

CELEBRITY STYLE

Thanks to *Bridgerton*, the Modern Renaissance of Regency Decor Continues

A new pop-up puts the best examples on display, including a new collaboration from AD100 designer Sheila Bridges and Wedgwood china

By Stephanie Sporn

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The Carousel @ Bloomingdale's Bridgerton Pop-Up Shop—featuring the new Wedgwood x Sheila Bridges collection, pictured—will be on until May 15. Photo: Frank Frances Studio

Not long after *Bridgerton* made its piquant debut on Netflix, antique dealers and experts saw a spike in Regency-style furnishings and homeware—a common phenomenon when period dramas become blockbuster sensations. Harnessing the rise of Regencycore and just ahead of the Shondaland show's season two premiere, Bloomingdale's 59th Street flagship is transforming The Carousel, its rotating pop-up shop, into an English garden party inspired by the Hastings' sumptuous outdoor ball in the season one finale.

Opening in store on March 3 and available online, the curation will present everything from gowns to glassware by female designers and designers of color. Many items are exclusive to Bloomingdale's, but, perhaps, none embody the spirit of the genre-defying show more than the launch of the Wedgwood x Sheila Bridges collection. Two years in the making, the line features the designer's iconic Harlem Toile de Jouy imagery on the British heritage brand's fine bone china in punchy hues.

"I wanted to work with a heritage brand that I already loved and collected," Bridges says. She's an AD100 designer who fondly remembers trading Jasperware in different colors and shapes with her late mother. Beyond its aesthetic appeal, Wedgwood is also significant to Bridges for its involvement in the anti-slavery movement. In 1787, founder Josiah Wedgwood self-funded and produced ceramic medallions depicting an enslaved man with the inscription "Am I not a man and a brother?" that he distributed to supporters of Britain's Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, of which he was a member. Bridges was gifted a black-and-white one that she has since turned into a necklace.

"I designed Harlem Toile 17 years ago for my home, and it has taken on a life of its own," Bridges says of the design, which subverts typical late 1700s French toile de Jouy narratives with scenes lampooning stereotypes associated with African American culture. Bridges believes that after the events of 2020 Harlem Toile has resonated with a new generation. Harlem Toile wallpaper is now in the collection of New York's Cooper Hewitt and the Smithsonian Design Museum, and Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) has acquired Converse x Union x Sheila Bridges Harlem Toile sneakers and a hoodie. "Part of the reason why I love designing products is the chance to share my point of view and my experience as a Black woman. I always call myself a visual storyteller, and that's what toiles did historically."



The Carousel @ Bloomingdale's Bridgerton Pop Up.

Photo: Daniel Salemi

Unique to her Wedgwood collection, Harlem Toile scenes are individually spotlighted on teapots, mugs, plates, serving bowls, and teacup and saucer sets ranging from \$100 to \$325. She has designed each piece as a holistic experience, where playful narratives continue on the side of items and even the backs. Out-of-place basketballs and chickens serve as subtle winks to Harlem Toile die-hard collectors.

“I wanted the designs to feel celebratory and happy,” Bridges says. “I love when there’s a sense of humor and unpredictability. Like in *Bridgerton*, you didn’t expect the queen to be a Black woman. It’s about shifting the narrative, which I find incredibly thought-provoking.”

Below, discover other home decor items from The Carousel @ Bloomingdale’s *Bridgerton* Pop-Up Shop. You may just get inspired to throw the ultimate premiere party when the show returns on March 25.

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