

DESIGNER PROFILE

ERIN DOLLAR

High quality, natural materials and minimal, modern prints give Erin Dollar her signature aesthetic. We sat down to chat fabric



How would you describe your company, Cotton & Flax?

Cotton & Flax is my home decor company, which offers handmade home goods featuring my minimalist geometric pattern designs. Everything I create is made with sustainability in mind, using high-quality natural materials like linen and wool. I screen print my



patterns onto fabric in my studio, and each printed fabric panel becomes a tea towel, pillow cover, cloth napkin or drink coaster. Cotton & Flax products are designed for easy, eco-friendly lifestyle, with a modern aesthetic to keep things stylish.

You recently designed your debut fabric collection, Arroyo, for Robert Kaufman. How did that come about?

My customers have been asking me for fabric yardage for years. Ever since I launched Cotton & Flax in 2012, I have had countless emails, Instagram comments and in-person requests for fabric yardage. For a long time, I told everyone the same thing: my studio is too small to print yardage by hand, and even if I could scale up, it would be prohibitively expensive for most people. With that in mind, I didn't really give it much thought until I saw the Blueberry. Park collection that Karen Lewis

created with Robert Kaufman. That collection was also overprinted, which gives the designs a rich, opaque look, very similar to the hand-printed fabrics I create from my own studio. This got my wheels turning... I pitched a collection to Robert Kaufman with that overprinting in mind, and luckily they were excited about the designs I offered!

What was your main inspiration?

While I was developing this collection, I lived in Northeast Los Angeles, near a beautiful Arroyo canyon that had hiking trails and a park within walking distance. My preferred colour palette is always influenced by my surroundings – when I lived in Portland, Oregon, I used a lot more green and blue in my work.

Moving to LA, I was drawn more towards neutrals and dusty colours. I was definitely influenced by the colours of the Arroyo





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Above: Erin's felt printed coasters for Cotton & Flax. Above right: The full Arroyo collection for Robert Kaufman area as we selected the colours for this collection; the rich greys and neutrals that make up the landscape, as well as the lovely pops of colour from wildflowers and other fauna. It's very personally meaningful to me now that I've moved away to a new city – that collection will always capture a very specific moment in my life as a designer.

Below: The rich greys and neutrals influenced by the Arroyo canyon landscape in LA You work with a lot of natural materials, including linen fabrics and eco-friendly inks. What is it about the natural quality that appeals to you?

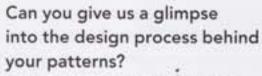
Sustainability is a huge concern for me in developing products for Cotton & Flax. I'm always trying to advocate for high-quality, well made goods, rather than throwaway designs. It's so frustrating to see how many large companies are producing tons of cheaply-made designs every season, just to have them end up in the landfill the next year.

By using natural materials and creating classic, minimalist designs, I want to offer an alternative to the 'fast-fashion' method of decorating. Anything I can do to limit my impact on the environment is worthwhile.

How do you think your background in fine art printmaking has influenced your aesthetic?

When I'm designing new patterns or artwork, I still really think like a printmaker. I think in layers, building up colour and texture in a deliberate way. Working as a printmaker means that you start to get really efficient with colour, since every additional colour you add to a design means another screen needs to be created to print that colour onto the fabric. I think my designs remain really minimalist because I want to create impactful patterns with a minimum





I try to spend as much time as possible creating new patterns each week. I draw in my sketchbook, and make trips to galleries, art museums and the library to gather inspiration. I love to experiment with different printmaking techniques, as well as drawing loose, imperfect motifs using a brush and sumi ink. I'm known for my deceptively simple patterns, so the challenge for me is creating dynamic, interesting patterns using a limited amount of colour and line.

of time at the printing table. That printmaker's spirit of efficiency has stuck with me through the years.

What is your favourite part of your job?

It's probably tied between drawing new patterns and meeting people who use my designs in their homes. Obviously I get a huge amount of satisfaction from creating the work in the first place, but it's also really special to get to meet my customers face to face. Since Cotton & Flax is primarily an online shop, I don't always get to hear about how my customers have added my designs



to their homes, or see him such page is integrated into epinesina's IS. When I get the appointuinty to get that heathers, it's notify special

You have a very beautiful instagram. Do you feel the instagram community has helped to grow your business?

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