



Chella Textiles: Celebrating Ten Years of Out-of-the-Box Innovation for the Out-of-Doors

Chella Textiles is a corporate paradox. A decade-old company with an age-old heritage, it creates outdoor fabrics so uncommonly beautiful they are often used indoors. Pioneering technical innovations – most downright improbable, all industry firsts -- materialize out of halcyon headquarters in Santa Barbara. And now, despite or perhaps due to its ingenious iconoclasm, this contrarian little company has become a go-to resource for luxury performance textiles.

Founded by Lee Menichella in 2000, Chella is characterized by its owner's inherent belief that nothing is beyond the realm of possibility. "Enduring style and technical superiority are not mutually exclusive," says Menichella, whose affinity for both are the foundation of Chella.

A decade ago, Menichella recognized the limited offerings in outdoor textiles which -- despite designers' increasing demand for saturated shades and strong design -- consisted of coarse canvas in a short list of solid colors and the obligatory awning stripe. His vision for Chella crystallized upon meeting Scott Bodenner, a well-connected fabric wunderkind.

Menichella enlisted Bodenner's technical expertise, and working together their mission is to create logic-defying textiles that delight even the most jaded design devotee. Chella's singular focus on luxury performance textiles manifests the discipline necessary to develop the finest solution-dyed fabrics offered anywhere.

“I see my job as intuiting what designers want before they even know themselves,” says Menichella. “Scott then turns my most eccentric ideas – a true performance matelasse; the first outdoor chenille -- into solution-dyed acrylics with great structural and color sophistication.” To the delight of the design community, Menichella’s strength lies in achieving what was thought impossible. “We thrive on it,” he maintains.

Menichella shuns faster/better/cheaper production options and insists on weaving at top-notch European and American mills, some of whose legacies date to the 15th century. “Certain mills employ true artisans who’ll have thirty, forty years’ weaving expertise,” says Menichella. “Their parents worked there and their children will, too.”

As more designers and homeowners discover Chella’s distinctive designs, the company is intent on maintaining the enigmatic Yin and Yang that renders Chella a rarity, not only in the outdoor textile arena but among fabric houses at large.

Stunningly designed and meticulously woven, Chella textiles are available through interior designers and Chella’s international showroom network. To view the complete Chella collection, visit www.chellatextiles.com.

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