

DIRECTIONS AND DEFINITIONS
GILL SAUNDERS AND
ROSIE MILES

WAGON

PRINTS

SHOWROOM DUMMIES

(established UK, 2003)

Folding screen (below) and wallpaper (facing page) for Mulberry, 2004
Screen: printed at Omnicolour
Digital inkjet prints laminated to reverse of perspex panels
200 x 300 x 3 cm
Wallpaper: prototyped at Omnicolour and printed at Zen, Lancashire
Photogravure
width of roll 52.7 cm
E.380-2005 and E.258-2005
Given by Mulberry and Showroom Dummies

Showroom Dummies is a design collective that unites the complementary talents of artist Abigail Lane, fashion designer Brigitte Stepputtis, printer Bob Pain and Edwin Wright, designer and maker of furniture and theatre props. The group has so far specialized in producing wallpapers, fabrics, tiles and furniture printed with everything from dogs, bugs and lizards to erupting volcanoes and frolicking skeletons; their first collection was called *Interior Motives (Natural Histories and Natural Disasters)*. The designs and chosen motifs are bold, dramatic, theatrical and provocative, well adapted to the kinds of eye-catching display that shop windows demand. For Christmas 2004 the Mulberry Company commissioned them to collaborate on specially designed interiors and window-dressing props for their retail outlets, as well as limited edition printed blankets available to buy.

Lane is a contemporary of Damien Hirst, Sarah Lucas and Gary Hume, and was included in the seminal *Freeze* exhibition that launched the careers of the YBA generation. Much of her work has investigated strategies of display, and has included photographs of museum galleries. She had also built up a collection of photographs of stuffed animals, taking in natural history museums around the world, as part of her fascination with taxidermy which, in Lane's words, results in animals that are 'real and fake at the same time'.⁴ Her independent work before the setting up of Showroom Dummies has included wallpapers patterned with ambiguous motifs, which she installed as the backdrop to macabre or mysterious tableaux. The Mulberry commission inspired folding perspex screens printed with life-size reindeer, and a wallpaper. Like Lane's earlier papers, this is not quite what it seems; it looks at first sight like an elegant rococo-style abstract design, but up close it is obvious that the patterns are arrangements of bones – reindeer bones.

Bob Pain's print company Omnicolour in partnership with sister company K2 Screen has developed print processes for commercial clients which, in tandem with the services of companies such as the wallpaper specialists Zen, allow them to offer artists a range of services that would not be available in the standard fine-art print studio.



