

Akira Isogawa's  
style secrets

The designer famed for ethereal, embellished garments and beautiful rugs opens the doors to his studio and shares the items he treasures most

AS TOLD TO ANNA McCLELLAND  
STYLING HEIDI ALBERTIRI  
PHOTOGRAPHY NATALIE HUNFALVAY

*"When I'm designing,* I sometimes work directly with the fabric, but sometimes with paper first. I made this paper dress (right) when I was working on a wedding gown and I felt it was worth keeping. It's been on that mannequin since 2007. It was a one-off dress but since then I've made a few similar versions, because it's a great style."



*"My silk scarves* are inspired by the obi you find at flea markets in Kyoto, where I grew up. It's a belt worn by men with a casual kimono, usually in charcoal, navy or black. They're often made of cotton, but I wanted something finer and I wasn't going to wear them as belts, but as scarves. They're dyed using the ancient art of shibori. I guess my dress sense comes from the colours of obi. I wear black or navy, that's mainly it. At my fashion shows I'm usually backstage, trying to be invisible. The irony is that, while I try my best to be in the background, I have to expose myself for the brand. But I'll do it in black, at least. Not in red!"



*"My mother passed away* 14 years ago and I only have one photo of her. We lived in a big house in Kyoto and last year my father sold it. Before he left, I went back, looked through the drawers and found these photos of my mother and aunt [below]."



Above: Akira Isogawa Hirameki Collection 'Batik' rug, \$4950/2m x 3m, Designer Rugs.

*"Every six months or so I feel the urge to go back to Japan and experience it again"*

*"We keep the paper shapes*

of garments as a record of what we've made, and to help manufacture the garments from the sample collection. I spend a lot of time sketching designs, but I miss making them as much as I used to. A lot of my time is taken up by administrative tasks, so I can't do large pieces, just small pieces myself."



*"These boots are*

made by a traditional Japanese shoemaker in a style usually worn by tradesmen, and made from cotton. A shop I ran into by accident in Kyoto made them in leather, which I'd never seen before."



*"As a teen,* I was into a Japanese electro new-wave band called Yellow Magic Orchestra. This was in the '80s. Since then, one of the members, Ryuichi Sakamoto, has released a number of solo albums that I listen to all the time. **hb**

UNLOCK  
THE PAGES  
of home beautiful  
with netpage™



HERE'S HOW TO GET STARTED

1. **DOWNLOAD** the FREE Netpage app from the App Store or Google Play.
2. **LAUNCH** the Netpage app and scan any page with a Netpage logo.
3. **DISCOVER** the possibilities – clip, save, share, watch videos and buy off the page!

Download the free  
Netpage app from



iPhone is a trademark of Apple Inc., registered in the US and other countries. App Store is a service mark of Apple Inc. Netpage is also available on Android devices. Using Netpage requires an internet connection and data charges may apply. Persons under 18 years of age should seek the bill payer's permission before downloading or using the app. Pacific Magazines takes reasonable steps to ensure any prices we publish are correct (as advised by the supplier) at the publication date. To the maximum extent permitted by Law, Pacific Magazines accepts no responsibility for, and shall have no liability to you in relation to, errors or price fluctuations, the content of any services you access using Netpage, the safety and security of any data you transmit using the application or any data charges you incur. Terms and conditions apply. Visit [www.pacificmags.com.au/netpage](http://www.pacificmags.com.au/netpage) for details. Use of Netpage is for your personal and domestic use only, not for any commercial use. Pacific Magazines retains all rights to Home Beautiful and the pages within the magazine at all times.