

Nikita Heloise Harrison

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*The rebirth of Maximalism in a Minimalist age, and the ethical
implications on the modern consumer and maker*

Extended Essay

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Synopsis

In the decade since 2007, Maximalism has made a comeback as a design style, despite the dominance of the Minimalist aesthetic. Contemporary designers have brought sophistication and depth to a style which was once considered loud and garish. In an age of mass-production and uncertainty, consumers are attracted to the identity and individuality of Maximalism. Companies such as ABC Carpet & Home or the URBN brands encourage consumers to independently design their homes as a reflection of the self. They import a variety of homeware - from bedding to curtains, prints to crockery - and curate collections of objects for a Maximalist interior, and market it as a lifestyle choice to consumers. The disconnect between the objects on sale in Western stores, and the hard work of craftspeople making them is enormous. Maximalism has created a market for imported items sold at disproportionate prices, with little transparency in terms of the working conditions of artisans and craftspeople, profit distribution or the environmental impact of production in a low-cost economy. This essay seeks to define Maximalism as it evolves, understanding the product demand it has created, and recognise the impacts on the makers of these crafted goods, oceans away from the consumer.