



## Interiors The inside track



Giles Kime



No pale rider: Totty Lowther in her Cumbrian barn with the new *Pomegranate* wallpaper design she has created for Lewis & Wood

# Fortune favours the bold

Large-scale wallpaper has the capacity to transform a space beyond recognition

**I**F there's one thing you'll learn from *Design Thread*, Kit Kemp's third book on interior design, it's that aesthetic bravery is as essential in the creation of a beautiful room as a paintbrush, a ladder and a bolt of fabric.

Mrs Kemp, creative force behind some of London's most stylish hotels, not only employs a heroic use of colour, but also refuses to be bound by conventional wisdom, which dictates that furniture, lighting and artwork should politely respect the proportions of rooms they occupy. Her larger-than-life pieces dominate the spaces she brings to life in a way that is exuberant, without being remotely overbearing.

Another aspect of scale that conventional wisdom gets horribly wrong is the idea that, when decorating a small space, one should fill it with correspondingly small furniture. However, nothing makes a small bedroom look bigger than a four-poster and an giant armoire. The same is true of

pattern; small, spriggy Victorian-style florals simply emphasise diminutive proportions, but large-scale pattern distracts the occupant from the fact that any cat they might choose to swing would get a very sore head.

**“Like so many successful designs, it's rooted in the past, but feels fresh and distinctive”**

A designer with aesthetic bravery in spades is Totty Lowther, a stylist who, in a past life, created everything from sets for feature films to windows for Laura Ashley and now juggles running an interiors boutique in a shipping container in Penrith

with the demands of life on a Cumbrian hill farm.

*Pomegranate* (above), her new design for Lewis & Wood, is based on an Indian take on damask, a style of textile popular in the 17th and 18th centuries. By hugely magnifying the proportions of the pattern, she's created a design that doesn't just have a transformative effect on furniture, but also on the space it occupies. Like so many successful designs, it's rooted in the past, but feels fresh and distinctive.

*Pomegranate* is the latest collaboration between Lewis & Wood and a long list of artists and designers, including Adam Calkin, Melissa White and Andrew Davidson, that harnesses the creativity of those beyond the world of textiles and interior design.

For more pattern on a gloriously grand scale, visit the company's showrooms at 105–106, Design Centre East, Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 0XF (020-7751 4554; [www.lewisandwood.co.uk](http://www.lewisandwood.co.uk)).

Harry Lowther

