

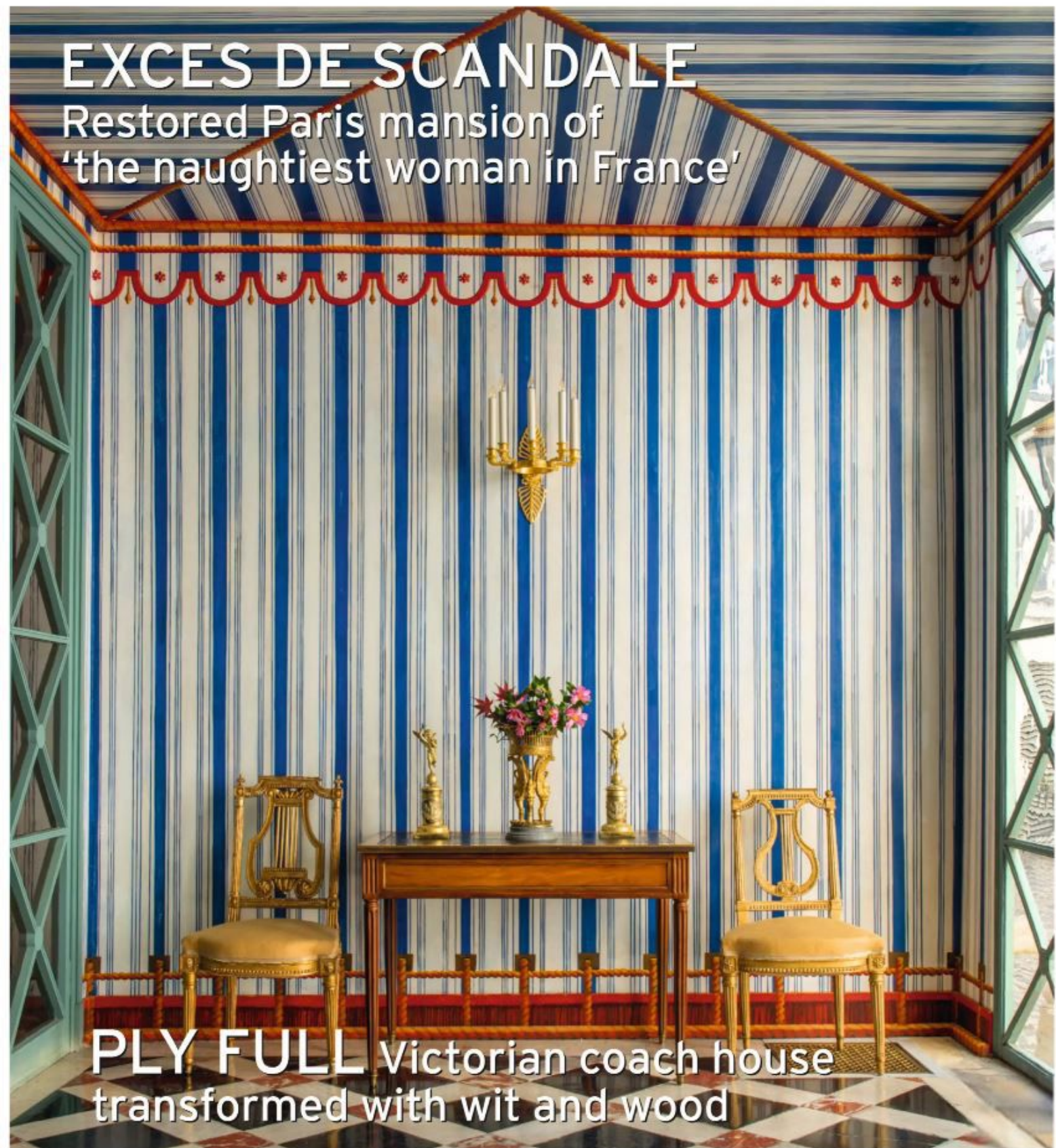
NOVEMBER 2021

# THE WORLD OF INTERIORS

## EXCES DE SCANDALE

Restored Paris mansion of  
'the naughtiest woman in France'

**PLY FULL** Victorian coach house  
transformed with wit and wood





# Vandra Rugs

We combine traditional handicraft expertise with modern design in our handwoven rugs

Vandra Rugs

Stockholm, Sweden, [www.vandra-rugs.com](http://www.vandra-rugs.com)  
Represented in the UK by Sinclair Till  
[www.sinclairtill.co.uk](http://www.sinclairtill.co.uk)

## books



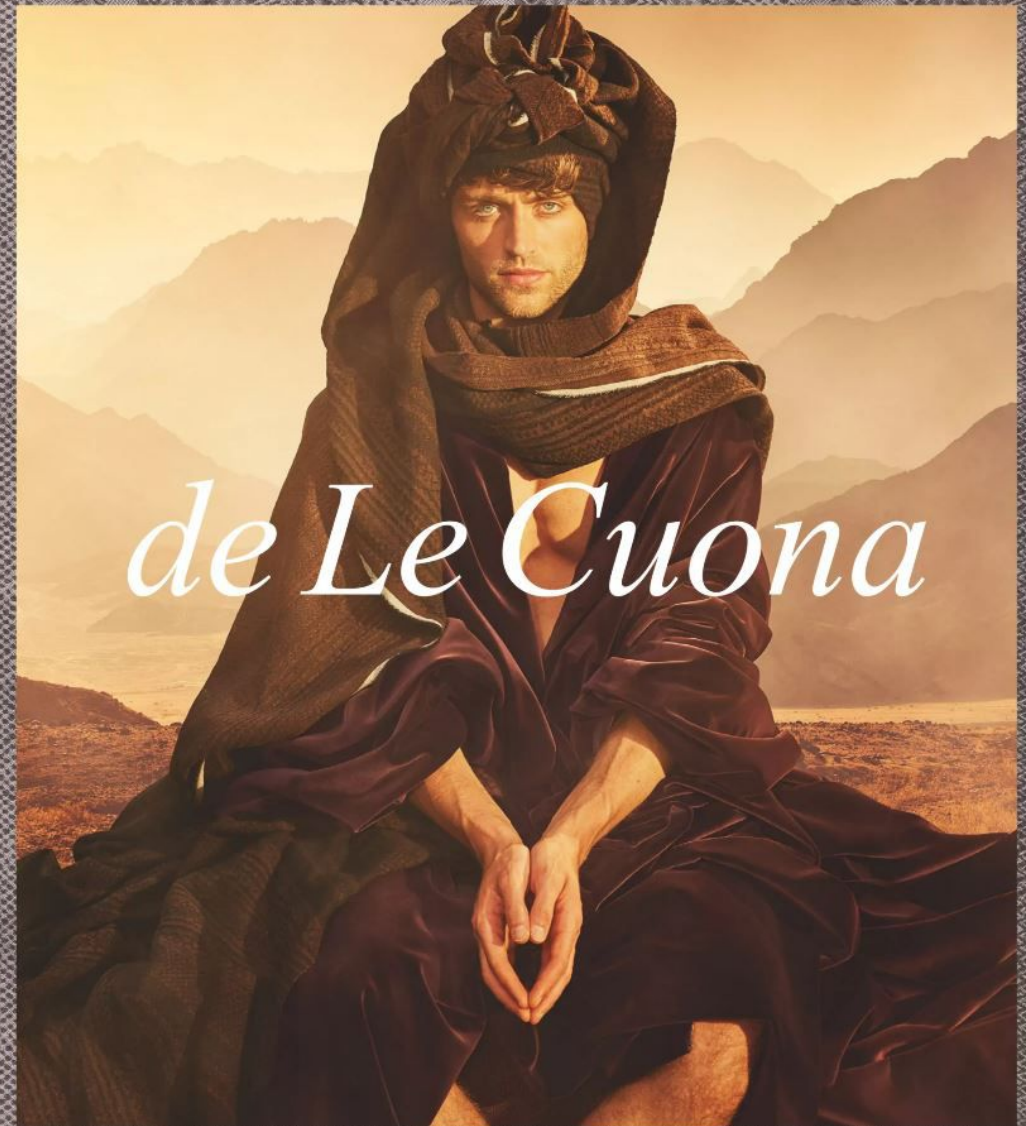
**SHELL: ART & ADVERTISING** (by Scott Anthony et al; Lund Humphries, rrp £39.95) If Frank Pick was the individual with the single biggest influence on art and design in the UK during the early 20th century, then Jack Beddington would come a close second. Appointed publicity manager at Shell in 1929, he followed Pick's example at London Underground in commissioning exceptional artists to create memorable, stylistically diverse and witty posters that celebrated petrol, the brand and the places it could take you. This book provides the first comprehensive study of the Shell Heritage Art Collection, incorporating posters, books, films and newspaper adverts.

As the authors confess, this is controversial given the company's role as a leading purveyor of fossil fuels. Indeed, there is deep irony in the fact that the Arcadian countryside celebrated in its posters was put at risk by the very product the adverts were designed to sell. But knowledge of this paradox does not deter from appreciation of the art. The means of communication was clever too – instead of billboards that might spoil the view, Shell put posters on the sides of its trucks, creating mobile galleries.

Its publicity was multimedia. There were the whimsical Shell Guides by John Betjeman and John Piper, and a film unit of such distinction that during World War II Beddington was seconded to the Ministry of Information to make documentaries. These events are told in lively and well-researched text and one learns much about the Shell Guides in particular, but it's the skill and variety of the poster art that will persuade most people to buy this book. The oil behemoth's output celebrated the British landscape or quirky landmarks, often using contemporary artists to highlight the modern world that petrol had brought into being. Beddington commissioned artists from Paul Nash's Unit One Group – Nash's own *The Rye Marshes* (1932) is a fine example of this Modernist approach – or graphic artists such as Hans Schleger (*Journalists Use Shell*, 1938).

Even artists who took more traditional approaches, such as Vanessa Bell in her pointillist *Alfriston* (1931) or Cedric Morris in the efflorescent *Gardeners Prefer Shell* (1934), did so in an unorthodox way. Not to forget house favourite Edward McKnight Kauffer, who could produce strikingly modern *Metropolis*-influenced graphics such as 1937's *New Shell Lubricating Oils*, photo-collage (*BP Ethyl Anti-Knock Controls Horse-Power*, 1933) or the Neo-Romantic *Stonehenge*, 1931. His omnivorous attitude epitomised Beddington and Shell's approach, creating commercial art of public value ■ PETER WATTS is the author of *Up in Smoke: The Failed Dreams of Battersea Power Station* (Paradise Road)

To order *Shell* for £34 (plus £4.50 UK p&p),  
ring the *World of Interiors* Bookshop on 0871 911 1747



# de Le Cuona

OVERLAND

A LAND IMAGINED

COLLECTION 2021

[delecuona.com](http://delecuona.com)