

# Talkin' 'Bout Maya's Generation



Most devotees of **Maya Romanoff** know it simply as the go-to source for exceptional wall coverings. But as the company's big 4-0 looms, it's time to toast the man behind the myth and retrace his aesthetic odyssey.

With typical 1960's karma, the company shares its anniversary year with the Woodstock music festival, the tie-dyed denizens of which sparked Romanoff's interest in the interplay between textiles and pigment. The dashiki-clad designer was

soon testing out various resist-dyed vehicles: leathers, couture fashions, whole-room environments. But it was Weathered Walls, the hand-painted wall coverings launched in 1979, that became the house specialty—and won a Roscoe Award from this magazine. Other honors followed, along with showcases at museums.

Romanoff's penchant for experimentation has never waned, whether he's draping canvas banners over a building in Chicago or creating a geisha girl in beaded wall covering for a sushi restaurant in New York. Indeed, invention remains of the essence not only for Romanoff himself—who continues to work despite an ongoing battle with Parkinson's disease—but also for his wife, Joyce, the company's president, and niece, Laura, vice president.

One upcoming release isn't technically new. Designer Amy Lau has freshly reinterpreted archival tie-dyed wall coverings as the Anniversary collection, intended for a generation that's less LP, more MP3. 773-465-6909; mayaromanoff.com. **circle 403** ➤

**Bottom, from left:** Maya Romanoff discovers tie-dye at Woodstock and incorporates his namesake company. He introduces resist-dyed leather. His Wearable Art couture debuts at I. Magnin in Chicago and Henri Bendel in New York. Experiments with whole-room dyed-textile environments lead to "Swan River" at the Richard Himmel Gallery in Chicago. He begins producing resist-dyed fabrics and floor coverings. In New York's Central Park, he drapes Belvedere Castle in cotton canvas. He also hangs 120-foot-long banners of hand-dyed cotton canvas from the facade of Chicago's Sun-Times Building. His Ajiro flexible wood veneers hit the market. Beadazzled wall coverings are introduced. His first collaboration with the Rockwell Group is a glass-beaded mural for the New York restaurant Geisha. He and David Rockwell put their heads together to unveil a wall covering collection, David Rockwell for Maya Romanoff. Amy Lau and Jo Lynn Alcorn's three-dimensional interpretation of Romanoff's wall coverings transforms a staircase at the Kips Bay Decorator Show House in New York. Tibetan prayer papers inspire Meditations wall coverings. The Meditations Ohm pattern comes in eight colors including Sea Salt. For the Anniversary collection's hand-dyed patterns, Lau reimagines a 1976 tie-dye from the Houston Astrodome.

marketscape







CRYSTAL

HALF PLAD

SNOWFLAKE

HALF PLAD



2003

2004

2007

2009

2009

2009

2009 2010