

# Looking Forward

# Looking Back

## The Fall 2006 High Point Show Reveals Diverse Trends

BY EDWARD NADER, JR., CPF

**A**re we looking forward or back? Actually, it's a little of both. Definitive trends can be identified, but the direction of design is as individual as our personalities.

The High Point (N.C.) International Home Furnishings Market offers an up-close-and-personal look at the latest trends and designs in home furnishings. The bi-annual show (spring and fall) is considered the largest wholesale home furnishings event in the world with 12 million square feet of floor space across 188 buildings. Each show attracts 70,000 attendees and 2,500 exhibitors, according to show organizers.



**highpoint MARKET**  
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The most recent show, which took place Octo-

ber 2006, not only featured the latest home accessories, but also many of the world's top designers sharing their thoughts about home fashions. The following pages reveal the latest products and styles, and what it means for professionals in the home decor market.

### What's Old Is New Again

Classic shapes are revisited. Overall, the lines of furniture are streamlining. There is a greater awareness of mid-century modern. Many baby boomers have good memories of the "hip and new" furniture of their childhood while younger buyers see it as a fresh look. Encompassing many generations, there is increased awareness of how pure and simple your living space can become. In a world of chaos and confusion, most consumers are striving for a serene home. The days of excess are quickly diminishing, and simple is here to stay.

From furniture to accessories, classic shapes are being reinterpreted by some of the best and brightest designers, each taking a shot at making it fresh and new again. Whether it's a mid-century mod-



▲ Dining chair from the Metropolitan Home Collection

(image courtesy of Metropolitan Home)



(image courtesy of Metropolitan Home)

▲ The shelter sofa from the Metropolitan Home Collection

ern or traditional period piece, there's a new way to see it.

*Metropolitan Home* has always been a firm believer in simplicity. Its recent launch into the furniture business seems a natural fit for the publication. Designer Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz minimizes detailing on a dining chair and distorts proportions of the new Shelter Sofa in The Metropolitan Home Collection.

Simply Modern, a new collection by Blake C. Tovin, is a beautiful display of this ever-growing market of mid-century modern simplicity. Jackson Pollock, John Coltrane and Jack Kerouac all influenced Blake as he made these "functional objects of beauty." You can feel the soul of the art, music and literature in this collection.

Designer Jonathan Adler often comes to mind when considering this style, but more and more collections are starting to surface. Adler uses simple lines, adding a bit of whimsy to make them fresh.

Although mid-century modern has garnered lots of attention, classic traditional shapes are not neglected. In fact, they're stronger than ever and many times showing up with a twist. You might see a gorgeous French chair with detailing of a fine antique but in metal or a bright lacquer. There's often a surprise—sometimes subtle, sometimes not. Take The Botticelli Mirror by Artdreams Home (pictured right), for instance. Available in black, white or red, it will dominate a room and say, "I have a respect for the past, but I am ready for the future." It's a grossly classical statement with the whimsy of a gloss lacquer. Bluefish Home is doing an entire collection of baroque and rococo items all lacquered with solid color finishes, a refreshing twist on an old classic.

There is a blending and mixing of fabrics like never before. Interior design forecaster Michele Lamb says silks, wools, linens, calf and boucle are all being used in the same space. There's a mixing of light and heavy textures. Chenille is dying off and getting smaller in nap, and "boucle is suffering by association," Lamb says.

Velvet is on the rise, especially Persian-cut velvets for the high-end market. Look for patterns like floral on velvet and jacquard, also on the rise.

"Linen alone is as hot as you can get," Lamb says. Brown and purple linen upholstery is shown on Henredon. Now that's a classic line with a fresh twist. Modernized classics are showing up everywhere. Men's wool suit fabrics are being applied to upholstery in pinstripes, plaids and herringbone. Felted wools are also on the rise while leather is starting to wane. It's kind of ironic that synthetics were such a huge impact at the Mason & Objet show in Paris. Although we are constantly preaching eco-friendly materials, there was a brilliance that couldn't be missed with polyester and polyurethane. There is a time and a place for everything.

## Patterns Or Textures?

Patterns are lightening up and becoming less bold for a wispier feel. Etchings are super fine on glass for an ultra-delicate look. The etching or relief opens up, leaving more negative space in many instances. Lace patterns are showing up and will appear on a myriad of items.

A rose pattern clusters tightly for an almost textural feel on the Modern Rose Vase from Global Views. Castillian offers a lamp with the same idea, but the entire base of the lamp is tiny, delicate white porcelain flowers.

## Show Off Your Grill

Grillwork or fretwork is appearing everywhere from wall lattice to chair backs and everywhere in between. Martha Stewart debuted her Byram Bench (on next page), featuring a tightly tailored seat, simple and clean. The bench has a repetitive pattern of curves across the back to create subtle interest. Box furniture uses fretwork for the back and sides of its new chair, creating dramatic, simple shadow effects.

## Spice It Up

Due to our mobility and multicultural society,



(image courtesy of Artdreams Home)

◀ The Botticelli Mirror by Artdreams Home

we are now one world. Strong influences from all sides of the globe make up the mix that we live in and call home. Earthy and spicy oranges, browns, golds and greens make their way all over rich and ethnic textiles. There's certain warmth from handmade craftsmanship and history that can't be reproduced through mass production.

Bright metallic golds demand attention in these settings—some even brassy. However, there is richness in gold that cannot be replicated with any other metal. The brilliance and warmth are surely a look rich in heritage and handmade qualities.

### Neutral And Broken-In Colors

Black and white are still hot, but they're beginning to show separately. They will not be used together for a while, but used plenty apart from one another. White is hot, hot, hot. Neutrals are moving from skin tones to desert neutrals in 2007 and 2008, and color is only predicted to get lighter in 2009. Ultra-pale whites with soft tinges of brown and green will make their way to the forefront. There will be a mixture of cools and warms, like milk and honey pales, or the use of grays and yellows together. Grays and browns are still paired up with yellows that are almost brown. Gray leads that group and is getting warmer.

Navy, classic and timeless, is back in vogue. You'll see it in pinstripe and other classic and understated looks of menswear on upholstery. Navy is also being paired with black.

Where color is present, it is starting to fade a bit. Reds and oranges are cooling down and giving way to more spiced-up colors like bricks and pumpkins. Reds are becoming more orange, and oranges are becoming redder. Purples are becoming darker, and pinks and purples are starting to meet.

Colors inspired from the sea reiterate the importance



▲ The Byram Bench by Martha Stewart Signature displays a fretwork backing

(image courtesy of Martha Stewart Signature)



(image courtesy of Wildcat Territory)

▲ The Joy Collection from Wildcat Territory shows the "new" orange of lighter and more weathered, spiced colors.

for the environment. "Going green," the environmentally conscious statement, has made its way to consumer awareness and isn't expected to diminish. Coral will be popping up in accessories, along with a sophisticated beach motif.

Bright limes are still around, but in much smaller doses. Lime is starting to wind down and darken to a more natural hue. Olive will start getting noticed. Blues will give way to green, especially paired with brown. Again, you'll see a "going green" undertone here—somewhat more natural with an earthier approach.

### Other Trends To Watch:

- Embroidery, rickrack, and ribbon trims, especially velvets and satins
- Woods are lightening up. Walnuts are on the rise while teaks are also appearing in hefty doses.
- Federal mandate is building with a reinterpreted idea of an old classic. Fusing French and Asian, there is a basis of all American arts.
- Nouveau Classic is also appearing and illustrating a more feminine tone. Bigger prints and delicate scroll motifs are seen with a lot of the bee motif. It's a busier feel, but not chaotic.
- Vinyl stickers are showing up everywhere. Used on walls, alone or on wallpaper, they are a really big deal. They will start appearing next year and probably run big into the next decade.
- Hollywood Glam is a mixing of several decades. "Lux," or luxury, is prevalent in this style with lush detailing and embellishments. Global views recently introduced the casino chair with handle, embellished with nail heads in a Greek key design. You will see more mid-toned woods and slick finishes within this genre.

The design world is vast and individual. When looking ahead to 2007, don't forget to look back. □

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