

# Eight Is Enough

Design Forecaster Michelle Lamb Reveals Emerging Looks  
For The Home Furnishings Market At The Spring '06 High Point Show

**BY EDWARD NADER, JR., CPF**

Much of the talk at the High Point International Home Furnishings Market in North Carolina during the 2006 spring show focused on the direction of design.

The High Point shows take place twice a year (spring and fall), gathering the world's top designers to premier upcoming home

fashions. It's the largest wholesale home furnishings event in the world with an average of 2,600 exhibitors and 80,000 attendees at each show, according to High Point officials. The show takes place in 188 buildings, totaling 12 million square feet of show space.

A speech titled "Trend Focus: Eight Emerging Looks for 2007-2008" by Michelle Lamb



The Ingrid by Comfort Designs uses the subtle detailing of oval buttons to add visual interest to this clean architectural piece.

sparked lots of discussion on upcoming trends. Lamb is an international authority on trend forecasting for the home furnishings industry. From neutrals to special effects to simplicity, she highlighted a variety of styles that likely will have mass appeal for 2007 and beyond. Here's a closer look at the eight areas she choose:

**1) WHITE OUT**

Simply put, white is huge. There is a strong movement toward purity, spurred by lots of talk of arctic melting and polar icecaps. The movie "March of the Penguins" has done a lot to bring about this awareness. The entrance at Maison de Object, a respected design show in Paris where global trends are born, was entirely all white furniture at the past exhibition. It was a breathtaking view of purity and crisp, clean design with high impact.

There is something about the purity of white that always helps it reemerge. Be it the peacefulness, the cleanliness or whatever, white has a purifying and rejuvenating way of drawing us in.

White is huge, even in accessories. Form is front and center as the most important design element. Watch for white lacquer frames to start poppin' up. Patterns are smaller with more of a texture than an actual pattern. Gloss is making its way back to the forefront, and much of the glass is colored but punctuated with clear detailing.

White shown with black is backing off and will be mixed with more grays instead. Black crystal is displayed with clear cuttings. Black wood will be seen in a limited amount. A suggestion: If you use black, focus on it for texture, and give the dominant role to white.

Also on the forefront are neutrals, which were starting to appear in 2005 but now are here in full force. A leading paint supplier, Benjamin Moore's new color introductions include Bone White, Bashful, Perlite and Sandy Gray.



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Taupe is used as an accessory. Some of the major manufacturers and designers featuring neutrals are Hickory with Nude, Fergusson with Blush and Laneventure with No Name. Designer Barbara Berry is offering a full palette of neutrals for her new collection for Henredon. Neutrals are enchanted and informed by color, making them more personal. Familiar light tan and beige linen reinforces this color play in fabrics.

Red-toned browns and chestnut browns are gaining ground. The browns will not be as deep but will become much lighter in tone. This is a parallel to the auto industry. Beige is gaining in both transportation and home decor.

Gray is directional. Woods washed in gray are becoming prominent. The development of gray is a significant influence on the advancement of neutrals. Colors are less garish when mixed with grays. A strong gray influence can be seen in both Nicole Miller and Jonathan Adler collections. Adler is going a bit silver crazy. You can see a lot of chrome and mirrors in his tables and consoles.

“Gray and brown step out,” Lamb says. Baker (a fine furniture maker) is really moving forward with the gray-and-brown combination. Greige—a combination of gray and beige—will move fast for the next two years. Beige hues are being layered to ground them on one another.

Natural and gray accessories are accented with black. Both black and white accessories are accented with values of gray.

## 2) GOING GREEN

The media constantly influences society. Magazines such as *Time*, *Vanity Fair* and *Wired* all are boasting green. The constant reference to green in an environmental sense ultimately leads to the use of green as an actual color.

Light greens are usually popular in the spring, but in 2007-2008, expect to see them year-round. There is definitely a cooling trend. Yellow-cast greens and bamboo will emerge as leaders and continue to take a strong influence as we build environmental consciousness. Greens are cool-



The Arden by Comfort Designs is a combination of retro and futurism. The wooden stiletto legs make a sharp statement.

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ing down, and light greens will become “minty.” Nature calls from a myriad of colors. Greens are being mixed with black—a trend that’s becoming a big deal. This holiday season, watch for layering greens, as opposed to all red, which has been in the lead for the last five years.

Materials leading into 2008 will be recycled. Some will be a subtle statement while others offer will be more obvious. A great example of this subtlety is the “pebble rug” from Dreamweavers. Made from recycled one-piece baby outfits, the rug looks like natural pebbles. It’s bound to be a hit.

Environment Furniture Inc. has devoted an entire collection to Peroba wood. This distinctive collection combines beautifully aged Brazilian Peroba wood with that of noble hardwoods harvested from today’s eco-friendly plantation trees. Peroba wood, reclaimed from 100-year-old homes in Paraña, Brazil, displays extraordinary textures and exceptionally beautiful grain flows.

### 3) BUY THE ITEM

Another trend: Buying the item, not the collection. The mid-1980s showed a strong need to match as much as possible. This “decorator’s style,” as it was once coined, has given way to a paradigm shift away from prints, chintz palettes and English florals. End tables, lamps and plates were all parts of sets built on a shared palette with a few design elements and a repeating pattern throughout the room.

Eclecticism has vastly changed all of that. Now, curves are mixed with straights, patterns mixed with plain, and high-end mixed with cheap chic. Woods are all over the place. Now, rooms come together by the piece. Each piece is selected on its own merit and has the ability to stand alone.

Today’s new mix is considered “unique, ferocious and committed,” Lamb says.

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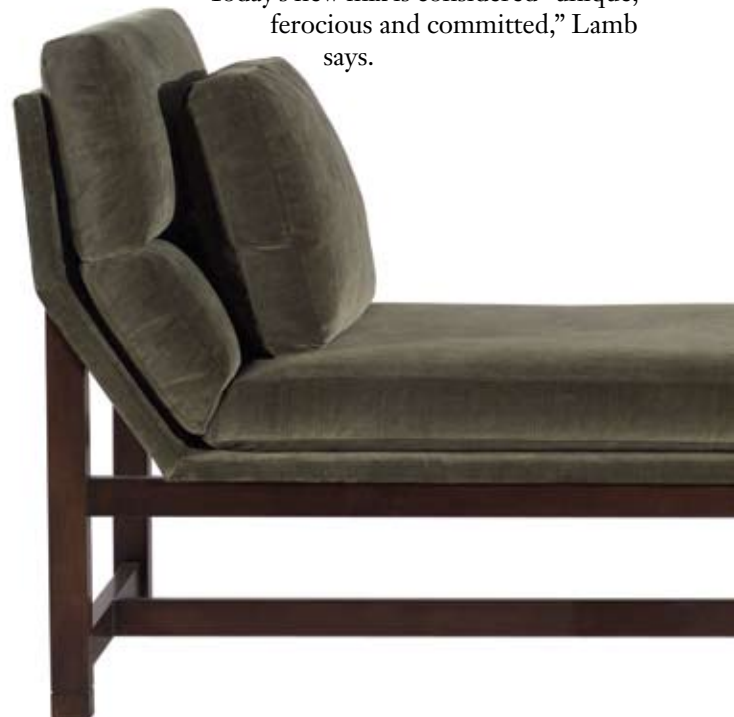
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Global Views organic shape with a painted wooden pattern and a natural green inside—definitely a tribute to “going green”

#### 4) THE FABRIC MIX

Each and every selection should have a voice of its own. Expect a trend toward velvets, linens and silks. Velvet is becoming a common headliner in textiles, and it's poised to get even bigger in 2007-2008. You will see velvet in both solids and crushed with patterns. Wools will become a large accent textile. There will still be some chenille present, but you will see it become much chunkier and used sparingly.

Linens also will take on a chunkier feel, certainly for the next 18 months and beyond. Tea-stained

linens are out. Linens are sharing the natural limelight with bulkier hemp, supporting the “go-green” movement. A trend toward a softer hand in textiles is definitely coming. You can expect to see textiles exercising more options of versatile fibers that are beyond specialty through 2009. Bamboo is used in all capacities from flooring to fabrics.

Although the natural, “go-green” movement is in the forefront of consumers' minds, the glamour effect isn't over. You will still see a lot of silks for their opulent feel. Raw silks, satins, and jacquards are prevalent in clothes and are making their transition to home furnishings to draw luster. You should start to see a lot of textiles “with guts,” Lamb predicts. Fabrics will have varying levels of shine for the next two to three years.

#### 5) LEATHER LUST

Leather continues to make a climb. Metallic leathers are making headway. You will begin to see these in rosey golds and lots of copper. These will be seen in both leather and pleathers. Copper is becoming the new metallic all around. In the last three years, copper prices have tripled, which indicates the consumer's demand for this metal.

We will begin to see interesting and unconventional detail

Zane Chaise and Ottoman from Hickory Chair, designed by Thomas O'Brian



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## HIGH POINT | INTERNATIONAL HOME FURNISHINGS MARKET

such as tufting and tucking of leather as well as a lot of unusual intermixing of different leathers and materials. Skins will not be eliminated yet but are now more weathered and worn. Skins being used have smaller scales, such as python, sharkskin and eel, which can be expected for the next two years or so. Suedes will also become updated by adding detailing such as perforating.

### 6) SPECIAL EFFECTS

The glamour movement has changed the perception of luster and shine. According to designer Larry Laslo, mirrors are hot. Deco mirrors are also on the rise. Light play is a big part of this. Faceted objects are used to project brilliance and sparkle. The light tends to play off the objects in a rich manner rather than a bright, glaring way. Small lacquer tables are a nice addition to add a bit of shine to an otherwise dull room. Many designers are flocking to frames for unusual texture. Whether natural or classic, a new finish makes it interesting.



Wall vase by Global Views

### 7) LIGHTEN UP

Patterns are covering less surface, leaving more negative space. Patterns are smaller and much more wispy and simple. Lines are very fine, from simple to complex. Even wavy lines have fluidity. Borders are more of a repetitive pattern such as a Fretwork or Greek key. Even cushions are somewhat bordered with an unusually thick cording or welting defining the tailored space. The emerging trend is toward sharp corners and geometric forms, well into 2008.

### 8) CULTURAL TRENDS

Asian still prevails, but it is now less rustic and less trendy, with almost a classic, but not stuffy, approach. Bohemian-Czech will rise with lots of trims and embroidery. You will see appliqué, ironwork patterns and fur accents.

Adding a contemporary spin to an African influence makes it fresh. Abstract animal skins fuse with modern. Antlers are

#### UPCOMING HIGH POINT SHOWS:

- Oct. 16-22, 2006
- March 26-April 1, 2007
- Oct. 1-7, 2007

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a big deal. Exotic, classic elements are being looked at in a modern light. The arts-and-crafts movement has been on the rise and is expected to be strong in the coming years. □

Edward Nader, CPF, covers the High Point shows for DECOR. He is the owner of Nader's Gallery, a contemporary gallery in Shreveport, La. His gallery is a multiple DECOR Top 100 Art & Framing Retailers Award winner. His e-mail is [Edward@nadersgallery.com](mailto:Edward@nadersgallery.com).

# Vegas World Market Challenges High Point

**BY ROB SPADEMAN**

Although comfortable walking shoes are a must for any trade event, the 110-degree temperatures that come with a Las Vegas event July 24-28 added a dimension of "Survivor"-like uniqueness to the burgeoning World Market in Las Vegas.

To beat the heat, and comfort the 60,000-plus attendees, high-speed fans at face-level blew cool water directly at visitors, who walked canvas-topped walkways between the temporary pavilions and the expanding World Market Center. (Officials confidently predict 12 million square feet of display space by 2012). Outdoor badge pick-up was accelerated by heat-reducing umbrella-ed hosts, who hustled attendees through the process and sent them on their ways.

Quickly rivaling the established High Point show in North Carolina, the Las Vegas World Market has established itself as a powerful alternative event for the furniture and design trades. The relative compactness of the 2 million square feet of display space and the attractiveness of a Las Vegas destination have catapulted the popularity of this twice-yearly event.

For art and framing companies serving the OEM market, the World Market offers an opportunity to press the flesh with clients, see how art and framing OEMs display their products, eval-

uate general design trends, and evaluate trade reaction to their offerings.

Many of the companies offering framed art at the World Market told us during our visit that they shop the DECOR Expo shows to source both art and framing products that eventually end up on display at their World Market displays in Vegas and High Point.

A unique presence in the permanent displays of the World Market Center is Roma Moulding of Toronto, Canada. Although compact and relatively easy to navigate, the Las Vegas Market in July is not for the faint of heart. Although logistical flaws noted at the January version of the market event appeared to be remedied, be prepared for lots of walking and sensory overload (how many lamps can you look at before they all become the same?).

Although the Las Vegas World Market presents buyers with an appealing alternative to the now-by-comparison small-town, spread-out nature of High Point, I was reminded that bigness is not necessarily goodness. Our cab ride to the center from the Hard Rock Hotel was \$23, and the return trip was \$11.

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Rob Spademan is the director of marketing and expo sales for DECOR. He is a frequent traveler to trade shows across the globe.

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