



Founded in New York by Tania Johnson in 2010, Tania Johnson Design specializes in custom made, contemporary, hand knotted rugs. The British born designer graduated from London's Royal College of Art with a Master of Arts in woven textiles

**Sunday**

Spending the day with my family while simultaneously getting inspired for a new collection – designing is the part of my work that I love the most but as the business grows, it is becoming increasingly hard to fit it in!

It is an unusually nice day in London, blue skies and bright sunshine, so perfect for a visit to Kew Gardens to combine work and play. While wandering around with my daughters, I snap photos of images that inspire me – finding myself particularly drawn to the patterns formed on the window panes of the glasshouses.

**Monday**

I take the train to London to meet with our PR agency, Industry Publicity. We talk about Decorex, where we just showed our new Water collection, and discuss our plans for the coming months.

Following the meeting, I visit a client's home nearby as she is interested in our round Rainstorm rug after seeing it featured in a magazine. We look at a sample together as she had been thinking of customising the colours to work better with her interior scheme. As it turns out, the tones of the rug

*A week in  
the life of...  
Tania Johnson*



work beautifully in the room and we arrange for me to return with the full round rug to see how it will sit in the space.

Back at the studio I catch up on emails and get started on some custom colour work for a client based in the US. The client is interested in an existing design but would like to see it re-coloured in shades of blues and greys. I use the same design software as our Nepalese manufacturer so I can easily create pretty accurate woven renders which is a great tool for creating a visual of a rug before needing to weave a sample.

#### Tuesday

This morning I have a meeting with my sister Sally-Anne who works on the



'Waterlines' are a pair of silk rugs that can be also be hung as a diptych



Textured 'Daisy' rug in client's home

▲ sales and business development side of the business, I am leaving for New York tomorrow, where I used to be based, so we need to go over a few things and

discuss our schedules while I am away. She is busy with post-Decorex follow up and after quite a flurry of enquiries, we put together some packages containing samples

and simulations to send to out to various companies.

With a few more hours left to continue with new design ideas, I put a mood board together of colours and art that inspire me – images by Agnes Martin, Eva Barth and Richard Misrach in soft, subtle colours that I love. My most recent collection was inspired by reflections on water and the tonal designs in silvery, sepia and gold shades have been really well received. While I need to create something new, I also want to take on board what was successful in the last collection in order to develop equally appealing designs.

#### Wednesday

I spend the morning designing, interspersed with following up on emails and enquiries. Excited by my new ideas, I wish I had more time to spend on them.

Early afternoon is spent packing samples, brochures and press packs for my trip before catching the plane to New York. I am staying with a good friend in Brooklyn, and having lived there for many years, it's always nice to be back.

#### Thursday

I wake up extremely early with jet lag and pop to the local deli for a large coffee, I still miss those! I have a morning meeting with Dania, my US PR and marketing consultant to go over our schedule and catch up on activity since my last visit. Dania has arranged a lunch meeting with a magazine editor to talk over new work and show some of the new samples, and after that we visit another editor at her office downtown.

After that, I stop by Alt for Living, a showroom that now represents our line in the New York area. When I was last over, ▼



Ripples



Whirl

▲ we discussed that it would be good to visit the interior designers they work with together as it can be helpful to hear directly how I work, conceive the designs etc. This is the main purpose of this visit and we go over the meetings scheduled for the next few days.

#### Friday

Another early start – I check emails from Sally-Anne before leaving and we chat about a few UK enquiries.

The first meeting today is with an interior designer at Alt's showroom in Soho. The designer is interested in one of the Water designs but would want it customised for both scale and fiber. She borrows a sample to show her client later that day and we discuss some CAD simulations I will do for her.

Straight after we load up our rug samples and race off to another designer meeting uptown. This client has not seen the line before so I explain how each rug starts ▼



The photograph that inspired  
'Splash' rug

▲ with a photo I have taken and discuss the different qualities of each of the designs in the collection. It is always important to see and feel actual samples, as no image can really convey the quality of a finely knotted wool or wool and silk rug. The meeting goes really well and the designer has some projects she is keen to specify the rugs for.

After a quick lunch in a typical NY diner, and having managed to consume an absurdly enormous sandwich, it's back to the showroom. We are meeting a client who is interested in the Ripples design for a country house project. We discuss how best to customise the design according to the client's needs and budget and I arrange to do some colour and scale simulations to help the client visualise the end result.

Later in the afternoon I return to Brooklyn and catch up on emails and make a start



'Splash' rug in situ

on the CAD work. I reflect on a successful, somewhat whirlwind, round of meetings and look forward to spending a relaxing the evening with my friend and host.

#### **Saturday**

My final day in New York and it's a lovely

sunny day. I relish the chance to relax a bit and head, yet again, for a Botanical Garden, this time Brooklyn. It doesn't matter how many times I have been here, there's always something new to photograph and I end the day feeling energized and inspired.