

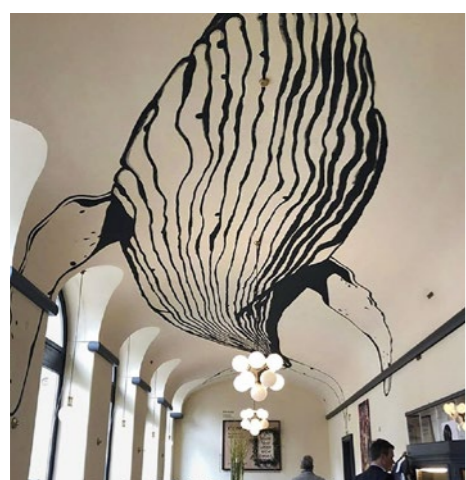
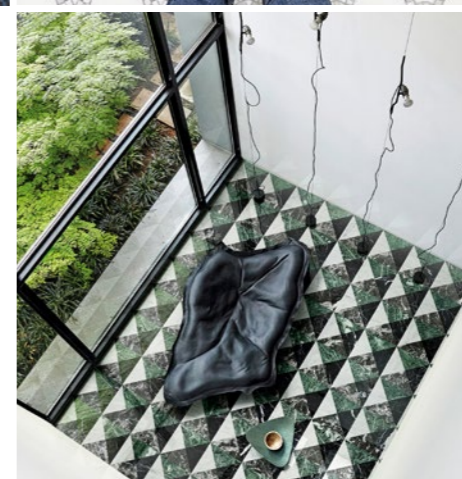
# HIGHS



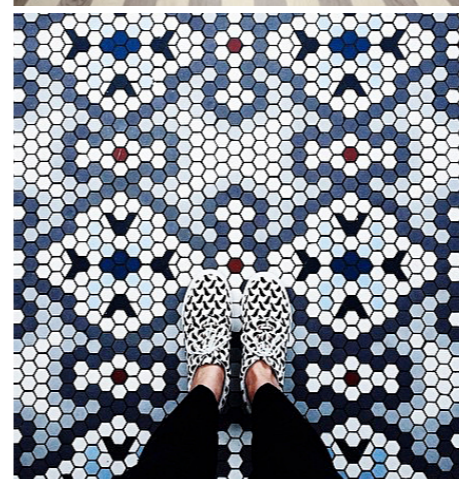
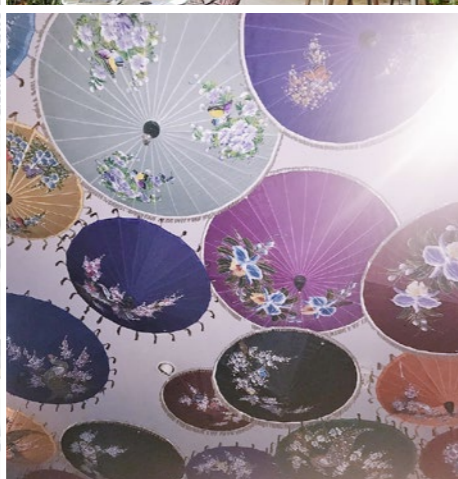
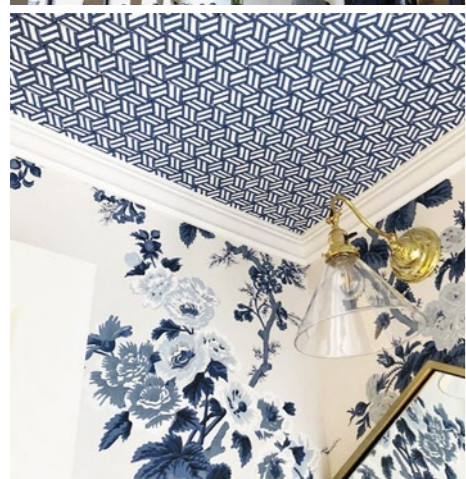
# THE



# AND



# LOWS



Stop climbing the walls and make a real statement at home by turning your interiors attention to floors and ceilings

WORDS: BEN OLSEN



**F** or some years, now, walls have had all the fun.

Floors and ceilings have been functional, with decorative flair confined to innovative light fittings. If you looked up or looked down, there wasn't much to see.

Go back a few centuries, though, and both floors and ceilings featured luxurious decoration, with a high quota of opulence. But as modernism and functionalism became more popular during the middle of the 20th century, these design flourishes were rejected. Sleek lines and unadorned surfaces have become the new design standard. Increasingly, floors and ceilings were either left neutral, allowing walls and furnishings to do the talking, or were ignored entirely.

But there's a new mood of maximalism and it's bringing creativity, glamour and playfulness back to our homes, following decades

**“A new mood of maximalism is bringing creativity back to our homes”**

of pared-back interiors. We're also pushed for room: commercial businesses need every inch of money-making space, while at home we need to work furniture and storage into ever-shrinking apartments. And for maximalist wannabes without much square footage, the obvious answer is to decorate the areas you've previously neglected.

Glitzy terrazzo tiling, one-off textiles, detailed cornicing and bold, wallpapered ceilings are expanding our horizons (both up and down), and fuelling countless Pinterest boards and Instagram accounts with eye-catching inspirational images.

Here are some of this season's standout options for adding top-to-toe finesse to your own home.

#IHAVETHISTHINGWITHCEILINGS



THE BAR AT LONDON'S SANDERSON HOTEL SHOWS OFF UPSIDE-DOWN PLANTING

**Upside-down planters**

Vertical gardens have been around for a while, but planted ceilings are a little more imaginative. At the Sanderson Hotel in London, a series of planters allow creeping jasmine and grasses to add softness and greenery to the main bar. Meanwhile sportswear brand Asics has included living ceilings in 10 of its flagship stores across Europe.

Translating these gravity-defying projects to your own home is slightly trickier but consider installing a ceiling-mounted trellis and encouraging creepers to weave their way through the bars, making sure you've accounted for access points to keep plants watered. A simpler method is to opt for hanging planters from the vast selection on the market, including Anthropologie's ceramic pots and quirky angular pieces by Oliver Bonas. Depending on the plants chosen – we recommend jasmine, geranium and citrus blossoms – this option not only looks good but smells great, too.

**Tip:** Try Boskke's ceramic sky planters, £89.95 (boskke.com), in your home. They're easily hung and clip-locks keep the inverted plants secure.

**Ceiling paper**

According to Sam Hood, founder of homeware retailer Amara, the so-called 'fifth wall' of the ceiling cannot be ignored. "We are seeing a shift from feature walls to statement ceilings," she says. "There has also been a rise of bold designs in printed wallpapers that can help achieve this."

For a subtle approach, pick a patterned wallpaper in the same shade as your walls. Alternatively, go bold with geometrics from Missoni Home or choose Timorous Beasties' characterful creations, which grace the ceiling at London's Waldorf Hilton hotel. Elsewhere, Cole & Son has a sophisticated new collaboration with British designer Martyn Lawrence Bullard featuring opulent accents from around the world.

**Tip:** Carley Bean, head of design at Cole & Son, recommends continuing the same paper from the walls onto the ceiling to add height to a room.



MAKE A STATEMENT WITH GEOMETRIC WALLPAPER ON YOUR CEILING



PAINTING THE SAME SHADE ON WALLS AND CEILINGS CAN MAKE A ROOM FEEL TALLER

**Stencils and shades**

Using different shades of paint totally alters how you perceive a room. "Paint your ceiling the same colour as your wall to create real height and make the room feel bigger," says Charlotte Cosby, head of creative at Farrow & Ball. "Alternatively, if you have a high ceiling and want to bring it down in height, use a darker tone on the ceiling than the walls."

Murals and stencils are another way to add drama to ceilings. While not advisable to attempt a recreation of the Sistine Chapel, you can instead add options including medallion stencil surrounds for light fixtures or install plaster mouldings and cornicing detail to your ceiling (try the Classic Cornice Company, classiccornice.co.uk, or Stevensons of Norwich, stevensons-of-norwich.co.uk) for added drama and impact. Just be sure to match the style to the era your house was built in (to satisfy any design purists who might rent or buy your place in the future).

**Tip:** the easiest way to make a bold feature of your ceiling is with full gloss paint. Try Farrow & Ball's range from £60, farrow-ball.com





#IHAVETHISTHINGWITHFLOORS

## Tiles and terrazzo

Any visitor to Portugal will have fallen in love with the tiles gracing everything from bus stations to bakeries. With variations across the Mediterranean to the Middle East, there's a vast well of inspiration that can work wonders for floors. Evoke Portugal's beautiful tiles in your home with Fired Earth's Madeira collection ([firedearth.com](http://firedearth.com)).

For contemporary looks, Italian tiling experts Bisazza has moved into cement, marble and wood flooring, working with designers including Tom Dixon and the Campana brothers. This season's range is bold and colourful with cutting-edge optical patterns.

The trend for metro tiles, seen in bathrooms and

### “Terrazzo-effect tiles inject colour and texture to floors”

kitchens across the UK, has now been overtaken by a passion for ombre tiling with colours transitioning from dark to light. “The blending of colour creates a sense of dynamism that you don't get with solid colour,” says designer David Rockwell, who has collaborated with Bisazza on a graphic cement tile range ([bisazza.it](http://bisazza.it)).

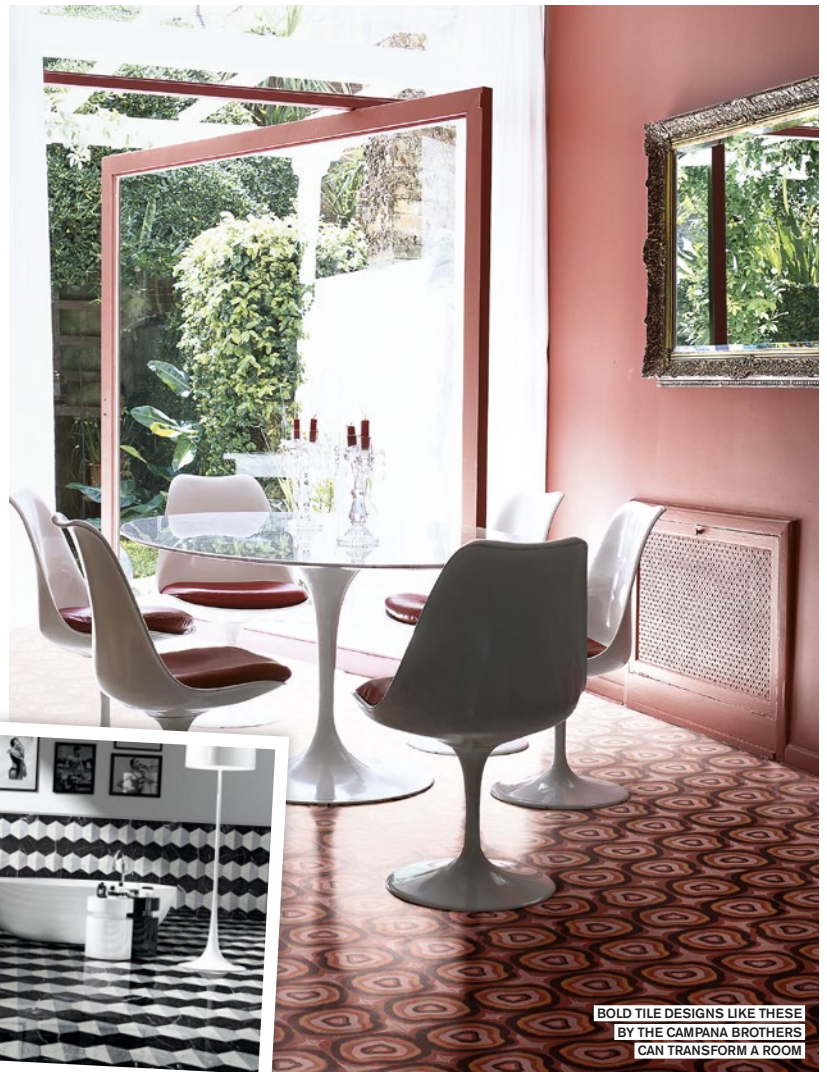
Seventies favourite terrazzo has also returned.

This versatile material features marble chippings set into concrete and has appeared in sophisticated new restaurant launches, including London's Bala Baya and Ella Canta. Diespeker & Co offers bespoke terrazzo options while Mandarin Stone sells terrazzo-effect tiles to inject colour and texture to floors throughout the home.

**Tip:** tiles can make a room feel clinical so mix your materials. Pair a tiled area with wooden flooring or richly textured furnishings.



OPTICAL PATTERNED TILES ARE REPLACING THE MINIMALIST TREND



BOLD TILE DESIGNS LIKE THESE BY THE CAMPANA BROTHERS CAN TRANSFORM A ROOM



USE A VINYL MAT AS A VIBRANT REPLACEMENT FOR A RUG

## Vinyl flooring

The resurgence of lino continues the retro-inspired direction of interiors. When London's high-end Cantonese restaurant Duddell's opened its doors at the end of last year, its striking chequerboard lino flooring drew at least as much praise as its dim sum. “Vinyl flooring gets a bad rep for being outdated but a wave of fresh,

contemporary designs is proof that this interior accessory is a great floor option in your living space,” says Hood, whose online store sells a selection of pop-colour mats for those unsure about a full-floor covering. “A vinyl floor mat is a practical and purse-friendly alternative to a rug or tiles.”

**Tip:** for striking, affordable, easy to clean vinyl flooring, try the geometric prints at Altrafloor ([altrafloor.com](http://altrafloor.com)) or John Lewis ([johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)).



THE FLOOR IN DUDELL'S IS 21TH-CENTURY LINO AT ITS BEST

