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ANN SACKS PRESENTS CHINOIS BY ROBERT KUO

PORTLAND, Ore. (May 26, 2013) – In keeping with the company’s tradition of artistry and hand-craftsmanship, ANN SACKS has introduced a new ceramic tile collection, Chinois, by renowned artist Robert Kuo. Chinois is completely handcrafted by artisans in the ANN SACKS, Portland facility. For his latest collection, Kuo gives a nod to the West with his Art Deco-inspired *Lantern* design, and incorporates two tiles, *Hua* and *Kuai*, from his ANN SACKS Carved Stone series, with the remainder based upon Kuo’s love of nature and classic Chinese motifs and imagery. The effective translations also reflect the textural beauty found in Kuo’s works that employ the craft of repoussé, the art of hammering decorative relief into metal. Ushering this decorative artistry into the 21st century, Kuo selected ceramic as his medium for a harmonious blend of dimensional tiles that exude depth of color.

Kuo looked to ANN SACKS to produce a more traditional Chinese glaze for the collection to represent various times in China’s fabled, artistic past. To achieve this, ANN SACKS compared the glazes they devised to pottery that Kuo had reproduced in similar likenesses to pieces found in his private collection primarily from the Song Dynasty (960 BCE – 1279 BCE), renowned for its cream glazes. This period in history produced understated, simple forms, with monochromatic and subtle colors, including the highly coveted Chinese celadon, which was perfected during this time. ANN SACKS approached the challenge by studying the science of firing from a retrospective viewpoint to ascertain what requirements would be needed to mirror the period colorations while employing the latest in technology – the Blaauw kiln – which fires at Cone 6, or approximately 2200 degrees Fahrenheit. After significant development, ANN SACKS found that by combining its proprietary glazes and adjusting the thickness as needed then firing the tiles through an approximately 12 hour cycle, they could recreate the desired satiny shades of the original pottery pieces.

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Seven distinctive designs, in a color palette of remarkable depth, comprise the collection:



Kuai: Translating to “pieces” in English, *Kuai* is inspired by the pattern of tree bark.



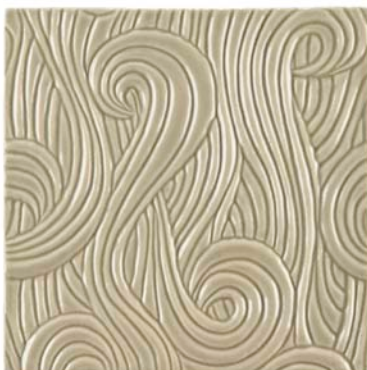
Hua: Meaning “flowers” in Chinese. Flower imagery can be found throughout its art and literature with each flower having specific meaning and purpose.



Shan: Remarking on how nature plays a pivotal role in Chinese arts, *Shan* means “mountain” in Chinese with a textural face giving the appearance of topography.



Toad Skin: Kuo pays homage to the three-legged toad – a prominent figure in Chinese literature and superstitions – and considered good fortune.



Dragon Swirl: Inspired by a ritualistic bronze design from the Shang Dynasty (1766 BCE – 1122 BCE), Kuo acknowledges the legendary creature’s place in Chinese mythology.

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Ice Crackle: Inspired by the glazes used on “guan” or “emperor’s” ware.

Lantern: Reminiscent of the pattern and symmetry of 1930s Art Deco designs.



Most designs are offered in the collection’s seven colorways: Mist Green (*shown*), Wasabi, Tea Dust, Ecru, Lake, Chestnut, and Black Pearl.

Founded in 1981, ANN SACKS has built its reputation with inspiring designs in tile, stone, plumbing, lighting and accessories. Based in Portland, Ore., the company is a division of the Kohler Co. Interiors Group, a wholly owned subsidiary of Kohler Co. Ann Sacks Tile and Stone, Inc., along with Kallista plumbing and Robern mirrored cabinetry and vanities are part of the Kohler Interiors Decorative Products sector. Under its Furniture sector resides Baker Knapp & Tubbs, Inc., Baker furniture, Baker Knapp & Tubbs Showrooms and Baker Stores, McGuire Furniture Company, and Mark David hospitality furniture.

Founded in 1873 and headquartered in Kohler, Wis., Kohler Co. is one of America’s oldest and largest privately held companies. Kohler is a global leader in the manufacture of kitchen and bath products, engines and power generation systems, cabinetry, tile and home interiors, and international host to award-winning hospitality and world-class golf destinations.

For additional information regarding Chinois by Robert Kuo or other ANN SACKS products, consumers can call toll-free 1-800-278-TILE or visit the ANN SACKS website at www.annsacks.com.

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