Wallpaper - Salubra

Object: Wallpaper

Place of origin: Switzerland (probably, made)

Date: 1959 (made)

Artist/Maker: Le Corbusier, born 1887 - died 1965 (designer)
Salubra Company (manufacturer)

Materials and Techniques: Colour prints from woodblocks; screenprints

Credit Line: Given by Dr Guy Barefoot

Museum number: E.13-2009

Gallery location: Prints & Drawings Study Room, room 514a, case SH, shelf 13

Public access description

The influential architect Le Corbusier (1887-1965) was commissioned by Salubra, a Swiss wallpaper manufacturer to design two series of wallpapers. The first collection was issued in 1932 and reflects the principles expressed in his essay entitled “Architectural Polychromy,” written in the early thirties. The interaction of colour in space and its effects on perception induced Le Corbusier to develop what he called a colour keyboard which he thought would help people to select harmonious colours for interiors.

The first collection consisted of plain coloured papers only. This book shows his second collection for Salubra issued in 1959, which included two very bold large-scale geometric patterns, which could be hung in various ways to form patterns of interlocking or alternating blocks, as well as papers representing marble wall surfaces, and several plain papers. There are pages of notes and facsimile sketches by Le Corbusier showing applications of the wallpapers in various locations including the permanent ‘Le Corbusier’ room in the Museum of Modern Art in Paris, and in students’ rooms at the City University, Paris.

The book once belonged to architect Peter Barefoot (died 2008); in a note with the book he described how he had once used the papers for a bank interior in Ipswich, in 1961.

Descriptive line
Wallpaper sample book, Le Corbusier, Switzerland, 1959

Physical description
A wallpaper sample book bound in cloth and paper boards, containing samples of patterned and plain papers. Lettered on cover and spine with title and with facsimile signature of Le Corbusier.

Dimensions
Height: 25 cm, Width: 40.5 cm, Depth: 2.5 cm

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Object history note
The wallpaper book was acquired by architect Peter Barefoot in 1961. The book, which was donated to the V&A after his death by his son Dr Guy Barefoot, came with a typed note dated 19 May 2006 in which he described the book, its contents, and referred to his own use of the papers for a bank interior in Ipswich c. 1961.

URL
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O184646/salubra-wallpaper-le-corbusier/