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One of my favourite starting points for inspiration when trying to come up with new, unconventional motif ideas for surface patterns is to look around for pieces of everyday life that are often meant to be overlooked, unnoticed and discarded. Bread clips, fruit stickers, security envelopes, registration marks... all are little pieces of art in their own right. Why not celebrate their short lives? It is the image of “one man’s trash” elevated and treasured.

Over a period of about six months, I cut all of the registration and printer’s marks from the slug areas of most of the packaging that was brought into the house, with the intention of eventually assembling them into a pattern. Here they are in all their unique beauty, a few altered digitally only to remove any hint of their origin. And even though I have turned the pattern into fabric, wallpaper and gift wrap, saving the clippings became a habit —I still look for and collect any different designs I find when disassembling boxes for the recycling bin!

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