

# Mario Buatta's Books Are Up For Sale Again

Rare book dealer Kinsey Marable is releasing 1,000 volumes from the decorator's collection.



BY OLIVIA HOSKEN — MAR 11, 2020



When the "Prince of Chintz" [Mario Buatta auction went live in January](#), over 4,000 people came to view the interior designer's prized collection.

"The average auction for a sale like this has between 250 to 300 lots," Dennis Harrington, head of English and European furniture at Sotheby's told *T&C* at the time. "Mario Buatta has over a thousand." When the auction officially kicked off, designers in attendance described the scene as a "blood bath" with the sale fetching \$7.6 million (more than two times the original estimate). As the numbers grew higher—\$52,000 for a Chinese lacquer secretary and over \$60,000 for a set of Dodie Thayer lettuce ware—many were left empty handed.





A library curated by Kinsey Marable.  
RICHARD KEITH LANGHAM

But, rare book dealer Kinsey Marable has a consolation prize for those still wanting more— 1,000 consolation prizes to be exact. He was among a select few sellers invited to peruse Buatta's home and select some items for sale.

He is starting to release the books in lots today, many of which have Buatta's custom bookplate and are signed and dated by the designer himself. (Look for regular updates on Marable's [Instagram](#).)

"I don't think the Fire Marshall would have been amused," Marable says. "[Buatta] must have filled all of his bookshelves up a good 30 years ago, so there was no place for the next 20 years of purchases except the floor; there were stacks and towering stacks. I had to drastically prune the collection, taking only the very best. I just couldn't deal with 5,000 books, although I slightly regret it now."

## A Selection of Kinsey Marable's Favorite Titles



Japanese by Cecil Beaton COURTESY KINSEY MARABLE



The books are primarily focused on architecture, interiors, gardens, and decorative arts. "I think he used books as if they were textbooks. His copy of John Fowler's *English Decoration of the 18th Century* was dogeared and marked with Benjamin Moore paint strips. He and John Fowler were very close, definitely his greatest mentor and maybe more. Fowler's letters and articles were left in lots of books," says Marable.

Despite Buatta's dubious storage situation, each book still has its book jacket, which is not always a given. "I bought Nancy Lancaster's library years ago and she took off every jacket and then wrapped the books in red wallpaper. **Note to normal people: don't do this,**" Marable jokes.

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