

## Mally Skok: Brunschwig Lives—Yippee!

November 1, 2011 in [Guest Bloggers](#) by [kyle](#) | [3 comments](#)

I hate to admit it, but a certain evening two weeks ago was the first time I had visited the [Brunschwig & Fils](#) showroom in the Boston Design Center in a very long while. For the past couple of years it was just too sad to go wandering around the designer-free rooms; it felt almost like visiting a terminal patient in their final throes of life. But—what do you know—Stephen Elrod, the genius creative director of [Lee Jofa](#), was there to announce the most wondrous and vibrant new collection that I had seen in quite some time.



When I arrived for the presentation, the showroom was buzzing and there were delicious drinks being served from behind the samples desk. Everyone was ooh-ing over the cocktail being served, a wonderfully subtle concoction that was especially mixed up for this occasion. The whole Kravet/Lee Jofa Boston team were there welcoming us back into the Brunschwig fold. We were about to witness a resurrection!



And what a story it was. After Brunschwig's final collapse into bankruptcy, [Kravet](#) president Cary Kravet swept in to adopt the line and Stephen Elrod swept into the Brunschwig design studio in New York, commandeered what the design team was working on, tweaked it, re-colored it, added some layers, and *voilà*: the Les Alizés Collection was born. What an achievement—its hard to believe that the legal documents for the takeover were only signed in March of this year.



I just loved all of Stephen's stories about the early days of Brunschwig, which he called a truly American fabric company. He is so enthusiastic about all aspects of the fabric world—a person truly after my own heart, and his charming presentation style really makes it all come to life. Quick fact I learned from him: did you ever notice how many of the document fabrics you see are in the blue and red palette, like the one Stephen is showing in the first photo above? In the old days fabric houses did not have a pigment for green when they did their printing, so they had to print yellow and then go back and put blue on top to make green. The yellow was unstable and faded over time, leaving the blue to re-emerge. Amazing!

There is another reason that this story is close to my heart. I have been in love with color and pattern since I was a young girl, so after many years as an interior designer I took the plunge a few years ago and started [a little fabric line of my own](#), which is hand-screened right here in Massachusetts in the studio of the venerable [Peter Fasano](#).

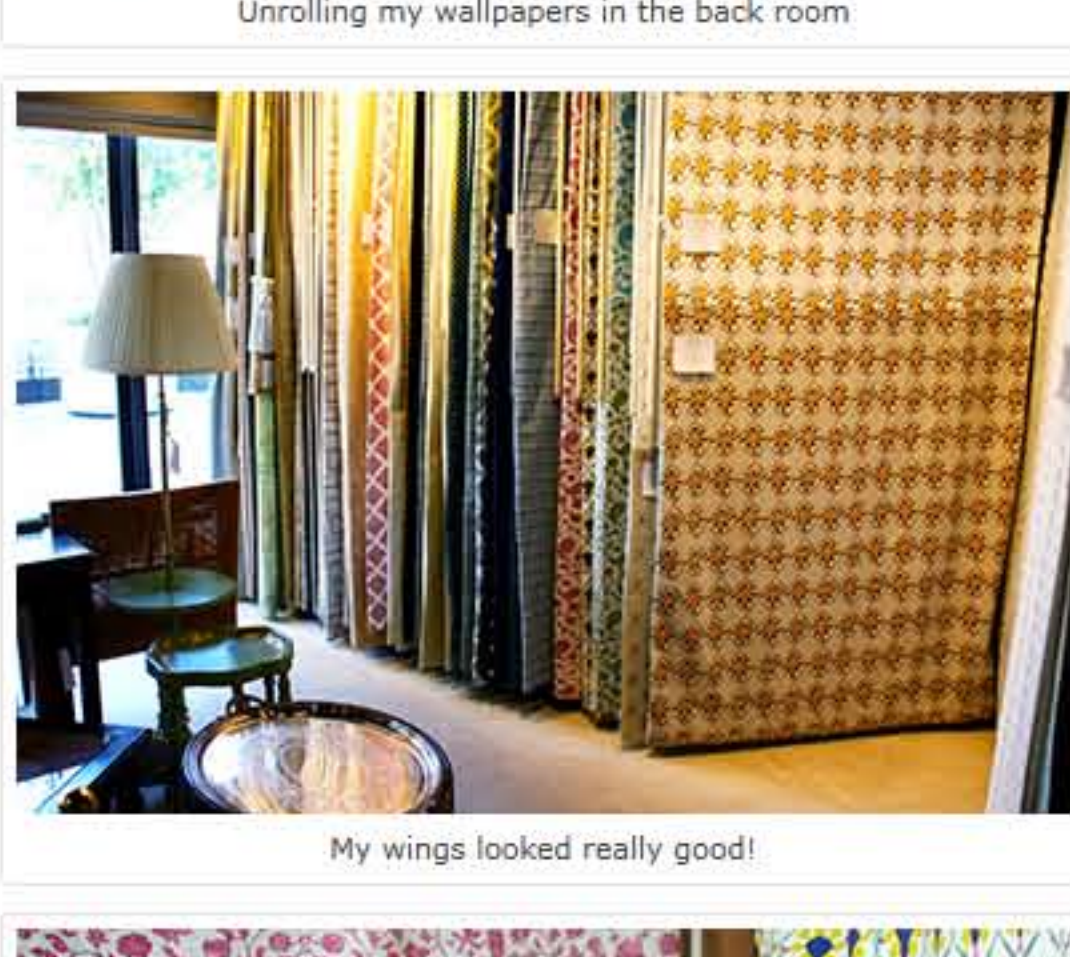
Getting a showroom in to represent you in New York is no mean feat, especially for a small fish like me, so it was a great delight that the rather terrifying Mr. Harry Hinson decided to take a chance on my line.



I had fun getting to know all the staff in the [Hinson](#) showroom—these are the photographs I took on the day my fabric wings were installed. I was so delighted to be in the big time, I documented it all.



Unrolling my wallpapers in the back room



My wings looked really good!



Proud mama

Hinson subsequently merged with Brunschwig, then the bankruptcy happened, Kravet bought Brunschwig and I was convinced I was doomed. My tiny little fabric line would never make it among all those huge names. But, what do you know: the Brunschwig showroom director decided to keep me in their New York showroom. I am soooo flattered. So that's another reason I am pulling for them—after all, we're family!

When I got home after Stephen Elrod's presentation, I spread out all my lovely new samples from Les Alizés in my dining room table to give them my full attention. "Would I use this in my own house?" is my yardstick for whether a fabric really does it for me.



Suddenly—bam, it hit me. Surely it's time for the adorable but fifteen-year-old Brunschwig curtains in my living room to be replaced. This turquoise/chocolate and lime looks pretty spectacular and very up-to-date. Stephen told us the pattern is derived from an old Greek document. I could do with a bit of sunny Greece in my life on this chilly autumn day. I just have to do what I always do with a new fabric: stare at it for hours, and wait and see if the love grows...



*Mally Skok is an interior designer and fabric designer who lives in Lincoln, Mass. Born in Cape Town, South Africa, she moved in the 1980s with her young family to Boston, where she was greatly influenced by the great English designers and the relaxed English way of life. Eighteen years ago the family came to Boston, but she and her husband still keep a beach house in South Africa. Mally's African connection and her love of travel deeply influence her global view of the world. She produced her India fabric collection three years ago and is in the process of launching a new Africa collection in showrooms throughout the U.S. and in London. You can check out [Mally's own blog](#) here.*

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[seema krish](#) on November 1, 2011 at 12:12 pm

Love this anecdote... Go Mally!



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[Tara](#) on November 1, 2011 at 5:12 pm

I love this story, it has all sorts of twist and turns and shows that things work out in interesting ways! Great fabrics! Great Lines and Great Designs! Cheers Mally! Great article



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[Sarah](#) on November 5, 2011 at 7:20 pm

Love this post Mally! Gorgeous, gorgeous fabrics. What an honor, privilege and testament to your good taste that your line is being showcased alongside Brunschwig.



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