

Wallpaper*

FEBRUARY 2008

*DESIGNINTERIORSFASHIONARTLIFESTYLE

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THE DESIGN AWARDS ISSUE 2008

Wallpaper's annual
sweep of star turns and
shining moments





Best chopper

L'Hélicoptère by Hermès

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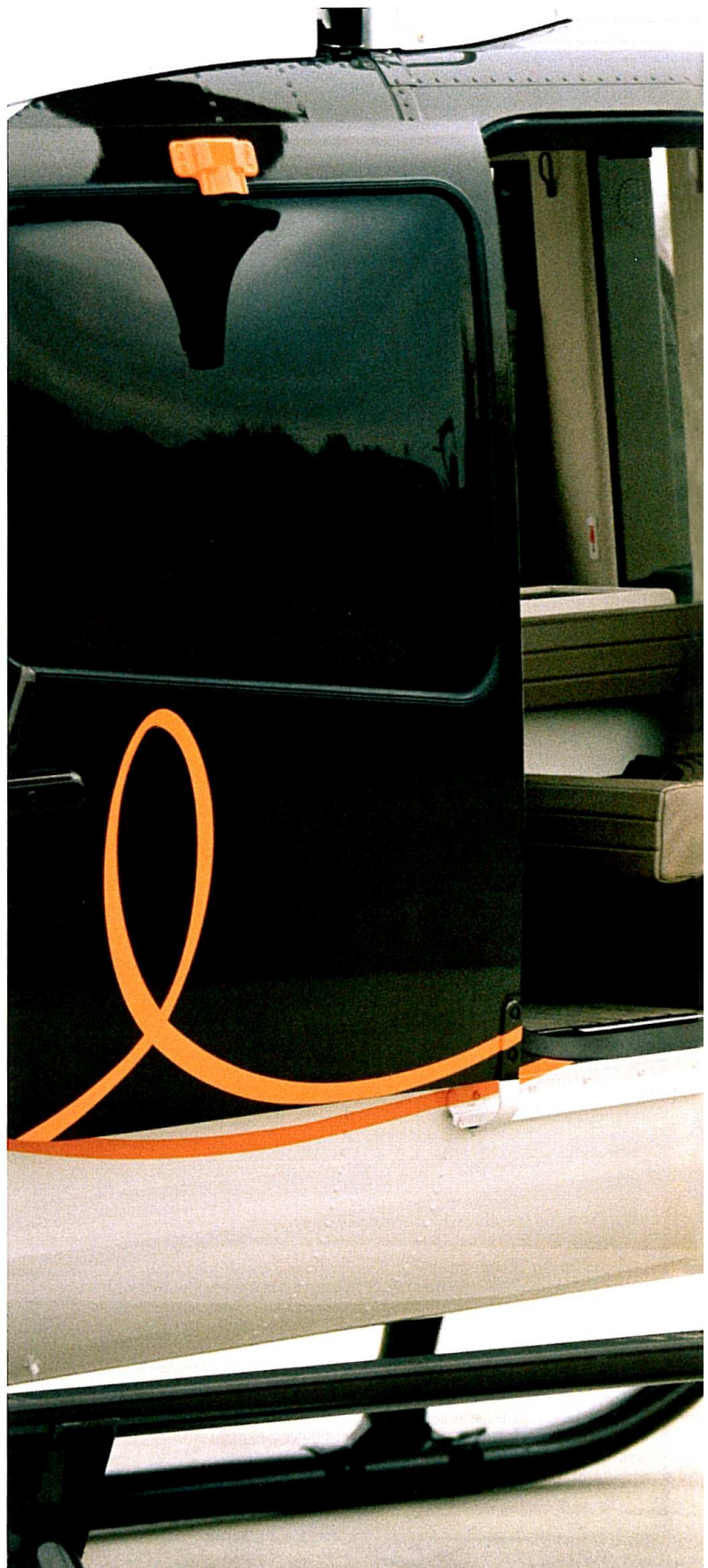
The world's most desirable chopper, from Hermès and Eurocopter, has us in a spin. Initially, the plan was for Hermès simply to restyle the interior of Eurocopter's bestseller, the twin-engined EC 135. But it soon became clear that the collaboration was also likely to produce much more fundamental improvements.

Many of the 50 or so changes proposed by Gabriele Pezzini, a freelance designer who often works on special projects for Hermès, resulted in technical advances as well as aesthetic ones. For example, he suggested a complete redesign of the landing gear, which not only made for a sleeker-looking craft, but also one that's much easier to get into. Internally, the cabin has been completely overhauled to maximise space, and the rear passenger seats have been replaced by a banquette, covered in handcrafted, naturally grained calf leather. Wonders have been worked with the storage space; consoles, drawers and cabinets are now recessed and all unnecessary detailing has been eliminated. Toile H canvas, which has been used for travel goods since the 1920s, covers the walls and ceiling, softening both noise and vibration. Indeed, no detail is unstudied or unimproved. The safety instructions, previously just stickers, are now woven like garment labels. The finished interior is calm, sober and very luxurious.

Such a project came more naturally to Hermès than you might expect. The brand, established in 1837 as a saddle and harness maker, has travel in its DNA. It has fitted out both cars and boats, and recently it established Hermès Ganier, a division devoted to special projects like the helicopter.

L'Hélicoptère was launched in September last year with a price tag of €5.6m. Don't hesitate to make a down payment, though – Eurocopter is set to produce just six a year. ★
www.eurocopter.com, www.hermes.com

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AIR CRAFT

L'Hélicoptère has the Hermès touch inside and out, from the seats covered in the brand's Taurillon Clemence leather in 'Etoupe' to the sleek landing gear

Turtleneck jumper, €1,060; silk scarf, €255; mink collar with silver chain, €1,400; boots, €1,250, all by Hermès, tel: 33.1 49 92 38 92. Vintage overalls, Aviator sunglasses, £96, by Ray-Ban, www.rayban.com

Fashion: Kerstin Hermann
Grooming: Erol Koyu
Model: Theresa Kosminski at Mega