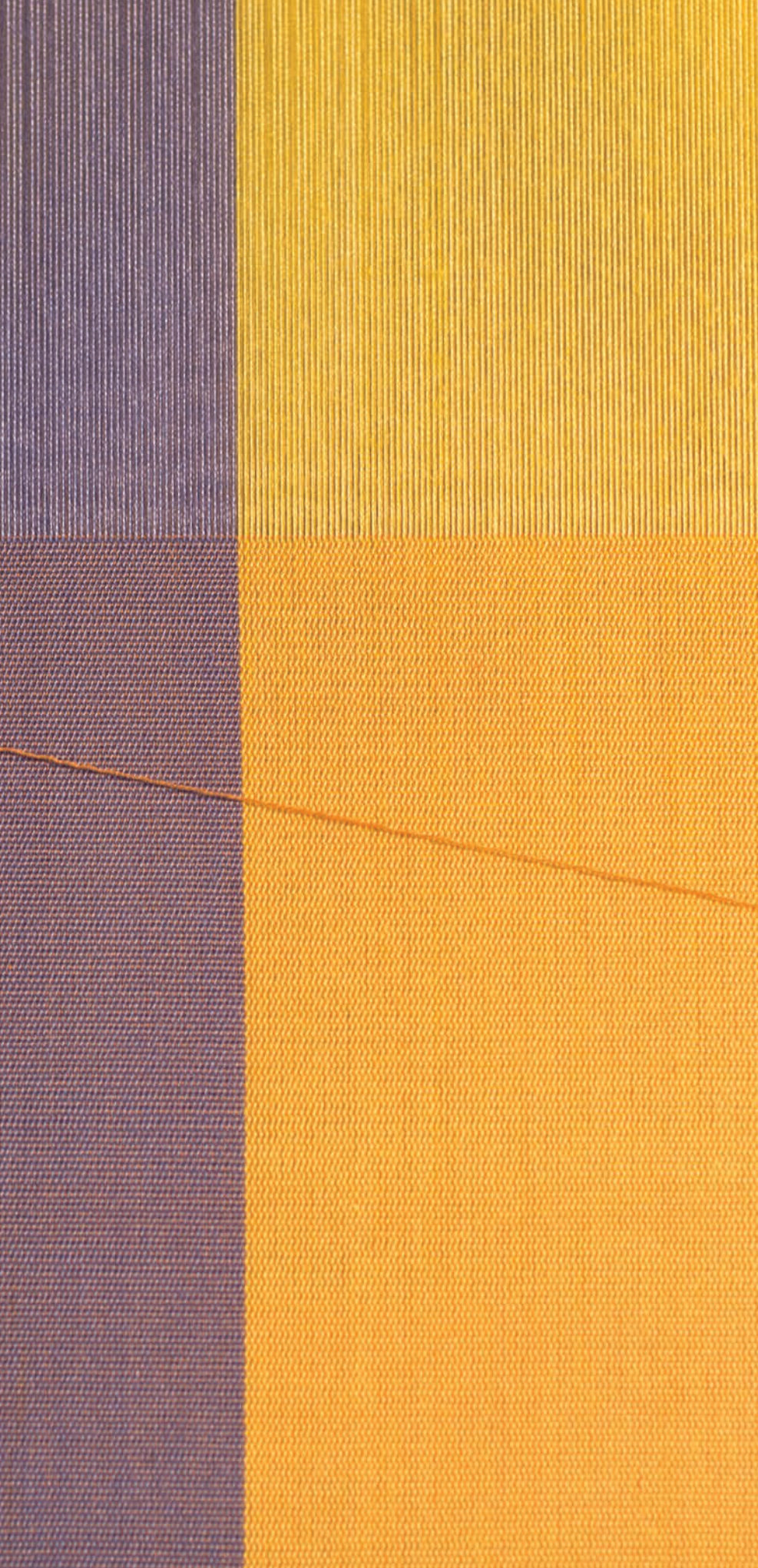


STANHOPE

PTOLEMY MANIN CHROMATICITY



Chromaticity means ‘an objective specification of the quality of a colour and consists of two independent parameters, often specified as hue and saturation.’ Like the colours found at the nearby Stanhope development Central Saint Giles by Renzo Piano, the artwork reveals extreme colour saturation unique to hand dyeing and weaving and tell an abstract, intuitive, visual story.

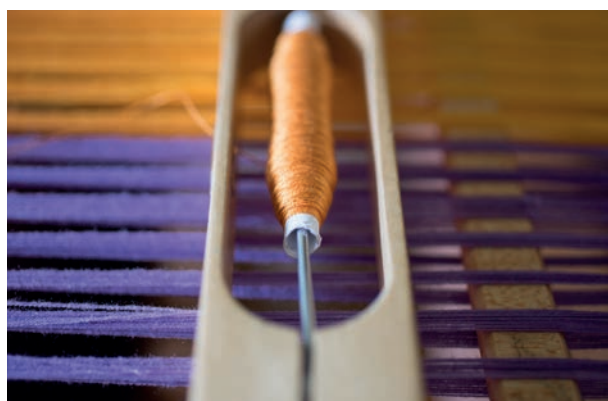
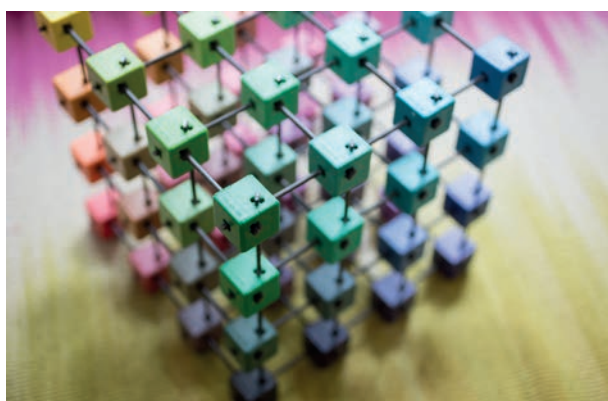
But this is also a play on words... A colourful city is a glorious city and London has become a place for colourful buildings to grow in unexpected and unexplored places. The warp and weft of the cloth become a macro city reflecting the vertical and horizontal lines of built urban architecture.

‘Architecture: from the Latin, teks – to weave (as a net); also to fabricate, a root shared with text, textile, context, subtle and technology. More especially to build a dwelling with tools...’

Mann’s thesis at the at RCA was focused on the interactions between weaving, architecture and colour and these elements have been a continuous theme in her work ever since. Inspired by this inherent relationship, as the above definition illustrates, her aim for Stanhope was to create a series of hand dyed and woven artworks celebrating this dynamic. Monolithic panels in varying depths and widths have become, themselves, three dimensional structures on the wall reminiscent of both architectural girders and irregularly placed skyscrapers across a white landscape.





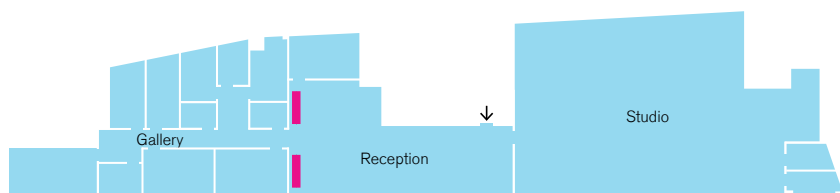


When Stanhope moved into its New Oxford Street offices in December 2015 it was faced with the challenge of how to install its varied art collection into the new space. Architects AHMM incorporated the collection in their fit out plan and art consultants Dickson Russell helped position and reframe the artwork to give it a new lease of life.


The collection was successfully installed in its new home, but the vast reception area with two large adjacent walls needed something much bolder and more dramatic than the existing collection could provide. The space also had certain constraints which made it a challenging location for a piece of art, not least because any artwork would have to work coherently across the two walls. There was also the practical constraint of transporting a large artwork to the second floor using the small passenger lifts. Hanging a heavy piece could prove problematic and there was the issue of future redecoration issues when the piece was eventually moved.

Dickson Russell suggested textile as an ideal medium that could both fill the space with sufficient impact and be light enough to overcome the logistical issues of hanging and transportation. A textile piece has the added advantage of providing sound absorption — an important consideration in such a large and open space. Dickson Russell put forward Royal College of Art alumnus and weaver Ptolemy Mann as a possible choice. Stanhope has a history of supporting emerging artists where possible and Mann's bold and colourful geometric art works were the perfect choice to lift this empty, white space. The Royal College of Art link was fortuitous as Mann's artwork would sit in the same space as work recently commissioned via a competition with the RCA to find five alumni to create images of Stanhope developments.





New Oxford Street

 Location of Chromaticity



The production of the artwork begins with the dyeing of the thread. Viscose rayon thread was used for this commission and Mann always works with synthetic dyes. Both materials are chosen for their superior lightfastness. The vertical warp threads are dip dyed in various colours along its length. This is the most painterly and immediate part of the process and where the design is realised. The dyeing process takes two days to complete. Careful consideration has to be taken at this stage with regard to the merging and blending of colour. Once the threads are dyed the design is fixed and cannot be painted over or adapted unlike painting onto a canvas. Mann, however, draws a comparison with her woven artworks and painting - both are woven cloth stretched over a frame — the difference being that she adds the colour before the canvas is constructed rather than afterwards.





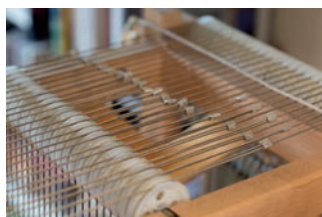
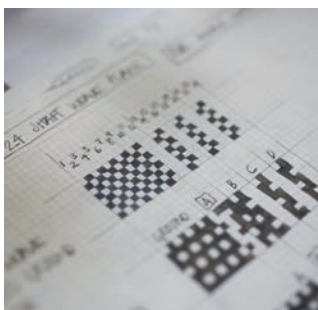
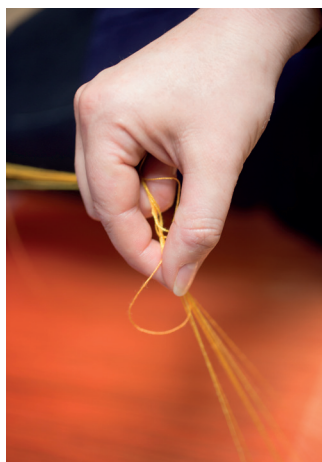


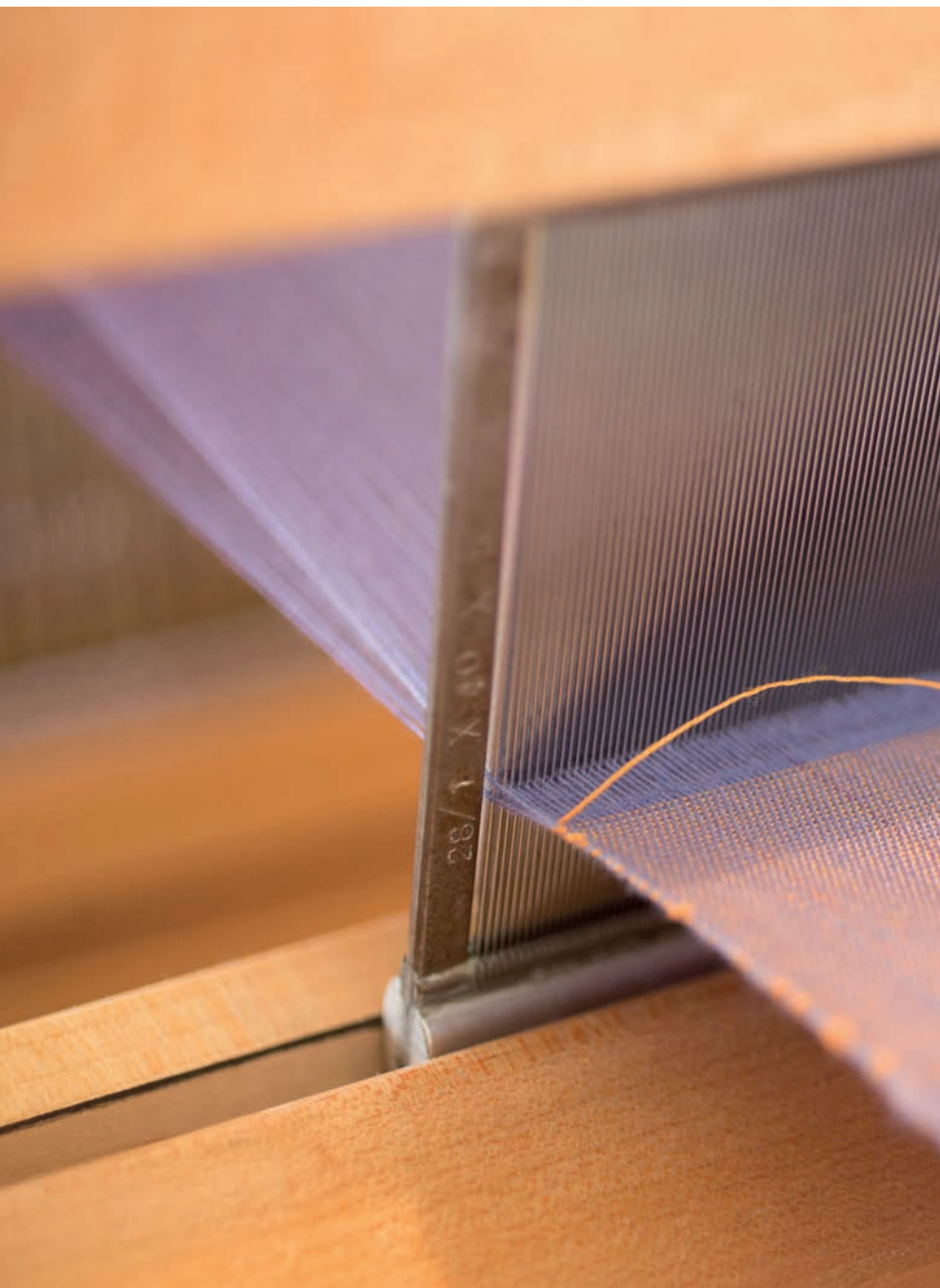
Mann completes the weaving process at her studio in East Sussex. Seventy strands of thread per inch are wound onto the loom. One set of warp threads can take up to two days to thread. The cloth is then entirely hand-woven by Mann. With the design fixed into the dye and the intricate threads set up, there is no room for error in the final weave. The entire commission took six months to weave.

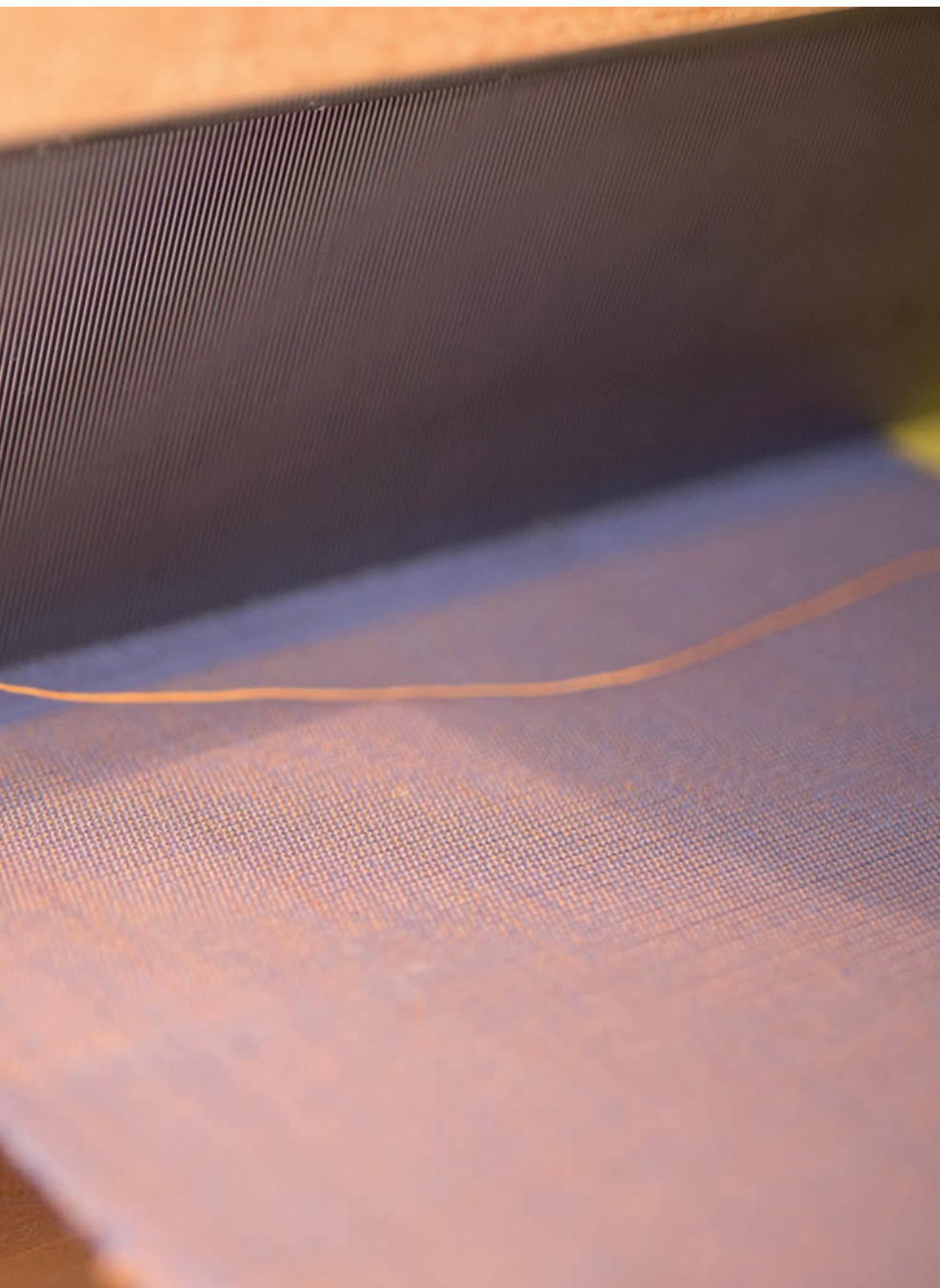
Chromaticity is woven using a warp faced technique. This means the warp dyed strands dominate the visible surface. The horizontal weft woven through is in a single colour per panel. This secondary colour can be seen shimmering through the textile when looking across the piece from a side angle.

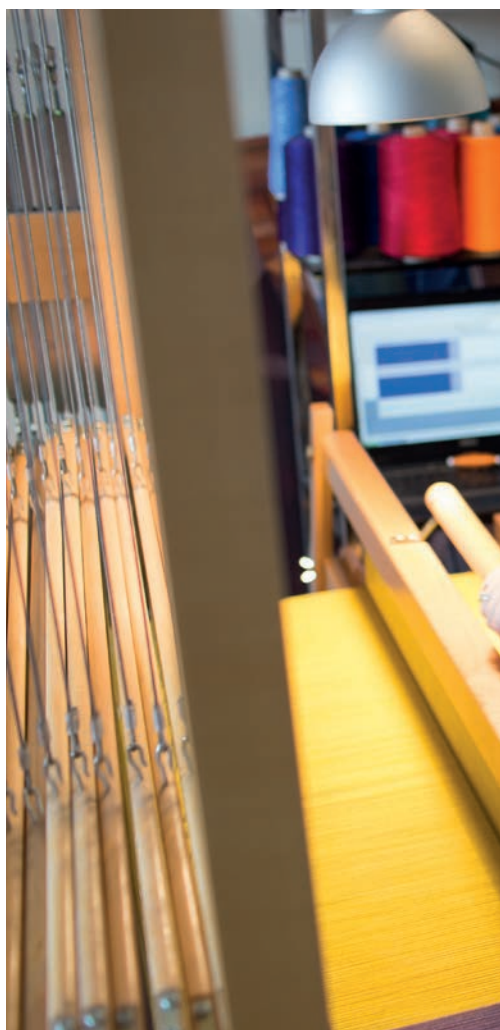
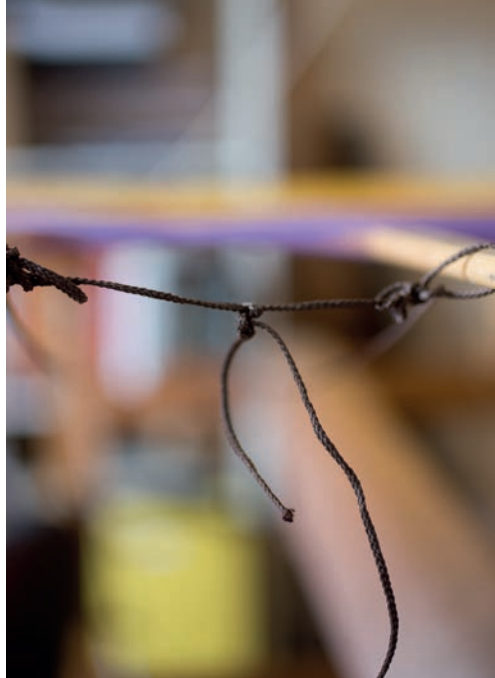
Once the panels are woven, they are then stretched over frames made from wood. The sides and depths of each frame are carefully considered in the design, often with a sharp contrast in colour woven into the cloth. When viewed from an angle this element of depth gives the work an extra, and surprising dimension of colour and form.



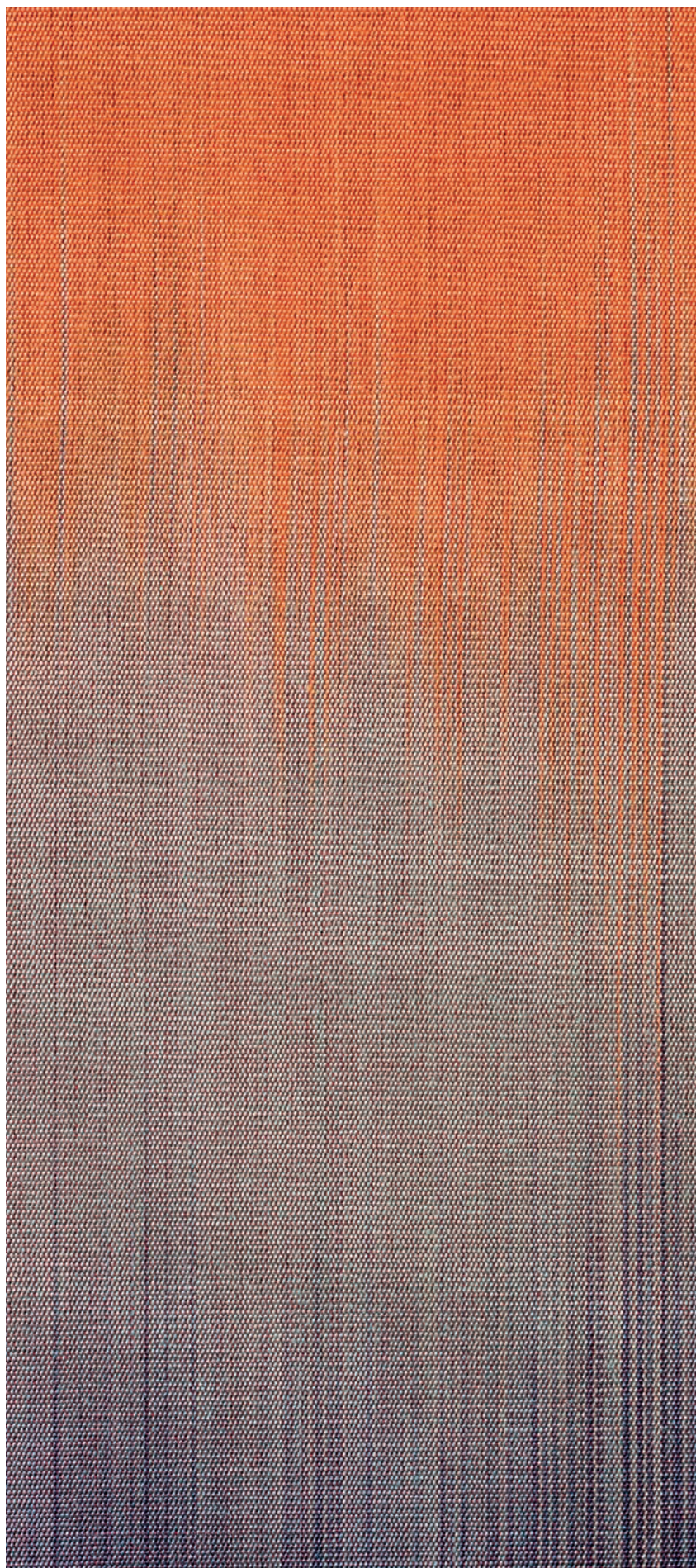
















Ptolemy Mann MA RCA

Mann has been making colourful, architectural work from her studio since 1997. She creates wall-based art for public and private clients using her signature hand-dyed and woven techniques and, more recently, has been producing furnishing fabrics and floor coverings commercially. Her contemporary approach to hand-dyeing and weaving brings her craft into the 21st century.

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