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ART DIRECTOR BOLON PAPER: MELIKA FARSHAD

# “We are leaders that dare to be different”

Bolon for me have always been about design. To create new dimensions is a vision of ours, we are leaders that dare to be different, and our design flooring decorates spaces all over the globe. For us our design universe is so much more than just flooring. This is one of the reasons you are holding the first issue of Bolon Paper in your hands. With the paper we want to give you a glimpse into our design universe and show you the things that inspire us.

Bolon is a family affair. Me and my sister Marie are the third generation that runs the business, in this issue we talk about the fun journey over the years. On page 32 you meet the fourth generation Eklund, our children and their young creative minds within music, fashion and design.

Our latest collection Truly is all about design innovation and showing off our in-house expertise. Truly as we named it, is a one-of-a-kind

collection, that consist of five unique designs. Read more about the campaign featuring our in-house design team, get inspired by our fashion story, shoot in our production with Truly as a backdrop, and see more about our new Truly made-to-measure rugs.

Håkan Nordin is such an inspiring man, not only because he is Bolon's Head of Sustainability, but because his incredible knowledge in this area. Get to know him and hear his stories from when he was one of the original four starting up Greenpeace Sweden. His expertise and the journey towards circularity Bolon are on, is the most exciting and the most important work so far in our history.

I hope you enjoy spending time with Bolon Paper and that we managed to inspire you as much as we do with our design flooring!

**Annica Eklund**



**T**he Eklund sisters grew up like any other small town girls, valuing family, spending time in the stable with their horses and being taught hard work pays off. They were interested in design, encouraged to express themselves freely and helped their parents with the small family business whenever they had the chance. After graduating school in Ulricehamn they took off to compete with horses and study fashion and design in Milan. None of them was supposed to work with the family's rug production company, the business their father had inherited from his father, it just was not for them.

# IT'S A SISTER'S AFFAIR

Life is built by all these tiles that creates a pattern no-one can predict. We collect tiles in everything we do, and all of a sudden a subject appears. This was the case with Marie and Annica and Bolon. The sisters started out in the corners and built their way into the core, and what they created, the tiles they collected became Bolon as we know it today. A design company producing flooring, having collaborated with the world's biggest names within design, fashion and architecture, with an all-Swedish production in their home town which employs over 100 people, and with a company value built on relations and joy. But the tiles Marie and Annica collected to get here weren't always the easiest to find.

## HOW DID IT HAPPEN THAT YOU TWO JOINED THE COMPANY?

**MARIE:** For me it all started with me moving to Florence to study fashion and design at age 22. And when I got back home a few years later I was sure to pursue a career within fashion and fashion buying when our father asked me to design a collection for Bolon (This was the early 90s and Bolon produced rugs only) and I said 'sure'. The collection was warmly welcomed by everyone, which was great fun for me of course. It was a lot more colourful and design daring than any of the previous collections Bolon made back then. This kept me in Ulricehamn for longer than I was expecting and I started traveling around the world together with Bolon to sell the collection I had created. One collection became several and led to my first real title within Bolon which was Creative Director. One can say it was Bolon's first steps towards the design daring company it is today.

**ANNICA:** When Marie started out designing rugs for Bolon I was on the peak in my equestrian career. When I wasn't in training with my own horses I worked in the stables. Then I got

pregnant with Linn and was forced to slow down a bit with the horses and as I did I felt it was time for a new chapter in life. I started working extra in the factory and was taught how to work the looms together with our father and for change I also worked in the warehouse which was just on the other side the wall from the factory (and still is). When Linn came in January 1995 I moved from the looms and warehouse to the office and reception. And from the reception I then changed to administration and business development. Back then we didn't yet have computers at the office so I typed on a typing machine and faxed. It feels almost surreal to think about that now, considering the digitalization that Bolon has been through over the last couple of years. Looking back at my career within Bolon I can say that I have been working in every department except for finance which our mother was head of. But it really was a path I needed to walk and as I took the CEO role in 2003 I knew I was ready.

**MARIE:** I get so nostalgic talking about this! It's crazy to think that by the time I designed my first rug collection and Annica was working night with the looms, there were only 9 people employed by Bolon. Cut to now, 25 years later where Bolon flooring is laid on every continent and we have almost 100 people working with us in Sweden only and distributors all over the world.

**ANNICA:** And to think there was a time when we weren't even thinking about engaging in Bolon.

## BUT IT'S STILL A BIG STEP FROM ENGAGING AND WORKING EXTRA TO TAKING OVER THE COMPANY AND AS SISTERS BECOME CREATIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO.

**ANNICA:** It really snowballed from these day our father said that he didn't want to be CEO anymore. By that time, me and

“And to think there was a time when we weren't even thinking about engaging in Bolon.”



Marie had been operative within the company for a few years and had started developing ideas that didn't quite fit the frame of what Bolon was back then. We

started our hike up in the company and by the time our father's administrative CEO resigned it was natural it was our turn to take over and imprint Bolon our way.

**MARIE:** It sounds so easy talking about it now, but really it was many tiles that had to fall into the right places. I had just moved back to Sweden and Ulricehamn from Italy where I had two kids, working only remotely for Bolon. It was a big readjustment for me and my new family of three. But what was lovely about it all was that me and Annica were so supportive of each other, making such a strong team. I will never forget the day our father

called us when we were on a ski trip with the kids and told us that the current CEO at that time had resigned and that Bolon was ready for us.

**ANNICA:** I think he was being a little bit too nice...

**MARIE:** Yes for sure he was, but from that moment we went all in.

**WOULD YOU CALL THAT THE START OF WHAT BOLON IS TODAY?**

**ANNICA:** One can really say that, yes. One of our first real milestones was when we saw Armani using our rugs as flooring. That's when we understood that flooring can be design and fashion and it has been with us every day since. Our first collaborating collections were with Giulio Cappellini and Tom Dixon

**“We are a family business and always have been and working for Bolon one should feel like a part of the family. I think the team feeling we have at Bolon and always have had, is a great part of our success.”**

that same year.

**MARIE:** I still recall it as so exciting that we got these big names for our first collaborations. We were just being ourselves, you know fearless and happy and with a sky is the limit attitude and people loved it. Those collaborations happened because of the genuine relations we built and that is still very much the case when we collaborate with designers and architects today.

**ANNICA:** Of course we saw a big gap in the market too for these kinds of flooring. Nobody was doing high design flooring produced with the same quality as we did. We got a good direction where we wanted to take Bolon during our first year as CEO and Creative Director.

**MARIE:** One must also remember that neither I or Annica has studied at any fancy business school. We have just had really good mentors since the beginning and of course, as we keep coming back to each other and our family.

**ANNICA:** Remember the first PowerPoint presentation we did for the management team, Marie?

**MARIE:** It was so terrible! So bad...

**ANNICA:** So bad! But we had that 'go' and we knew what we wanted and we were not afraid.

**MARIE:** It has been educating, going through everything we have gone through with Bolon.

**ANNICA:** Very much like school. I can sometimes miss the time when we were far less people, making quick decisions, being even more fearless and prioritized design above everything else. Don't get me wrong I love Bolon today and the people we have working with us, some since even before we took over the company, but those years when we were in the true building stage were extremely exciting and me and Marie took so many decisions based on our gut feeling.

**MARIE:** Those years were so important to Bolon and to us.

**YOU HAVE CREATED YOUR OWN DREAM TEAM AT BOLON WHICH IS SOMETHING A LOT OF COMPANIES STRUGGLE WITH, WHAT IS THE RECIPE FOR GOOD WORKING ENVIRONMENT?**

**ANNICA:** I really think it comes out of our family values. Both me and Marie are genuinely interested in people and love to both talk and listen. We have worked really hard to create a good culture at Bolon and do not take it for granted. We are a family business and always have been and working for Bolon one should feel like a part of the family. I think the team feeling we have at Bolon and always have had, is a great part of our success.

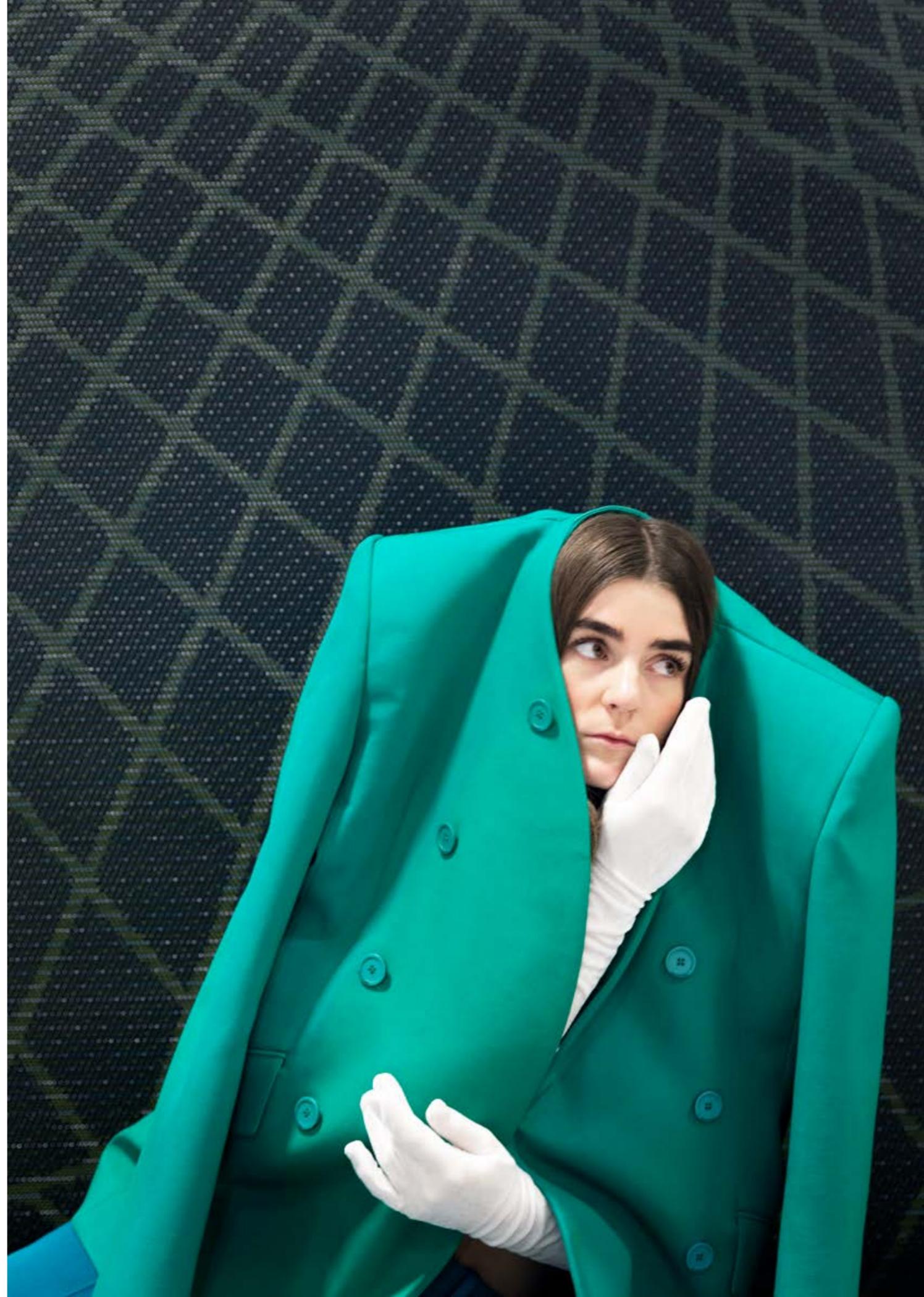
**BUT YOU TWO ALSO HAVE A DREAM TEAM WITH EACH OTHER. HOW DO BOTH OF YOU DESCRIBE BUILDING A COMPANY TOGETHER WITH YOUR SISTER?**

**MARIE:** I must admit I'm thinking more and more of it as I get older. How lucky I am to have made this journey together with Annica and how much fun we've had. In hard times we've supported each other and in good times we have celebrated together. It has really been a true privilege to have walked this road together with my sister. It's really unique.

**ANNICA:** I think you are putting it very well, Marie. We have great respect and trust in each other and without that I think it would have been a lot harder.

**MARIE:** We have lived in our company these past 25 years which we understand is pretty special. But it has not felt like a sacrifice at all, because we have brought our family with us at every step and we have had the time of our lives.







**“Five intuitive design expressions – the singular faces of Bolon – playing with spatial perception. An intimate experience. See magnified formations, savour colour effects. Hyper texture. Scale study and light direction in away we have not risked before.**

**This is Bolon.”**

## **#2 DISRUPT AND DISCOVER**

**”CHALLENGING OUR THREADS, THIS TEXTURE TURNED OUT HYPER TEXTILE.”**

**”DARK AND INKY WITH A NEARLY BLACK DEEP BLUEBASE, IT IS A VERY ELEGANT MULTI-COLOURED CHECK WITH SOFT GLIMMERS OF YELLOW AND WHITE GLOSS.”**

**”A CONTEMPORARY CHARACTER, WHICH FEELS HANDMADE.”**

**” I IMAGINE THIS DESIGN IN AN ARCHITECTURAL SETTING WHERE IT WILL SURPRISE AND THRIVE.”**

# ”CIRCULARITY FOR BOLON ISN’T A BREEZE BUT A BIG WAVE”

*HÅKAN NORDIN IS THE CHEMIST GONE GREENPEACE WARRIOR GONE ONE OF SWEDEN’S FIRST CLIMATE CONSULTANTS. WHEN HE STARTED TALKING ABOUT TOXINS AND ALIEN CHEMICALS MANY COMPANIES DIDN’T THINK IT CONCERNED THEM. CUT TO ALMOST 40 YEARS LATER WHEN CLIMATE CHANGE MAKE US TO TAKE DRASTIC DECISIONS AND MAKE PROMISES TO WORK FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE. WHEN HÅKAN TOOK OFFICE AS HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY AT BOLON 2020, BOLON MADE A BOLD DECISION TO REDUCE CLIMATE FOOTPRINT BY 50% AND ALL THE FLOORING WE PRODUCE WILL BE 50% CIRCULAR BY 2028.*



## **WHY THE YEAR 2028?**

– Good question. Over the years I have worked with many companies helping them set such goals and in my experience a good goal is a realistic one. In order to keep a promise, one needs to have just the right time to do so. If the promise is too short-termed, the changes you make will affect your business poorly, maybe even forcing you to change back to old ways. And if the goal is too far away in the future, you simply will not do the work because it seems too far away. The 2028 promise is not about us making the simplest most business effective changes, quite on the contrary, the changes take time and capital, but we do it because we want to! We want to be in the forefront of the design business, making precedent changes and taking the lead towards a better and more sustainable product.

## **LET’S DIVE RIGHT INTO BOLON’S 2028 SUSTAINABILITY PROMISE!**

– Bolon’s 2028 promise is a really exciting and extensive project with the purpose to fulfill our sustainability vision which is to offer the market high end design flooring that are a part of a circular material flow, safe for humans and nature and with zero climate impact. By this, we take a strong position in fighting climate change and moving towards circularity by focusing on our products and our client offer. Our starting point is the flooring itself made to be very long-lasting which is in itself a strong sustainability quality. Then in matters of supply, production, raw material the product is already very circular, an example is that we since many years have our own recycling process in the house. With this in mind, I want to stress that we wanted to make a promise for 2028 that would be something greater than just a goal for us to achieve, but to fulfill our sustainability vision and by that the greatest offer to the design industry, everyone that loves our flooring. This is only the beginning as always with Bolon, when we have a vision and set goals as a company and work hard together, we never create a breeze but big waves.



**SUSTAINABILITY IS A BIG PART OF BOLON'S DNA, HOW DO YOU SEE BOLON INCORPORATING THAT INTO THE PRESENT?**

– I see it in many ways! Bolon over 70 years ago was all about being resource effective, creating products out of no longer functioning material. And in a way that is exactly what we still do in our production today 2022. Not a single piece of flooring or excessive material goes to waste in our factory today, thanks to a recycling device we have constructed ourselves. We still have our entire production under the same roof, making every process easier and less of a burden on the environment too of course. That's circularity. Back then circularity wasn't a common used word as it is today, but we got it on our DNA.

**WHEN HEARING SUSTAINABILITY AND BOLON, MAY PEOPLE ASK HOW PVC, WHICH IS THE MAIN MATERIAL IN ALL BOLON FLOORING, CAN BE SUSTAINABLE?**

– That was actually the first question I got when I began working at Bolon. How I, as a climate consultant, could work for Bolon who mainly produce with PVC. The answer however is very simple. Plastic, or PVC, now made without dangerous heavy metals since 20 years back, is a very durable and modern material. It's also very resource effective. Plastic today is associated with trash and the pollution of our oceans and so on and of course there is no denying that. But the way Bolon works with the material, the PVC plays a big part in the product being so durable and long-lasting which also is a big aspect for a product to become a sustainable choice. I would also like to add that PVC is one of the most climate friendly plastics, containing less oil than any other plastic and does not earn its bad reputation. Take natural materials for example, many of them are often considered more sustainable than PVC. But natural materials take a great deal of water and energy to become usable. And then when installed, a lot of perfectly fine materials go to waste and cannot be used again. The life of PVC is much more circular and one of our missions at Bolon is not to let any material at any time be wasted but used again and again in new flooring.

**YOU HAVE A VERY INTERESTING BACKGROUND WITH HISTORY IN GREENPEACE, TELL US ABOUT YOUR EARLY LIFE CAREER?**

– Well, I am really a chemist. And when Greenpeace started many years ago, I met Greenpeace Sweden's founder and just randomly asked her if she needed a chemist and as it turned out she did. So I got to be a part of the first team, only four people, of Greenpeace Sweden. Back then, there weren't any environmental experts, but if you were a chemist you could also call yourself an environmental expert. So that was largely my role within Greenpeace and then it grew with the experience. I stayed within the company as a 'toxic campaigner' most of the time, for 5 years and even moved to Berlin to open up Greenpeace there. My area was very niched and mostly concerned toxins. We campaigned against nuclear weapons, dangerous bleach in papers and other alien chemicals. I love that about Greenpeace, their work is very hands-on and you work 24 hours, 7 days a week. I lost all of my friends during that time, that's how time-consuming it was. When I quit after 5 years I wanted

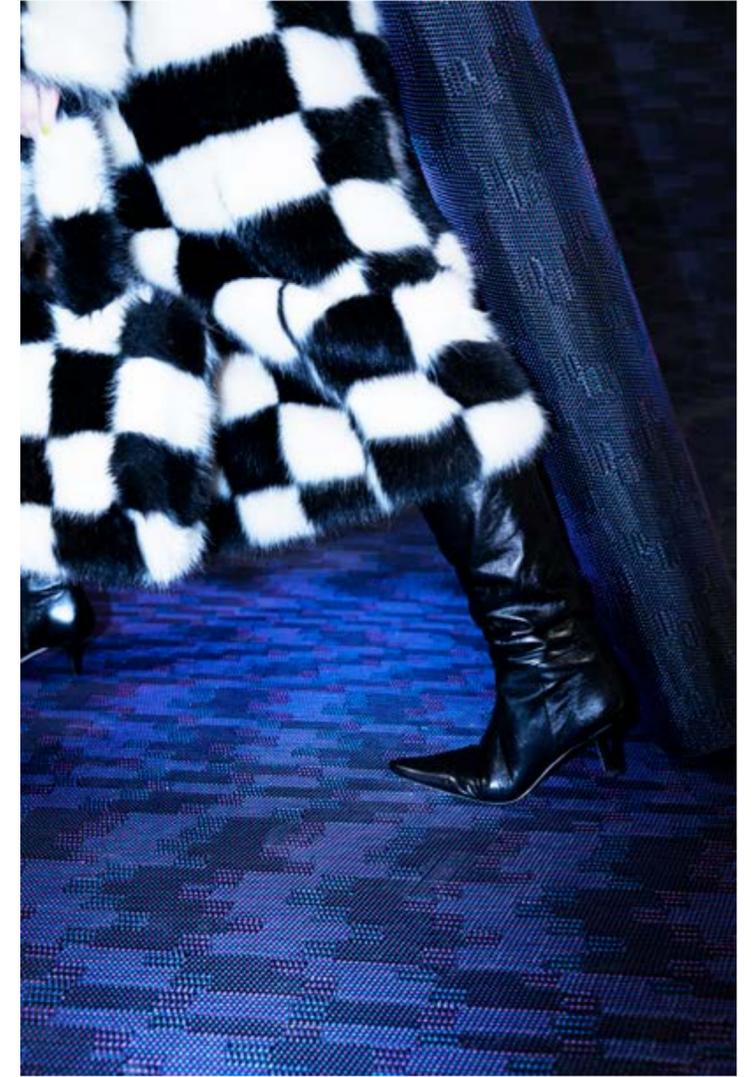
to take my experience and really put it to use. During my time at Greenpeace many companies reached out to ask us questions about toxins and chemicals and so I figured as a climate consultant I could get to help companies interested in improving their sustainability process on a deeper level. Now I have been doing so for almost 30 years.

**SO MANY INDUSTRIES WERE INTERESTED IN HOW TO IMPROVE THEIR SUSTAINABILITY WORK BACK EVEN BACK IN THE EARLY 90S, WHEN DID YOU NOTICE DESIGN TOOK AN INTEREST IN THIS MATTER?**

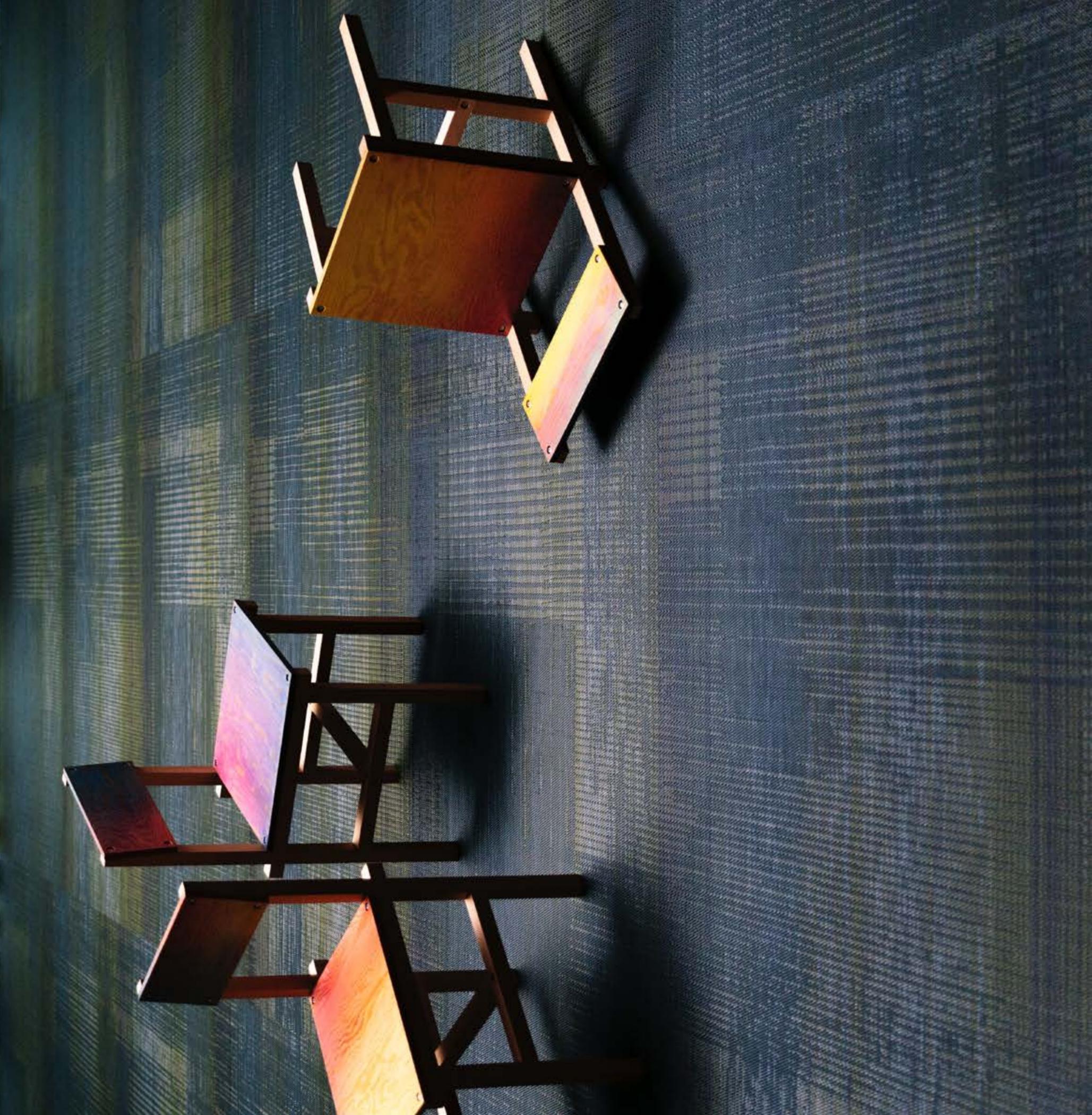
– When I founded my climate consultant business I mostly worked with medical companies but also a lot of Swedish breweries which was fun. I knew my services were well-needed but I could never have guessed how much business it would be for me during my first years as freelance. I think for the design industry, the end 90s was a turning point in terms of sustainability. My phone started ringing non-stop and honestly has been ringing ever since.

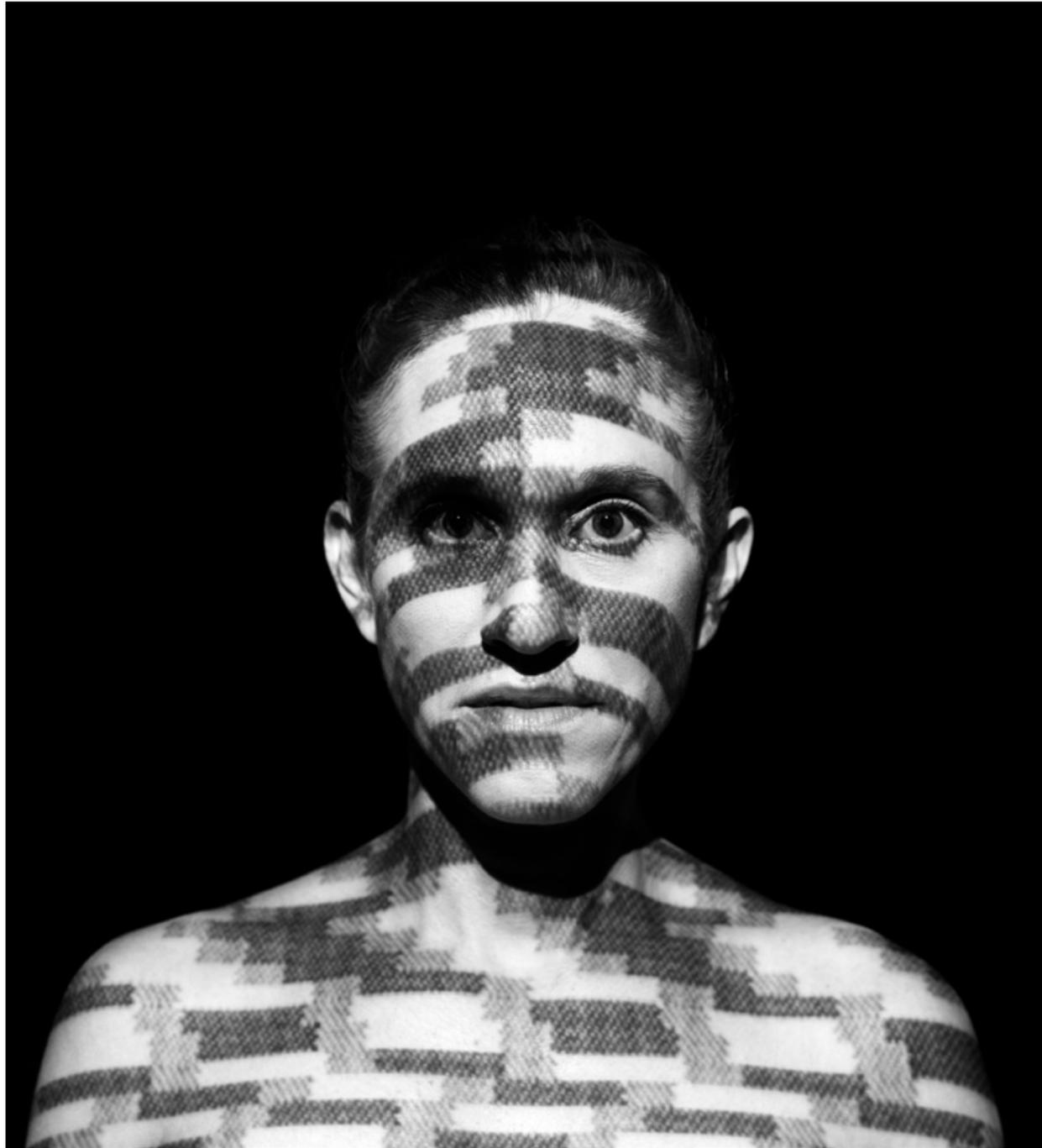
**WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE BIGGEST SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGE FOR THE DESIGN INDUSTRY?**

– I would say one of the largest challenges for the design industry is circularity. Of course this applies to fashion and many other industries too. To get the customer to work with the companies for circularity is key! That could however be a costly process both in terms of capital and for the environment. Take Bolon for example. We make these amazing, durable floors, which lasts for decades. But when the time come for the customer to update their flooring, our dream would be to work with that client and turn their old flooring into new. We are working on an effective way to close that circle.



*"IT IS IN OUR MINDS  
WHERE WE CREATE OUR  
LIMITATIONS AND OUR  
POSSIBILITES"*





### #3 100%

"I take pictures of flooring all the time, wherever I go. This design's out of focus pattern creates a vibrating colour effect, ultraviolet on an oily, nearly black base. With such a supreme level of energy it is as expressive as I think flooring should be. Standing its own ground in every possible way."

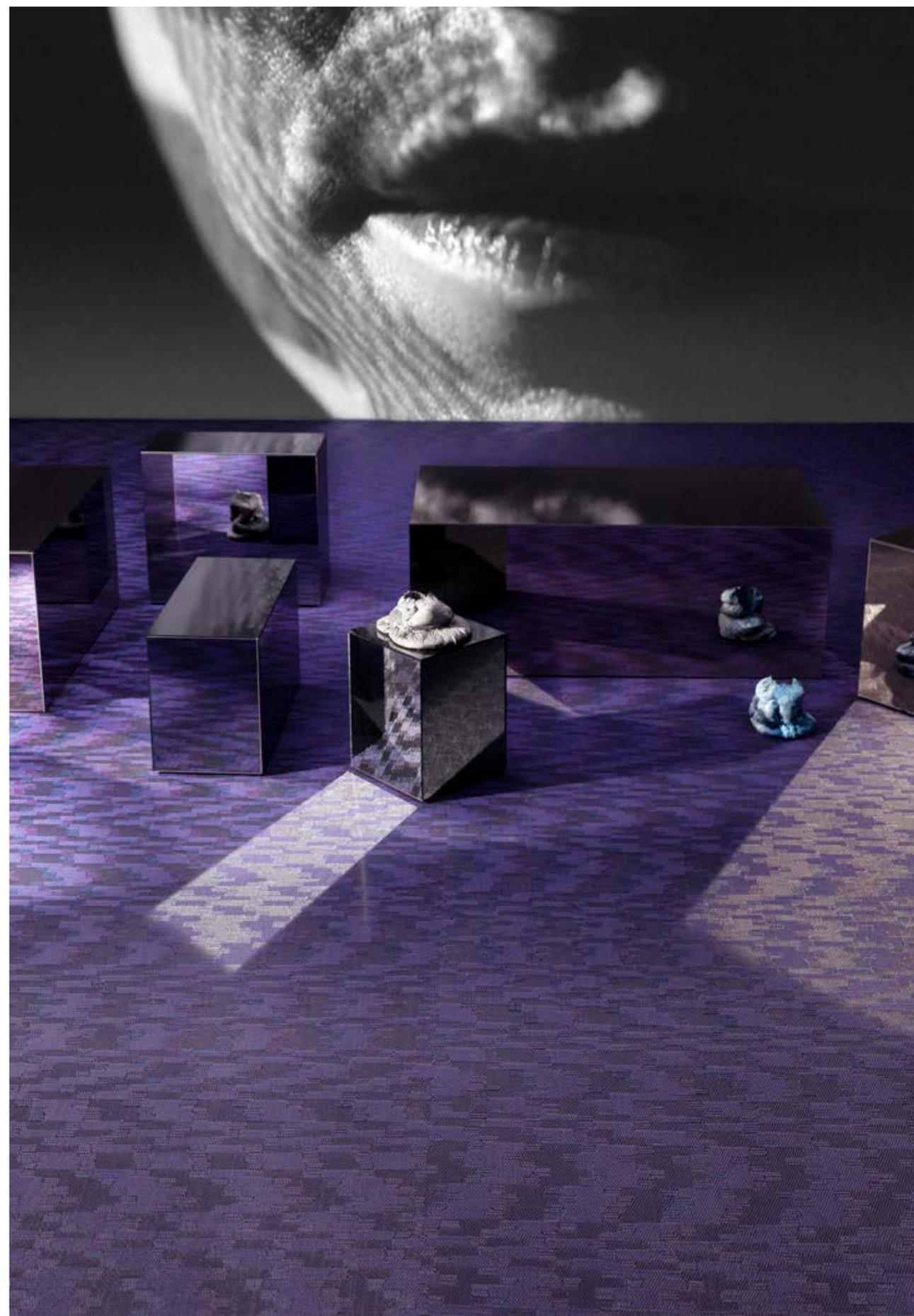
– Klara, Head of Product Management



### #4 PRECIS

"When I feel the wow. That's when I know. This design has a unique play with colour. Changing and moving from one side to the other in magnified formations. Nearly black with a soot matte base - but - there is also lustre. It is complicated, let me just say that calculated tiny spaces in-between play just as big a part as the rest."

– Lisa, Product Developer



**”Made-to-measure rugs in bold patterns”**

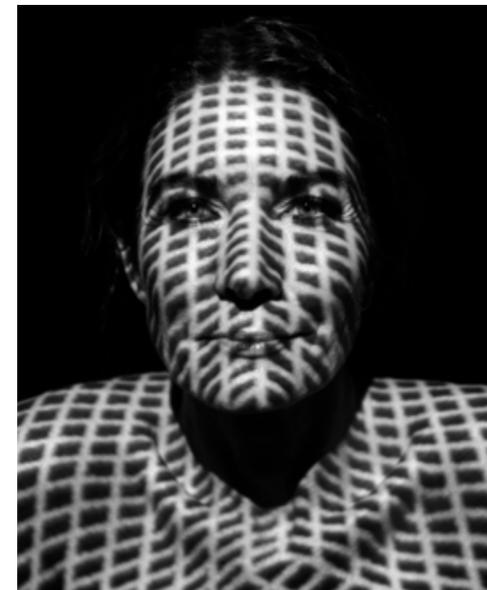
**Last year Bolon introduced made-to-measure rugs as a new category to the product portfolio and this spring Bolon adds another five designs. The new rugs are the unique designs from the Truly flooring collection. Truly is all about enlarged patterns, colour effects and hyper texture.**



## #1 ANYTHING EVERYTHING

Directing light into the most curious of compositions. A graphic pattern building rooms within a room. Shifting from intense green to glossy white on dark blue.

– Annica, Chief Creative Officer



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## #5 I SEE YOU

Expanding what is possible by weaving forward. A collage-like pattern, layer upon layer of subtle surfaces. An experiment on a chalky white base.

– Marie, CEO

# CREATIVITY UNITE THE 4TH GENERATION OF BOLON

*LINN, MAX AND LIV EKLUND, CHILDREN OF ANNICA AND MARIE EKLUND ARE THE FOURTH GENERATION OF BOLON. ALL THREE OF THEM GREW UP PLAYING UNDERNEATH THEIR MOTHERS DESKS, FOLLOWING THEM AROUND THE WORLD TRAVELING FOR BUSINESS AND MEETINGS. NOW, OVER 20 YEARS LATER, ALL OF THEM PURSUING THEIR DREAMS ALL OVER THE WORLD, THEY CAN ALL STILL RECALL THAT WARM SCENT OF BOLON FLOORING BEING MADE IN THE FACTORY IN ULRICEHAMN. WHEN I ASK THEM IF ANY OF THEM HAS FELT IT ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD ALL THREE OF THEM RESPOND QUICKLY: NO, IT'S TOO UNIQUE. IT'S HOME.*

**PHOTO:** Tobias Regell

**Linn Eklund (27)**, the eldest of the three of them and daughter to Annica Eklund, is today living in Stockholm after a few years in Hawaii and Paris, chasing her dreams with the company which she is co-founder of, called Hobnob Studio. A creative agency, focusing on fashion, culture and skiing, with its own cyber and physical platform and paper. Hobnob has only in a few years become the talk of town with clients such as Cartier, H&M and Valentino.

**Max Eklund (22)**, the middle cousin and Marie Eklunds first born, took everything he owned and moved up north in Sweden last summer to pursue his dream of making music at one of the country's best music schools. Max has been singing, playing and producing for as long as any of the Eklund family can remember and now he has finally found what seems to be a good path to evolve. No one realized it would lead him to Örnsköldsvik though.

**Liv Eklund (21)**, is Marie Eklunds daughter and the young, tent wilder and (according to her brother and cousin) maybe the most creative branch in the Eklund family tree. She is now living in New York City, studying a four year fashion line at established Parsons School of Design. On the side of her studies she interns and work with her

**"I remember the old factory and office very well, with the red cursive Bolon sign. When you walked inside the building the first thing you noticed was the very significant Bolon smell. Like warm and moist and vinyl(...) It smells like home. Oh God that sounds so cliché."**

Instagram called Topsy Tongue

**WHAT IS YOUR FIRST BOLON MEMORY?**

**LINN:** Maybe I should start since I am the eldest.

**MAX:** Yes, go ahead!

**LINN:** So my first memory is from when I was around four, maybe younger, this was long before my mom became CEO of Bolon. I had a RC car with a flatbed, super tacky, which I drove around the office, leaving everyone who worked at Bolon at the time, papers and pencils. I kept myself busy. I was with my mom at work when I was younger and remember making games and fun out of office supplies and such.

**LIV:** I don't have an early memory like that but I remember a photo session we did with the entire family, our moms and our grandparents outside

Bolon's first factory. We did a book on Bolon called The Story of Bolon and I remember it to be a very cool and big deal. That is my first big memory of Bolon, but of course I have lots of memories when we came with our mothers on trips for work but I don't recall really connecting it with Bolon, it was just something we did.



**MAX:** It's hard for me to recall a precise memory like you Linn, but I remember the old factory and office very well, with the red cursive Bolon sign, and when you walked inside the first thing that hit you was the very significant Bolon smell. Like warm and moist and vinyl. It's hard to explain but it's very imprinted on me. Now I think of home when I smell it. The first time I noticed that was when I went with grandfather when he was picking something up and I got to go with him.

**LINN:** I think all of us can remember getting to come with him when he cruised in his favorite vintage car down to the factory just to make sure everything was in place. Sometimes just to see that the lights were off.

**LIV:** He really loved that. Parking at the visitors parking and just run inside to check on something.

**WHAT WAS IT LIKE, GROWING UP WITH BOLON?**

**LINN:** I don't think any of us realized what it was Bolon was doing when we were younger. It wasn't until we got older that we saw the product for what it was and of course that impression is made stronger when one has seen Bolon flooring all over the world in the most unexpected places. For example when I lived in Hawaii and bought my first surfboard the small surf shop had Bolon flooring. Obviously I ended up buying a surfboard...

**LIV:** With Bolon we've had the great privilege of traveling a lot to many different places, experiencing and seeing a lot more that we would have just growing up in Ulricehamn. I think that has given all of us a good perspective on life. But then again, it wasn't just traveling. I can recall as a child I thought it was so boring when we were having family dinners and such and the adults started talking work around the table. Looking back at it now though, I can see how growing up in an entrepreneurial family has given me a lot.

**LINN:** But most of all, growing up with Bolon, I have to say that it has really kept us very close as a family. I don't think it would have been the same without Bolon.

**MAX:** I agree. And I think my drive comes a lot from growing up with Bolon and our family working hard together. It's important to have ambition and my family has taught me to reach for the skies.

**ALL OF YOU HAVE SPENT MOST OF YOUR UPBRINGING WITH ONLY YOUR MOTHERS WHO HAS ON THE SIDE OF BEING THAT, ALSO TAKEN BOLON FROM A LOCAL RUG COMPANY WITH ONLY 9 EMPLOYEES TO A WORLDKNOWN DESIGN FLOORING BUSINESS WHO NOW EMPLOYS OVER 100 PEOPLE. NOW PURSUING YOUR OWN CAREER GOALS, HOW DO YOU FEEL ANNICA AND MARIE AS BUSINESS WOMEN INSPIRE YOU?**

**LINN:** Without my mom I would never have dared to found Hobnob. My mom and Marie has taught me that two women and two sisters can do something unique and powerful.

**MAX:** I didn't realize until I started working myself how cool my mom

and Annica are, both as persons and women. Taking Bolon from what it was 20 years ago and turning into what it is today is seriously bad ass.

**LIV:** Me and Max didn't grow up with our dad, so seeing our mom working hard providing for us was just very given. Now that I am older I realize how cool what they have done with Bolon is and it empowers me.

**LINN:** They have given us all confidence in knowing that nothing is impossible. It doesn't matter if it's a career within fashion, design, music or you know, as a dentist. My mom has taught me to dare to dream big.

**LIV:** Exactly. But it has always been with a big focus on humility too. Working hard pays off, you know.

**I FEEL LIKE WE ARE COMING BACK TO THE SKY IS THE LIMIT MINDSET, AND RESEARCHING BOLON ONE CAN REALLY FEEL HOW THAT MINDSET PERMEATES THE ENTIRE COMPANY. YOU HAVE ALL NOW LEFT HOME AND**

**THE TOWN OF ULRICEHAMN TO FIND YOUR OWN WAYS IN LIFE, HOW HAVE YOU BROUGHT THAT WITH YOU TO STOCKHOLM, NEW YORK CITY AND ÖRNSKÖLDSVIK?**

**“It's interesting to think about, considering me and Max and Liv are the fourth generation of Bolon, but also that we are from two different generations. Me being a millennial and Max and Liv Gen Z. We have very different views of life, business and creativity and I think that is what makes the future for us and Bolon so exciting.”**

**LIV:** I don't think I even would have dared to dream about New York if I didn't have that mindset from my home. Even if I'm not sure what my path is yet, I am confident in the search for it and dare to explore it in every way I can.

**LINN:** I think of it in everything I do. Knowing in the back of my head that the sky's the only thing that could limit my outcome, I founded Hobnob together with my partner with the very brave and cocky ambition to change the fashion industry in Scandinavia. Which I consider us to be contributors to now. You have to dare to win, but also be prepared to lose. That'll take you far.

**IT'S FUN TO SEE HOW YOU ALL, GROWING UP ALMOST LIKE SIBLINGS, HAVE CHOSEN TO PURSUE CREATIVE CAREERS ALL THREE OF YOU, BUT WITH SO DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. NONE OF YOU ARE DENTISTS.**

**LINN:** Not yet anyways!

**MAX:** It's nice to have a plan B... No but I think Liv is the one of us who has been the most creative since she was a child.

**LIV:** I think so too. I was always painting, creating, doing stuff. My fingers tingled to do things.

**MAX:** Creativity has been a way to solve problems for us in your family. Taking a task or a problem, say, and then discussing different solutions and possible ways. It was like a fun game.

**LINN:** I agree! But I began my creative path much later than Max and Liv. I studied English and business in Hawaii and it wasn't until I moved to Paris to study at Istituto Marangoni that I found my creative passion for photography and of course fashion. Of course, our family has always had fashion and I actually think that it is all of our common creative outlet. But I never really saw it as a career alternative until Paris.

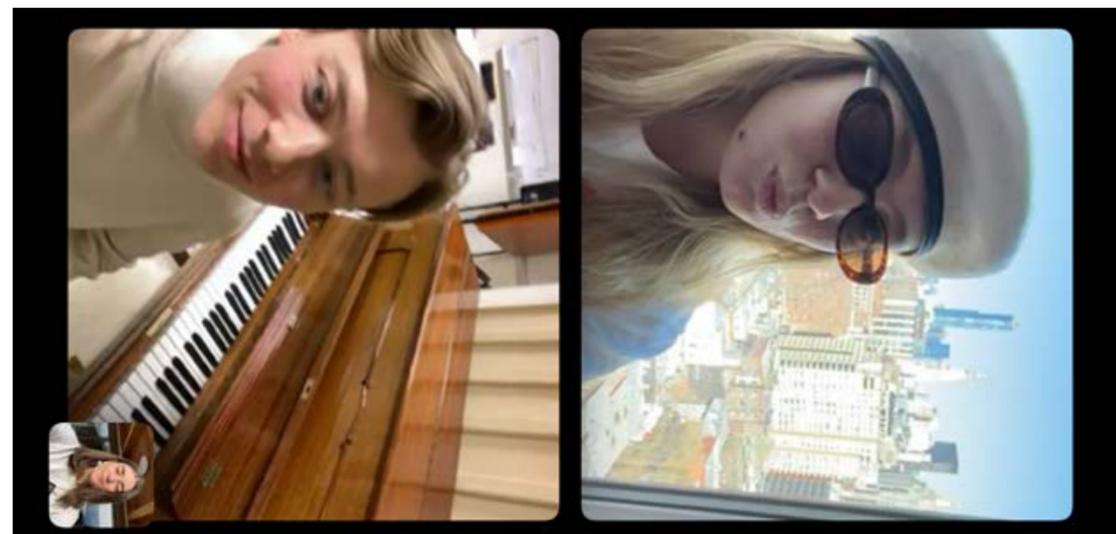
**HOW DO YOU ALL SEE YOU WORKING TOGETHER IN THE FUTURE?**

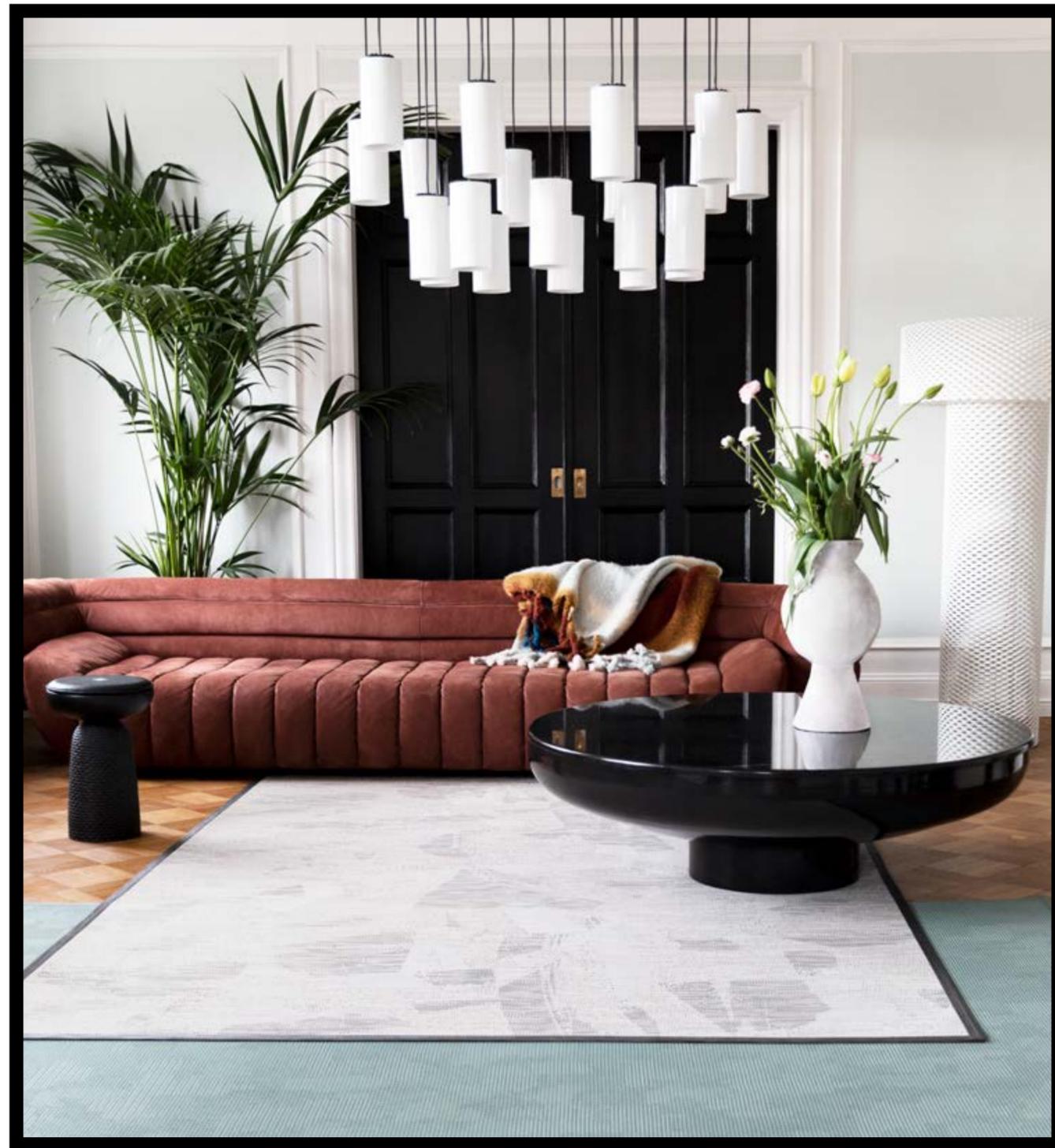
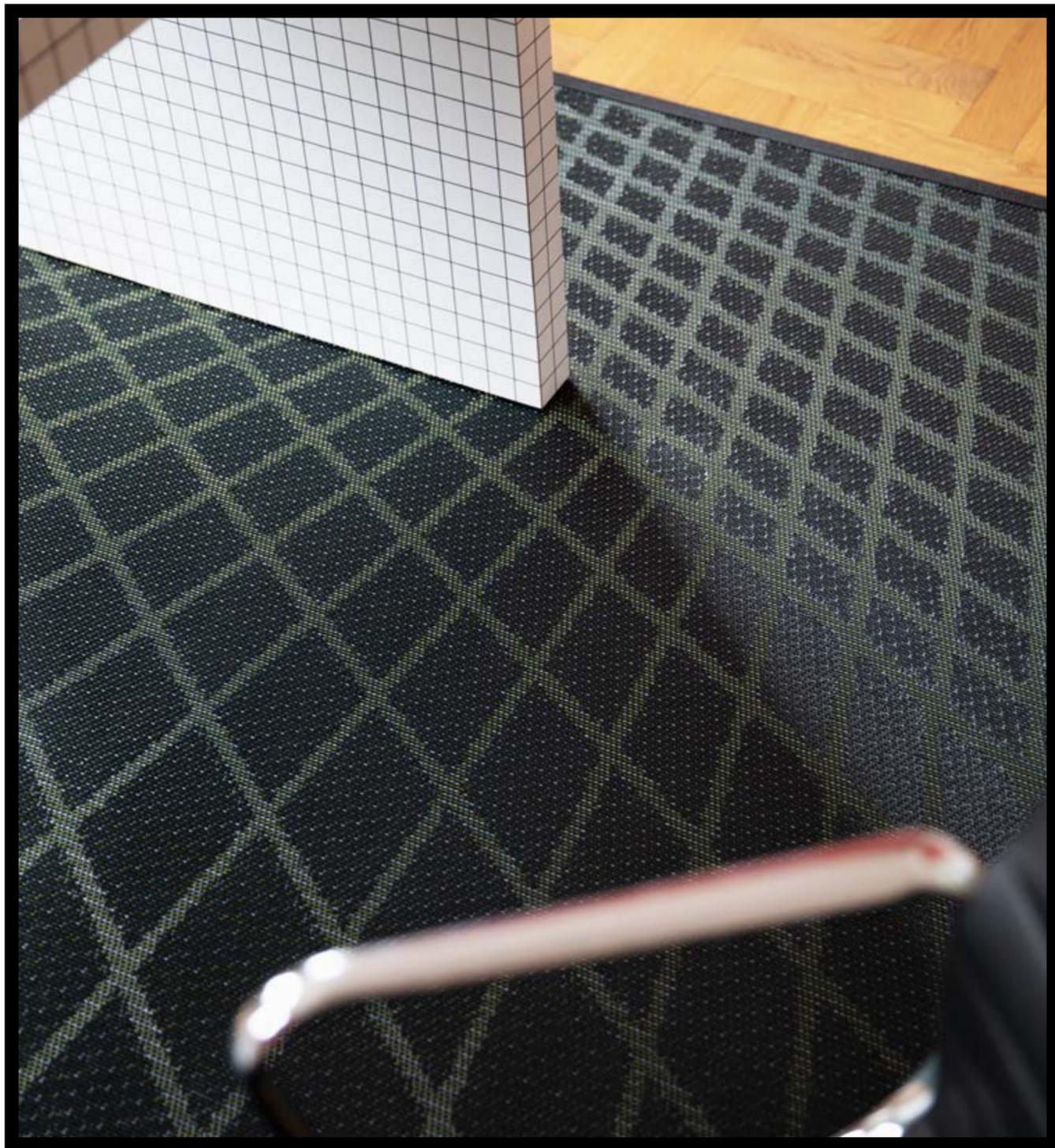
**LINN:** It's interesting to think about, considering me and Max and Liv are the fourth generation of Bolon, but also that we are from two different generations. Me being a millennial and Max and Liv Gen Z. We have very different views of life, business and creativity and I think that is what makes the future for us and Bolon so exciting.

**LIV:** I think so too. The millennials have changed the business environment with digitalization but Gen Z is thinking even more outside the box, creating their own rules and finding new platforms.

**MAX:** Exactly, the weirder the better I feel sometimes. It pushes you to create outside the box and I think that is what made mom and Annica so successful to start with and hopefully that is what we'll bring to the table someday.

**LINN:** There isn't really any right or wrong any more and that is empowering I think.





# RUGS

**ANTONIO FACCO'S EARLIEST WORK WAS CONSTRUCTIONS MADE OUT OF CARDBOARD IN HIS CHILDHOOD HOME. NOW, 25 YEARS LATER, HE HAS WORKED WITH ALL THE GREATEST NAMES IN THE BUSINESS AND HE IS LONGTIME FRIEND. ANTONIO TALKS ABOUT HIMSELF AS HIS MOST COMPLICATED CLIENT, STRIVING TO ALWAYS MOVE ON TO THE NEXT PROJECT AFTER FINISHING HIS LAST.**

**DESCRIBE THE WORLD OF ANTONIO FACCO IN THREE WORDS.**

An unpredictable sincere and elegant world.

**WHAT DOES "DESIGN MEAN" TO YOU?**

For me, design means translation. It is the process of translation and synthesis of a thought into reality. Design is my tool to tame instinct and creativity.

**HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE 30 IN 2022?**

I think it's amazing. I belong to a generation that came of age during a time of great change if you think about the growth of digital technologies and how the world has changed in the last 20 years. I remember the past but I'm always looking to the future, constantly. If I don't think about the contradictions, absurdities and evils of the contemporary world, I actually constantly see thousands of opportunities, connections and exciting projects. Being 30 years old today is a great opportunity that should not be wasted.

**WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN 30 YEARS?**

I'm honest, I'm an ambitious person and addicted to novelty. There is a very long list of experiences and projects that I would like to accomplish. Given the last 10 years, my gut instinct is that I will have so many project, entrepreneurial and personal experiences and I can't wait. Maybe I'll have designed the car of my dreams, maybe I'll be working on some project on Mars. I definitely see myself with a more balanced but paradoxically more dynamic life.

**DID YOU HAVE A CLEAR VISION WHEN YOU STARTED YOUR CAREER?**

I believe that even if less conscious and less defined, in some way an instinctive vision was already present. It's as if that image was made up of many grainy pixels. Despite this, however, those shapes and colors were already there and in my own way I saw them and interpreted them.

**IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE A CLEAR VISION, OR RATHER TO FUNCTION BY INSTINCT?**

I believe they are both fundamental and necessary to each other. Certainly what I can say is that the biggest mistakes I've made in life, I've made when I didn't follow my instincts. However, it can be a double-edged sword. Today, with a little more maturity I practice the coexistence of both: I believe that instinct and clear vision must respect each other and listen to each other. This is the secret to a successful project.

**DO YOU HAVE TO BE AN INSTINCTIVE PERSON TO WORK IN A CREATIVE BUSINESS?**

I'm sure they do. Instinct is a chromosome in the DNA of design, it pretty much defines it. Instinct in the creative business is critical in so many ways. Feeling the need of people, feeling the need for a new product, feeling that you have the right person in front of you to start a right dialogue and therefore, a right project.

**DID YOU CHOOSE DESIGN OR DID DESIGN CHOOSE YOU?**

I've been imagining, creating, trying to invent and build since I was a child. Discovering the meaning of design was actually a very natural and almost spontaneous process, it has remained the same since then but the context has changed, perhaps less carefree but definitely more challenging.

**DO YOU FEEL PART OF THE BUSINESS?**

Since I've been living in it for several years now and I know the design market quite well thanks to international experiences and personal encounters that have been fundamental for my growth in this sense, I would say yes. However, sometimes I find it a bit reductive and limiting to feel part of a business. The market is sometimes redundant.

**OR DO YOU FEEL LIKE AN OUTSIDER?**

I often think I am without imposing it though. I don't like labels and I don't like to belong to a specific category. My transversal approach to the world of design and entrepreneurship I think demonstrates this enough. I like to constantly find new stimuli, I love constantly questioning myself, confirmations bore me. The world of design is sometimes too self-celebratory and loses sight of the substance, of course it's part of the game, but it's not enough for me.

# "The biggest mistakes I've made in life, I've made when I didn't follow my instincts"

**WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST DESIGN MEMORY?**

It's funny but probably when I was a kid I used to try to build, little houses, spaceships and stage sets for the shows my twin sister did at home in front of my parents. Yes I would use glue, cardboard and whatever I had on hand, but somehow it was a form of design in my opinion.

**WHAT DOES SUCCESS MEAN TO YOU?**

Having finished one project, I must immediately move on to the next. In this sense, the success of something belongs to something that is now in the past. This allows me to always remain active but not always fully enjoy the present. If we understand success as recognition of good work, it is good for all of us because it gives us courage to face new challenges. Feeling too much success, however, is dangerous because it distracts us from the focus, it concentrates us on the ego and being sometimes illusory or temporary can damage you.

**CAN SUCCESS EXHAUST YOU? WHAT PART OF YOUR WORK IS THE MOST ENJOYABLE?**

At the beginning, when I started to get the first important awards, I fell into the trap of the illusion of "success". Today I think I have matured a lot, I have awareness and my feet

on the ground. I'm very critical and strict with myself, I demand a lot, I usually say that I'm my most complicated client. But when I feel that I've given my all and that I've achieved exactly what I had in mind, that's a feeling of adrenaline that is worth all the effort. It doesn't last long, but that's what happiness means to me, it's summed up in that moment.

**DO YOU HAVE THE FEAR OF NEVER FINDING INSPIRATION AGAIN?**

There are times when I feel more dry, especially when I'm very focused on the business. You have to learn to create a balance and I've realized that the rhythm of creativity has to be respected. However, I'm not afraid of it because at any moment it can change and hundreds of ideas come all at once.

**DO THINGS BECOME EASIER WITH EXPERIENCE OR DOES THE CHALLENGE BECOME GREATER?**

Great question. Definitely with experience the creative processes of synthesizing to get to a result become incredibly faster. But I think creative people always aim to raise the bar, constantly, it's part of a quest and need for personal growth. In this sense you become more skilled but you want to deal with increasingly complex creative processes and systems.

**WHAT DO YOU DREAM OF?**

I dream of having many projects ahead of me but most of all of being able to share my journey with more inspiring and rare people in all parts of the world. I hope that my vision will always accompany me and help me build a multidisciplinary creative system to be able to explore design and life itself in all its forms.

**WHO DO YOU WANT TO BE PROUD OF YOU?**

When I realize that true friends are sincerely proud of me despite all my flaws, it fills my heart.



**BOLON**

