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Ideas of Exchange

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In December 1993 I completed a part time masters degree in textiles at the University of Central England. My programme of study dealt with the integration of printed and embroidered textiles, culminating in a collection of garments produced in collaboration with a fashion student Pammi Sinha. I exhibited this work at New designers 1994 and was one of ten graduates to be awarded a Habitat 30th Anniversary award. This led to a yearlong collaboration between myself Habitat and Habitat's suppliers in India. In this paper I will discuss the issues that emerged from this exchange of ideas.

In 1993 it was relatively rare to see textile craft products which reflected a western design sensibility sold on the high street, Retail outlets like 'Egg' were emerging and having a considerable influence on their main stream counterparts. Egg pioneered by Maureen Doherty and Asha Sarabhai sold contemporary craft pieces predominantly ceramics alongside clothing and soft furnishings. The fabrics sold in Egg many of which were designed and produced by Asha Sarabhai, using a cooperative scheme set up in her native India, revealed a new kind of decoration. An

'Austere form of ornament. Everything for its own sake, but equally every ornament is reasoned by function's

Outlets like 'Egg' are not so unusual in the year 2000 with home ranges emerging from many fashion designers juxtaposing handmade and high tech. Egg was the shop that many stylists and buyers were talking about and trying to