

# On the Town

BY LARA HALE

## DESIGNING WOMAN

The rich colors, intricate design and luxurious materials that compose textile designer Lori Weitzner's fabrics and wallcoverings exude modern sophistication. You'll find Weitzner textiles in chic settings all over the world, from celebrity homes (including Julianne Moore's) to public venues, such as Four Seasons Hotels, and they're included in the collections of many international design museums. They're so luxe they might seem at home on the catwalk, too—and in fact, Weitzner has recently introduced the "Couture Collection" of upholstery fabrics, created in Italian mills that previously had only partnered with fashion designers.

Given their polished appearance, it's somewhat surprising to find out how the textiles in Weitzner's new "Melodia" collection are produced: by hand, using the Old World techniques of global artisans.

"We're working with artisans in seven different countries, using old techniques but trying to do them in a very modern, new and very sophisticated way because otherwise my client is not going to buy them," Weitzner says.

Translating these ancient techniques into luxury goods for the modern world is, as Weitzner puts it, "a wonderful challenge." It's a lot of hit-and-miss, she admits, saying that some of the artisans will be excited and willing to try new things, and others find it more difficult to take their techniques and apply them in a different way. She points to



Textile designer Lori Weitzner in her New York City studio.

the weavers the company recently started working with in Thailand who initially were horrified at the thought of interweaving their traditional Thai silk with a plastic yarn that would make it suitable for modern home use.

"You're seeing the winners," she says, of the fabrics and wallcoverings in the "Melodia" collection. "There are so many

ideas and attempts that never got past the prototypes."

Lori Weitzner will speak about how her company works with Old World artisans on November 5 at Black Bamboo. The event runs from 5:00 to 7 p.m. and is free to the general public. If you'd like to attend, RSVP to the store at [info@black-bamboo.com](mailto:info@black-bamboo.com) or call 816-283-3000.

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