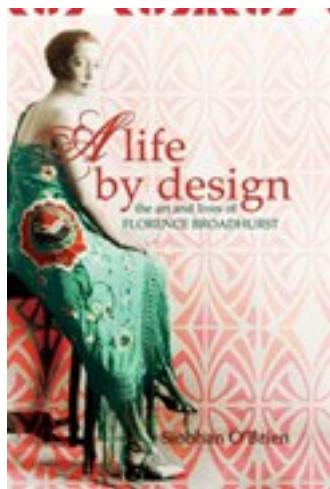


# Life by Design



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著者:Sibohann O'Brien

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Florence Broadhurst, the one-time chanteuse of Shanghai, Bond Street salon owner, world-renowned wallpaper designer and Sydney socialite lived a life steeped in subterfuge and deception. Here for the first time we get a glimpse at the fascinating woman behind the hand-printed brocades.

Late in the afternoon of 16 October 1977, seventy-eight year-old Florence Broadhurst was brutally murdered. Her killer was never found.

The mystery surrounding Florence's death is in keeping with the elegant artifice of her life. Born into humble surrounds in rural Australia Florence soon decided Queensland was too small a stage. Assuming the name Bobby Broadhurst, she sang and danced her way through China before setting up a performing arts academy in Shanghai. After a brief return home she set sail again, this time for London where she married and opened a fashion salon on Bond Street, now going by the name Madame Pellier. A great deal of mystery surrounds this first husband. Was he a Pakistani business man or

English gentry, or both? There are certainly photos of Florence travelling by camel across deserts, then there are the images of her taking tea with a then young Queen Mother

Regardless of who he was, somewhere along the way Percy Kahn was shed and replaced by Leonard Lloyd-Lewis, and in 1949 the couple and their young son Robert returned to Australia. This time Broadhurst claimed to be an English woman escaping post-war London for the sunshine of the promised land'.

Florence had a good eye for colour and design and in 1959 she drew on memories of images she had gathered from her travels through Asia and Europe - butterflies, bamboo, filigree, arabesques and English floral - to create Australian (Hand Printed) Wallpapers. Florence's charms and skill as a consummate self-promoter soon saw her infiltrating Sydney's social set and building an impressive clientele, ranging from Lady McMahon and literary agent Jill Hickson to Qantas and Estee Lauder Cosmetics. By the time of her death Florence Broadhurst was a very successful socialite - and a wealthy woman. Was it one of these factors that lead to her untimely death? Perhaps son Robert could answer many of these questions, but he rarely speaks to the public - and only through written questions.

Having been left to languish for several years after her death, Florence's genius is now undergoing a major revival. Her designs are being reprinted in limited editions and to have an original Broadhurst' is the height of designer chic. Yet who was this at times generous, at times ferociously autocratic and always evasive woman? Like her bold designs Florence was a study in contrasts. Here for the first time we get to glimpse at the woman behind the hand-printed brocades.

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## 书评

"Fabulous, fabulous darling." what a life of Broadhurst. multi identities, multi talents, fascinating life, fascinating human being. a life like hers can only be called 'lived', a life like hers will always shine in every perspective. Fabulous!

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