

Spring 2008

Design Directions



Environmental consciousness suffuses home fashions, interpreted in colorful shades of green and brown; naturalistic design themes; ecologically friendly manufacturing processes; and product design and merchandising innovation

By Donna Boyle Schwartz



color

Graceful greens, rich browns, dramatic reds, apparel-inspired pinks and new neutrals produce a potent palette

Ah, spring...the time of year when a bleak, lifeless landscape is transformed seemingly overnight into a lush, verdant panorama. Dreary bare tree limbs suddenly burst forth with a delicate green haze of unfurling leaves, softly shimmering amidst budding blossoms.

Perhaps no other color is more closely associated with springtime than green, and home fashions producers offer an abundance of sylvan shades in products destined for spring selling. The freshest color trend is the prevalence of yellowed greens, particularly herbaceous hues such as leaf, celery, basil, mint, willow and grass. Chartreuse, in both pale and bright varieties, is extremely directional, as are shades with an olive tinge.

"We're seeing a lot of springtime greens, inspired by leaves as they first emerge," comments Rick Rogers, managing director, American Homeland, the newly formed U.S. arm of Chinese producer Shanghai Homeland. "These are lighter greens with a bit more of a yellowish tint to them, as opposed to darker shades. The palette really reflects more of an environmental consciousness on the part of the consumer. We're also seeing grays as a new neutral tone."

Jeffrey Lemansky, designer, Columbine Cody, agrees, noting, "There is definitely a new direction taking hold for color in the home textiles market today. We see a trend in earth-

taupe in its Haven 100% organic cotton coordinating bedding programs, as well as its Dakota 340-thread-count sateen sheeting and quilted coverlets and its Waffle, Hexagon and Mondrian contemporary chenille coverlets.

"We feel these colors are a direct result of the consumers' response to the organic and sustainable cotton movement in home furnishings," Lemansky adds. "There is a change in the consumer today which some have termed as the 'new austerity,' or, as we see it, as part of the maturation of the global warming movement. People are seeking earth-friendly products for their home. They view these products as the new luxury and a way of embracing the issues of sustainability, global warming and fair trade. These colors bring an element of sophistication to the product."

Many suppliers present fresh green shades. The Sedwick bed ensemble from Westgate Home Fashions spotlights a large contemporary floral design in celery green; the company's Opus bed features a large stylized scroll in a striking citron color. Anchor Home Fashions highlights shades of green in its Avocado, Asparagus and Artichoke table linens and kitchen textiles.

W-C Home Fashions updates traditional eyelet embroidery with its Eyelet bedding in a pale leaf green shade; newcomer Crestline Home



Columbine Cody plays into consumer desires for earth-friendly colors and fabrics with its 100% organic Dakota sheets, shown here in olive green.

Zorlu USA offers Paris in bedding and window treatments, featuring an allover Jacobean design in pale leaf green with mauve accents on a khaki ground. "This is an updated version of a classic color combination," explains Martine Pasquale, creative director.

Fresco design features an allover arabesque in green and white.

Sferra Bros. uses sea mist and chocolate in its Alistair ensemble, an allover woven paisley design; Veratex features spa green and taupe in its Bertina bed ensemble, an intricately woven scrolling stripe; Rachel Ray's Terrace Stripe bed for WestPoint Home pairs apple green and chocolate brown, and Avanti Linens highlights mocha and lime in its embellished towels.

GTT International uses shades of green and taupe in its Victoria bed ensemble, a large scale damask; Extreme Linen highlights Deco, a contemporary wavy stripe in chartreuse and brown; CHF Industries uses sea foam and cocoa in its Rene shower curtain, featuring an allover flocked medallion.

In decorative pillows, Caldeira USA offers a range of florals, damasks, stripes and textures in shades of green and chocolate, green and linen, and green and blue. Caldeira also features citron in its Summer Brights collection, which includes shades of orange, purple, pink and aqua.

Other examples of green and brown abound: Bodrum offers Umbria table linens, an overscaled damask, in olive green and cocoa; Baltic Linen pairs sea mist with brown in its Willow bed ensemble, featuring embroidered pussy willow buds; PHI showcases shades of pear green and linen in its Bermuda bed ensemble, and highlights cocoa and aqua in its Boutique Hotel collection.

Area rug designer Angela Adams highlights shades of olive and chocolate in the Kelly rug, an abstract geometric; and Plush Living uses bright Epsom green and pinecone brown on white in its Basel bedding, an allover contemporary leaf design.

The ongoing popularity of brown continues to be reflected in omnipresent combinations of brown and blue. These shades have been popular for the past two years in deeper tones of chocolate and indigo, but now are morphing into paler shades of cocoa and mineral blue.

"Blue and brown combinations are important, with the browns grayer and the blues greener," observes Pasquale of Zorlu. "For instance, our Reina basket weave drapery is a very handsome charcoal color; it looks very new when combined with a light powder blue and tan striped sheer."

Richloom Home Fashions designer Marci



Interman uses warm brown hues and cool neutral shades to create an elegant mood in its bedroom ensembles.

friendly colors of nature such as yellowed and bright greens, watery and inky blues, dark browns and reds. There is also a strong interest in deep wine colors. Taupe has been very strong in replacing natural or ecru in our pallet."

Columbine Cody offers shades of olive, deep peppercorn, monument gray and browned

Fashions features Eden, a bed ensemble in shades of citron and aqua with a simple steel-colored floral embroidery; Dwell offers Camellia bedding and accessories, a modern column floral in chartreuse and charcoal; and Sylvie Jourdan highlights Nanou table linens, a Jacobean design in grass green.

Greens often are paired with various brown shades, reflecting both the growth in environmental sensibilities as well as the continuing popularity of brown in home décor. For example, designer Donna Karan marries apple green and taupe in the Floral Valley bed ensemble, featuring an abstract embroidered floral design; the Garden



color

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Cohen remarks, "Brown, from mushroom to chocolate, continues to remain a dominant color in the palette. Up and coming colors are livable oranges, warm-toned grays, blues with a gray cast, and teal. Specific color combinations moving to Fall '08 are a soft gray blue and mushroom. However where brown was the dominant color before, it will now be the accent to the blue."

Cohen points to Richloom's Maxim bed as an example. "This dramatic masculine damask features the new warm gray accented with ivory and black," she notes.

Columbine Cody offers its 250-thread-count, organic percale sheeting and Jewel Creek coverlets in shades of deep blue, chocolate, moss green and wine. "This is a more basic palette," Lemansky notes. "We're also using these shades in our innovative 'Bachelor in a Bag' solid color program."

Veratex uses aqua and cocoa in its Dawn bed, featuring a large leaf design appliquéd and embroidered on a color-blocked faux suede ground. Westgate uses a pale mineral blue paired with taupe in its Ofara bed by Wesley Mancini, featuring an allover vermicelli quilt pattern; and marries a lush blue with cream in Cornwall, a woven damask.

Arrow Home Fashions highlights silvery blue and taupe in its Fabrizi ensemble, an allover medallion pattern; the company also features silvery blue in its Athena two-in-one reversible bedding ensemble, featuring a simplified Greek key design on one side and a rounded honeycomb texture on the reverse.

Thomasville uses new silvery blues in Savoy, a stylized damask, and Arboretum, a botanical rendering of leaves and branches in ice blue on linen; Newport Home Fashions features solid-color decorative pillows using cypress, a dusty aqua shade; and the Court of Versailles collection from Springs highlights Cadeau, a woven

of red, including rust, brick and chestnut, transition naturally from all of the luscious brown tones in the market.

"Naturals continue to dominate, but the more saturated browns, rusts and reds are moving forward and giving the palette some life," points out Gretchen Dale, chief operating officer, Loftex Industries.

Richloom offers Luca, a bold brocade floral in red. "Red is coming on strong as a fashion color," Cohen comments.

Style.Lab features red prominently in table linens, including floral jacquard, awning stripe and woven bamboo patterns; Waverly showcases a deep pomegranate shade in its Botanical bed, featuring an allover floral design; Faribault adds chili pepper to its blanket line; and Bacova Guild offers a new Tuscan red color in accent rugs.

In its luxury White Label program, Croscill Home highlights the Scarlet ensemble, an allover large-scale damask in a rich crimson hue; the company also adds cherry as a colorway in its youthful mix-and-match District collection.

A number of suppliers use red and brown together. Signoria Firenze showcases Carman, a contemporary rose jacquard bed in red and brown; Chandler Collection uses red and brown in an allover arabesque design; Westgate features Onora, a rich crimson woven medallion with taupe accents by Wesley Mancini; and Revman features Curacao Reef, an antique, tea-stained floral on a deep red ground, and Jimbaran Bay, a lush hibiscus floral in chocolate and red, both from the new Tommy Bahama collection.

Red also looks fresh on a crisp white ground: Dea introduces Coral bedding, a red coral and leaf embroidery on white; Home Treasures offers a stunning contemporary bed, Squares, featuring appliquéd red twill tapes on a white ground, coordinating with Pleat accessories, featuring multiple rows of tiny pleats; and



Jasmine showcases pure shades of pink and yellow in its table linens and accessories.

gaining acceptance. Perhaps the prettiest interpretations of orange are the soft corals and melons, which give a hint of orange without being overwhelming.

For example, the Naniwa embroidered bed ensemble from Luxe Brands International features orange embroidered floral elements, giving the design a subtle Japanese influence. "Color is an extremely important part of what we do, and we chose orange because it has been a very strong color in the garment industry but so far has been slow to translate into bedding," states president Lee Anne Downey. "We feel this injects fresh color and fashion into bedding, but in a very subtle way—the orange isn't overwhelming, it is more a hint of color, which makes it much more livable."

Richloom's Cohen agrees, noting, "Orange will be moving into the palette as an accent color."

Other companies highlight various shades of orange. WestPoint Home features the Coreaux bed in its Charisma line, a cotton/linen blend fabric in a rich coral shade featuring a brushstroke arabesque design; Style.Lab introduces shades of melon, aqua and butter yellow in table linens, including a woven stripe, a floral stripe, a puckered plaid and an allover texture; and PDK

Tropez ensemble, featuring a rich wallpaper stripe design; the company's Palm Beach Posy bed features shades of orange, pink, citron and marine blue in a '60s-inspired allover floral pattern.

Suburban Silk offers Citrus bedding, an orange and blue floral on a brown ground, in washable silk; Veratex highlights shades of rust orange, corn silk and taupe in its Anabella bed, a rich allover floral embroidery; Bardwil uses shades of coral, lime and yellow in its Liz Claiborne Belle Plaid and Collage Floral table linens; Ferran New York features shades of saffron, jade, mineral and fig in its Persia bedding, in contemporary geometric designs; and Mélange Home offers a new sorbet shade in its two-tone Hotel bedding, as well as Aspen Gold and Larimar Blue.

Another apparel-inspired color, pink, is moving into home fashions, in shades ranging from pale blush to bright fuchsia.

Luxe Brands features delicate pink and white floral embroidery on a white ground in its Blossom bed ensemble, accented with solid color fuchsia banding and cording. "This is a bright, fresh approach to color," explains Downey. "We are trying to capture the delicate and subtle nuances of color in the buds and flowers. Often in nature, the buds are a paler shade than the actual flower; with this bed we represent the



Luxe Brands International features subtle shades of orange in its Naniwa embroidered bed ensemble, part of the Malaika collection.

jacquard bed featuring graceful ribbons and bows in a soft mineral hue.

Custom Comfort/100% Pure updates its blue palette with shades of mineral and silver in its embossed Mia bed; and uses teal in its Limbo geometric ensemble as well as its Cassandra bed.

Several companies use teal to add depth to their collections: Extreme Linen offers the Kayla bed, a vine and leaf pattern in teal and cocoa; Welspun highlights Jesper, a pieced color-blocked bed in teal blue, green and aqua; Ellery HomeStyles features the Honduras bed, a floral embroidery in shades of teal, lime and white in its KAS collection; and Dan River pairs teal and taupe in its Yarmouth geometric ensemble.

When it comes to creating excitement in home textiles, it doesn't get more dramatic than red, that ultimate power color. The deeper shades

Legacy Home highlights Clayton, a dramatic large scale damask in red, coordinating with a Greek key embroidery in red on white.

GTT International makes a bold statement in red with the Shalimar bed, a rich paisley design; Blissliving Home uses red silhouetted trees on a silver background in its Pia duvet ensemble; Studio Chic features the Gracious bed, a large scale chenille damask in rich merlot and gold; and Thomasville showcases Wynwood, a European brocade in Chinese red with gold accents, and Molokai, a tropical floral on a paprika ground.

Given the popularity of red, it comes as no surprise that another bright color, orange, is also gaining ground. Although orange is traditionally a hard sell in home furnishings, rich shades like persimmon, cayenne, terra cotta and clay are



American Homeland updates a classic allover jacquard design with rich crimson hues in this Berlaymont bed ensemble.

Regency pairs shades of persimmon and chocolate in its Terrific bed ensemble, featuring a woven chenille stripe and chrysanthemum motif.

The new 1891 by Sferra collection highlights shades of coral and aquamarine in its St.

entire gradation of pink shades as they would be found in nature."

Luxury linen supplier Schlossberg Switzerland highlights pink and fuchsia in its Doreen bed. "The Doreen design is all lightness



color

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and elegance, with delicate, cheery blossoms striking a duet with the berries of a rose bush," notes Georgina Bliss, director of marketing. "The graceful crimson berries join harmoniously with the brilliantly colored blossoms in fuchsia and apricot to form loose bushes, gently bedded on a light background of pearl."

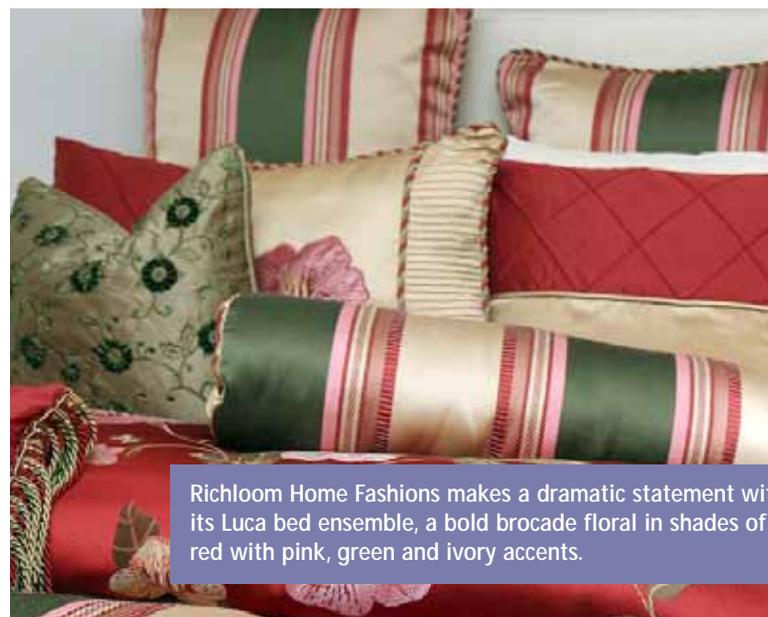
Jasmine showcases varying shades of pink in its table linens and accessories. "Coming back from home textiles shows in Frankfurt and China, we think that high-purity, high brightness and soft, warm colors will be the main direction," points out Amy Lin, design director. "Shades of pink, red, green, khaki, brown and purple also will be popular this season."

Designer Tommy Hilfiger features pink and apple green stamped medallions on a white ground in the Hibiscus Hill bed; the Sasha ensemble from Croscill Home features actual ribbons sewn into a mitered design in pale pink and ivory; and the Girly collection from Ferran New York features shades of pink, lime, tan and white

blush pink heat-transfer floral design on a shadow stripe background, with pearlized pink accessories; La Vie en Rose from Springs Court of Versailles collection highlights tones of strawberry and cream in a woven pattern of meandering roses; and Traditions by Pamela Kline offers Sea Island bedding, featuring a lush variegated tropical floral in shades of pink and green.

Extreme Linen introduces Classical Flowers, a lush tropical floral in shades of pink and green on white; Dan River uses pink and green on a white ground in its Peony Garden floral bed, and also pairs pink and burgundy in its Gated Garden, an all-over fretwork bedding design; and Peacock Alley offers Stella Dawn, an all-over woven starburst duvet in shades of quartz and gold; the coordinating Lucia matelassé coverlet is in shades of pearl and champagne.

A number of suppliers use pink and brown together, a surprisingly appealing color combination. CHF offers Trinity window fashions, a flocked arabesque stripe in cocoa on a blush pink



Richloom Home Fashions makes a dramatic statement with its Luca bed ensemble, a bold brocade floral in shades of red with pink, green and ivory accents.

use purple hues, especially as accents. These shades range from pale lilacs and lavenders to richer tones of plum and aubergine.

"We see lavender emerging as an important color," comments Rogers of American Homeland.

Schlossberg Switzerland uses intense hues of purple and blue in its Gladys bed, accented with pale green leaves; Habidecor and Abyss offer coordinating bath towels and rugs in shades ranging from pale lilac to deep purple; Sferra Bros. uses shades of lilac and chestnut in its Hampton bed ensemble, featuring a woven damask stripe; Newport features shades of purple and plum in decorative pillows; and Hollander Home Fashions is adding shades of plum, berry, magenta and pink to its solid-color down alternative comforters.

Veratex highlights lilac and cocoa in several bedroom ensembles, including Dusk, which features three wide horizontal bands set off with embroidery; Eternity, featuring interlocking quilted circles; Yasmin, highlighting floating medallions with an etched design; and Wisteria, an all-over scroll in pale lilac and ivory.

Le Jacquard Français is showcasing a deep raspberry shade in its Fleurs Gourmandes woven table linens and a bright anemone hue in its Volga style; designer Donna Karan uses purple, ivory and taupe in the Lilac Shadow bed, an Asian inspired floral silhouette accented with ruching; Waterford's Kaylee bedding by W-C Designs pairs a subtle lilac shade with gray accents in an Asian-inspired jacquard; and Trendex features mauve in its table linens, including Stamford, a large scale stripe; Dunmore, a large scale damask; and Noya, a diagonal stripe.

In a paler vein, neutrals remain an extremely important component in any home fashions assortment. The newest shades are gray and silver tones, as well as taupe and ivory hues.

Loftex, for instance, takes an upscale approach to its towel line, highlighting neutral shades of ivory, taupe, cream and white.

Zorlu uses gray and taupe in both window treatments and bedding ensembles. "In terms of neutrals, grays are becoming more important, and browns are becoming grayer," states Pasquale. "Colors like flax, linen, putty and mushroom are all important. Our Maracana window is a good example: a light silvery gray, blush golden tan and light oyster gray form a large damask design that is fresh and not too heavy looking. Also, Versa is a damask in a slightly green charcoal, with beige and dark gray. Morgan is a quilted bed ensemble in a light shrimp, taupe/gray and ivory combination."

Interman is using cool neutrals in its bedding products. "We are creating a different feeling of black and white, with moderate gray, soothing beige, warm brown, and soft green and

blue," explains Interman design manager Shan Xue. "Also, we are using layers of color, such as purple and aged metal colors, to create an elegant mood."

Designer Tommy Hilfiger takes a relaxed approach to island style with House on the Hill, highlighting a vintage hand-blocked print in neutral tones of cocoa and ivory; Bacova Guild highlights soft neutral shades and heathered textures in its River Bed accent rugs; and Welspun highlights shades of white and ivory in its Luxus towels and bedding.

The ultimate neutral, white, figures prominently in many collections. Designer Eileen West created a new white-on-white Palazzo Rose comforter for United Feather & Down; designer Donna Karan offers a dramatic study in white-on-white in the City Lights bed, highlighting decorative stitching, pleating, smocking and woven textures; and Mélange Home highlights white-on-white handmade lace in its Crochet bed ensemble.



Zorlu USA uses brilliant hues of orange and gold to create excitement in its first collection of shower curtains.

Luxe Brands features dense white-on-white floral embroidery in its Goya bed ensemble. "The Goya pattern is a very elaborate embroidery design, therefore we chose a white-on-white, monochromatic color story to really showcase the hand-embroidery," Downey points out. "We use a subtle, creamy white embroidery thread to give just a hint of contrast to the pattern—it creates a very rich, sophisticated look." ●



Zorlu USA uses a variety of fashion-forward colors in its decorative pillows and throws, including brown, orange, teal, green, purple, pink, white and neutral hues.

in coordinating contemporary patterns, including Climbing Vines, Wildflower, City Block Plaid, Pearl Strings, Lattice, Garden Gate, Fret Block and Starburst.

Latin singing sensation Thalia uses pastel shades of pink, rose, butter, lilac and lavender in her romantic ensembles for Homestead; Bacova Guild highlights Kate shower curtains, featuring a

ground; Crestline offers Dynasty, a classic flocked damask, in pink and brown; Revman pairs pale quartz pink with chocolate brown in the Martine bed, featuring an all-over candlewick embroidery; and Ellery uses pink and taupe in its Orino comforter, a geometric appliqué style in suede and faux silk under the KAS brand.

Closely aligned with pink, many suppliers

design

Botanical and naturalistic themes, overscaled structures and soft modern motifs dominate imagery



And we've got to get ourselves back to the garden." The home fashions industry is taking the immortal words of Joni Mitchell's "Woodstock" to heart, reflecting a flourishing environmental consciousness in a host of design themes.

Ecologically inspired design subjects cover the gamut, from botanical renderings of leaves, ferns, flowers and even coral to sophisticated animal skin motifs, allover honeycomb textures and loose, stylized scrolling vines, damask and arabesque motifs.

Leaves are a ubiquitous trend in design, ranging from small delicate ferns to dramatic giant palms. For example, Luxe Brands International highlights naturalistic motifs in its Leaves bed ensemble, featuring small tossed green leaves embroidered on a crisp white ground, as well as in its Wheat bedding, spotlighting sheaves of golden wheat embroidered on a white ground, trimmed with bands of natural linen.

"Today's consumer is more environmentally conscious and is seeking a return to nature," comments Lee Anne Downey, Luxe Brands president. "This is expressed in both color and pattern in our Leaves ensemble, which is a very fresh and

Arrow Home Fashions highlights an overscaled acanthus leaf in silver and gold in its Chameleon bed ensemble; Trendex offers Topeka table linens featuring a small-scale leaf design in white, grass, taupe and platinum; and Veratex spotlights Royal Palm, a retro look stylized palm leaf silhouette in champagne and chocolate, as well as Jakarta, a stylized woven jacquard bamboo leaf in linen, ecru and cocoa.

Designer Lizz Greer, known for her accent rugs and artisan textiles, offers a line of decorative pillows and curtains in three styles, Maple Leaf, Chestnut Leaf and Ginkgo Leaf; the patterns are created with appliquéd suede and embroidered leaves.

Croscill takes a painterly approach to tropical leaves in its Palm Tree Trio bath ensemble, featuring three large scale palm trees hand-painted the entire length of the shower curtain; the Island Dreamin' bath ensemble takes a similar approach with a single hand-painted palm tree with the cut-out leaves serving as a valance treatment

Creative Bath highlights leaf motifs in a variety of designs, including Northwinds, a botanical leaf and pine cone pattern; Chickadees & Pine Cones, a true-to-life rendering by the Hautman Brothers wildlife artists; Tahiti, a large scale tropical leaf design; and Shadow Leaf, a leaf silhouette on a textured ground with coordinating debossed leaf bath accessories.

Schlossberg Switzerland uses airy, spaced grasses in its Vic bed ensemble; highlights large, authentically rendered leaves of beech, ginkgo, maple and linden in its Vermont bedding; and showcases highly stylized flowers and leaves in its Fedora design.

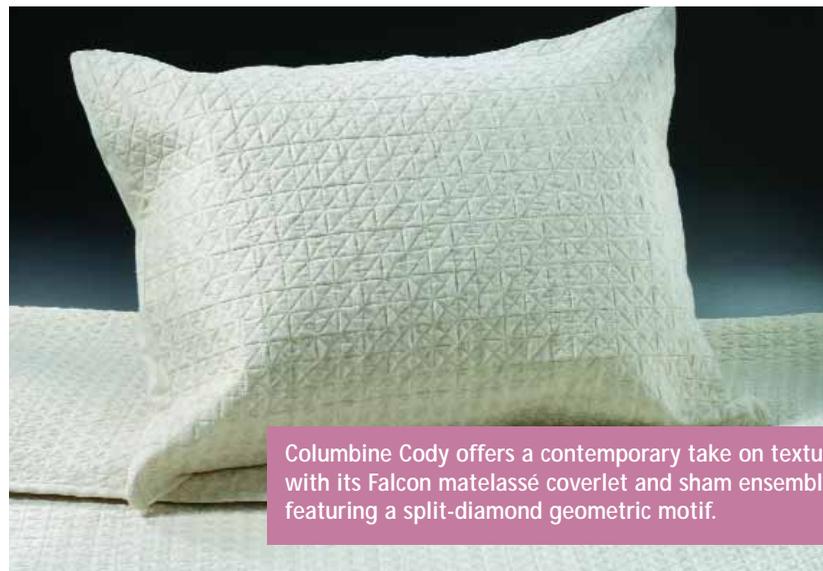
Floral elements are a perennial best seller in home fashions, and also fit in well with the trend towards naturalistic motifs. "We see both traditional florals and botanical looks as important motifs," asserts Rick Rogers, managing director of American Homeland. "We are taking a modern approach to classic design elements—for example, we have an updated version of a 19th century French document that incorporates a crinkle effect; we also offer a printed velvet with a silk slubbed texture."

Zorlu offers Rhode Island, a monochromatic floral print bedspread featuring cotton crocheted lace trim on the sheets and pillowcases, seersucker shams, a white cotton duvet with pom-pom trim, coordinating with blue and white striped bed skirt and Euro shams and white lace curtains.

Thomasville highlights Ashley, a woven jacquard rose and hydrangea bedding ensemble; Avanti makes a major floral statement in embellished towels, featuring embroidered roses, hydrangeas and butterflies accented with scalloped binding; KeeCo features the Chateau collection of bedding ensembles, featuring romantic floral elements in pastel shades; and Anchor Home showcases its lush Hydrangea pattern in table linens and kitchen textiles.

Heritage Lace showcases Hydrangea, a large floral motif in curtains and table linens, as well as Windsong, a dramatic allover floral panel in fine gauge clipped embroidery. Bardwil features a classic English floral design in its new table linens designed by Anna Griffin, a preeminent designer of wedding and event invitations; the table linens coordinate with Griffin's Accoutrements dinnerware pattern for Lenox.

In bath ensembles, India Ink highlights Caitlin Rose, a hand-painted rose design on a



Columbine Cody offers a contemporary take on texture with its Falcon matelassé coverlet and sham ensemble, featuring a split-diamond geometric motif.

yellow ground, and Cottage Rose, a hand-painted floral in aqua on an antique crackle ground. The licensed Royal Doulton bed, bath and table linens collection by W-C Designs features the signature Old Country Roses pattern, an iconic traditional rose bouquet design

Many florals reflect historical influences. Indeed, Marie Antoinette may have lost her throne—and her head—in 18th century France, but she still reigns supreme as an arbiter of fashion. For example, Richloom features Artois, a romantic bed ensemble in shades of mauve and aqua.

PHI offers rich documentary floral patterns, classic French toiles and traditional chintz floral prints in its Manor Blooms collection; Portland Rose is an 18th century documentary floral in rich colors on an ivory ground from WestPoint Home. Traditions by Pamela Kline draws on 1920s Paris for inspiration in the Bohemian bedding collection, featuring Camarin, a lush floral printed vel-

more pared down contemporary traditional."

Rogers of American Homeland agrees, noting, "Extremely large motifs are very directional. We offer 70-centimeter repeats in jacquard woven bedding in a wide range of styles, including damasks, framed medallions and both traditional and contemporary floral designs."

Pasquale of Zorlu comments, "Classic designs such as damasks, especially large scale, stripes, flowers and paisleys; as well as more modern styles like polka dots, textures and abstract brushstroke shapes, are all important for us."

Columbine Cody showcases Medallion Creek, a large contemporary medallion and Tropicana, an allover Jacobean design, both in stonewashed matelassé. Extreme Linen features Grandeur, a large center medallion bed ensemble in blush with a hint of gold. In its Peri line, CHF offers Paloma, a relaxed overscaled damask on a textured ground, as well as Antoinette, a column



Jasmine highlights allover motifs in its table linens and accessories, including scrolling damasks, paisley, florals and leaves.

clean look. Similarly, Wheat is a very iconic symbol for both U.S. and Egyptian cultures, an image that reflects on the importance of the natural world and our planetary ecology. The colors here are soft neutrals, making this a very subtle bed that is easy to live with."

Zorlu USA highlights Hampton Court, a soft blue and white duvet ensemble featuring an allover jacquard leaf design. "This bed has a crisp, summery feeling," points out creative director Martine Pasquale. The company also showcases two neutral bed and window ensembles with a natural feeling: Arbor is a 100% cotton jacquard with a textured background and tiny trees tossed throughout, in blue/brown and gray/brown combinations; and Dunes is a white pique bedspread with a natural colored cotton hem, a herringbone duvet with wood buttons and a natural color knit throw; the Euro shams and decorative pillows are embellished with wood beads, shells and faux leather trim.

Other companies also highlight leaf motifs: Richloom showcases the Organic Fern bed ensemble, featuring a subtle silhouetted fern design; WestPoint Home offers an updated take on tropical with the Seychelles bed, a subtle large-scale banana leaf print in khaki and white;



Luxe Brands International showcases nature in its Leaves bed ensemble, featuring delicate embroidered green leaves on a crisp white ground.

vet duvet: Bronte, a warm red stonewashed matelassé coverlet; and Sullivan cotton paisley accessories.

Many suppliers are giving classic floral and damask motifs a more modern twist by using very overscaled patterns.

"Large scale medallions continue to be important, as are leaf motifs," remarks Richloom designer Marci Cohen. "In general, there is a move away from very contemporary modern to a

damask stripe with subtle metallic highlights.

Jasmine showcases allover damasks, paisley, florals and leaves. "Damasks, documentary florals, leaves, contemporary geometrics and stripes are all popular for the season," states Amy Lin, design director. "Combining color, design and en vogue elements into the products is very important."

Croscill offers a variety of damask bed ensembles, including Bellissimo, a large damask in



design

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gold and ivory; Caruso, an updated damask and scroll design in black and tan with flecks of silver; and Platinum, a damask stripe in pewter, ivory and gold. Abyss offers a new all-over arabesque jacquard towel in a blend of 70% cotton/30% Modal.

Honeycomb, filigree and tile effects also are evident, offering more of a transitional look in both all-over, textural versions as well as border designs.

Columbine Cody, for instance, highlights Rattan, an all-over basket weave effect; Falcon, a split diamond motif; Waffle, an all-over waffle weave; and Two-Tone, an interlocking scroll design. "The two most directional design motifs are the ones that are more clean or transitional in nature," explains designer Jeffrey Lemansky. "We have had a great reaction to several matelassé patterns done with an organic quality such as bamboo, rattan or even large scale wall paper

Revman takes an upscale approach to animal with bedding by designer Michael Kors, featuring Mumbasa, a stylized zebra skin pattern in chocolate and ivory; as well as all-over animal skin texture in black and ivory in Denpasar. Home Treasures enters the bath accessories category with a "wild" assortment, including Alligator all-over textured accessories in black or brown, as well as Panther, featuring a brown mother of pearl body with attached silver panther figures.

Designer Marlo Lorenz offers the Safari collection of decorative pillows, spotlighting Giraffe, Lion and faux leather; Palmer Smith for the Table offers Cub table linens featuring an all-over small scale animal skin design; Blissliving Home uses tone-on-tone animal prints in neutral shades in its Sabrina bed ensemble; KS Casual by Kim Seybert offers Giraffe placemats and accessories in either black or brown shades; and CHF Industries highlights Tanzania, a stylized animal



The Vermont ensemble from Schlossberg Switzerland brings the vitality of nature into the bedroom, featuring large, authentically-rendered leaves of beech, ginkgo, maple and linden.

patterns but with a more simplified motif; traditional geometrics in our chenilles also have been well received."

Honey bedding from Zambaiti USA features an all-over jacquard design of linked honeycombs, in chocolate and ivory; PDK Regency offers Mercury, a chain-mail look textured solid semi-sheer window panel; and Carmen window treatments from Westgate Home Fashions feature an "iron gate" vertical stripe alternating with a textured solid; the company's Antiquity and Antiquity sheer window treatments feature a dense tile motif.

Bacova Guild highlights its Delaney bath accessories, an ornate filigree look in antique silver or antique gold; Versai highlights Milano, an all-over scrolling acanthus leaf pattern in a rich wine shade; Espalma by Cobra introduces Border Greek Key towels and coordinating tub mats, featuring the classic design in white, ivory, silver and black; and Veratex offers Charleston bath accessories, an all-over metal filigree pattern in bronze, as well as Antiquities bath accessories, a classic damask look in platinum and silver or red and gold.

Also in the transitional vein, animal skins are re-emerging as an important design trend, particularly overscaled zebra and giraffe patterns. Richloom offers Nambia, a tone-on-tone overscaled zebra skin look in gold. "We still feel strongly about skins," Cohen notes.

skin in towels, as well as the Zebra shower curtain in chocolate and ivory, and the Dynasty shower curtain, a stylized cheetah pattern.

Gramercy is a large contemporary black and white zebra rug from Bacova Guild; Kapala is an updated zebra look in a bath ensemble from Newport Home Fashions; Nala is a subtle, all-over animal skin look in window treatments from Croskill; and Kenya is a subtle animal skin motif in shower curtains, bath accessories and embellished towels from Avanti.

Contemporary design remains an essential component to most assortments, and many of the current crop of contemporary patterns take their inspiration from the "mid-century modern" movement. These retro-inspired designs often feature rounded geometric shapes, organic or wavy lines and color-blocking effects as well as some "pop art" contemporary floral elements.

Schlossberg Switzerland offers Jasper, a design composed of checks of color whirling playfully over the bedspread and pillows. "The stringent graphical design is broken occasionally by checks set slightly askew, producing a surprising 3-D effect," points out Georgina Bliss, director of marketing.

Interman offers a variety of contemporary home fashions designs. "Simple style reflects modern connotations," comments design manager Shan Xue. "Young people are seeking a simple life, and their hearts yearn for culture and taste.



Interman creates a strong contemporary statement with this graphic bed ensemble, combining bold stripes and color-blocking effects.

Therefore, a trend in modern style is toward stripes, lattice looks, oriented lines and geometric shapes, all in sprightly colors."

Homestead's new collection by Hable Construction features graphic, contemporary florals and geometrics in bright shades of orange, aqua, teal, lime, pink and brown; Mohawk highlights contemporary geometrics in brighter shades in its Mid-Century Modern collection; Custom Comfort/100% Pure showcases Spyra Gyra, a retro look geometric bed ensemble; and Softline Home Fashions takes a contemporary approach to lace with its Cynthia draperies, featuring a stylized geometric design.

Westgate features retro-look, interlocking squares in blue, brown and ivory in its Razzle Dazzle bed ensemble; CHF Industries spotlights concentric geometrics, wavy stripes, color-blocked looks and twill tape accents in its Soft Modern bed and bath products; and Revman highlights retro contemporary looks in its Echo Home collection, including Kiko, a stylized geometric in shades of blue, taupe and white, Retro Garden, a stylized floral, and Holo a contemporary geometric.

Columbine Cody highlights Geometric, an all-over contemporary in deep tones. "We have had a great response to our new deep dyed chenille coverlets and shams in geometric motifs," Lemansky states. "This is a new twist on a classic business, to address a younger, more contemporary customer."

Suppliers also are freshening up an old standby, the stripe, offering wavy versions, pencil-thin varieties and wide, awning versions in both vertical and horizontal layouts.

Loftex puts stripes to good use in its spa-like Scrub-A-Dub towel, a textured vertical ribbed jacquard. "Solids are still the name of the game

green; Arrow Home Fashions features Soho Stripe, a large stripe in blue hues; Waverly takes a formal approach to stripes in both bedding and window treatments, including Sanchez Stripe, a printed stripe on a jacquard damask, and Varena, a taffeta stripe; and KeeCo highlights a range of stripes in its window coverings, including Grafton, a chenille stripe, Archana, a narrow, faille stripe, and Legend, a horizontal pieced stripe.

Croskill Home offers an assortment of stripes in its window treatments, including Jericho, a contemporary heat transfer ombré print on a woven stripe; Fullerton Stripe, a casual textured stripe; Matrix, a broken line vertical stripe; and Oxford Stripe, a three-tone vertical stripe; WestPoint Home features Persian Stripe bedding in its Charisma line, a rich silk and cotton textured stripe layered with a velvet coverlet; and Hollander Home Fashions offers a classic ticking stripe design in five colors in its licensed Laura Ashley basic bedding line.

Bardwil adds a new piece-dyed stripe in six colors to its Lenox Platinum towel collection, the stripe effect is created by alternating bands of bamboo and cotton; and Mélange Home offers an array of stripes, including Soho, a pieced horizontal stripe bed in faux silk in gold and ivory, aqua and white or green and white; Malibu, a yarn-dyed striped bed in sunburst, ocean, claret or clay; and Hudson Stripe, a chunky chenille striped throw in four colors.

Espalma by Cobra highlights Horizontal Rib in towels, as well as Cable, a jacquard zero twist towel; Softline Home Fashions features Veranda Stripe draperies, featuring a ribbed faille cloth with metallic accents; and Ellery HomeStyles offers a variety of stripes in window treatments, including Vibe Stripe, a 100% silk woven textured stripe; Kelly; a sheer stripe in spice tones with



Richloom Home Fashions combines rich colorations with textured stripes and detailed embellishments in this sophisticated Bellingham bedroom ensemble.

in towels but jacquards have made a small comeback," observes Gretchen Dale, chief operating officer.

Designer Tommy Hilfiger highlights printed stripes on a woven faille texture accented with grosgrain ribbons in the Grand Cay bed ensemble, featuring shades of navy, sky blue and apple

herringbone and gold accents; and Turin: a classic awning stripe in navy, green or pink.

Richloom highlights the Bellingham ensemble, a rich textured stripe design. "We've been showing more stripes, particularly in window," Cohen remarks. "Surface interest in the fabric also is important." ●

style

Environmentally friendly manufacturing, luxurious materials and ornate embellishments elicit excitement



The first Earth Day was held April 22, 1970, and now, 37 years later, the promises and hopes of the environmental movement are finally becoming a reality. Green is becoming much more than a color or a design element; it's becoming a state of mind—and a manufacturing method.

As consumers become more and more concerned about their personal impact on the natural world, home fashions suppliers are responding with a wide variety of ecologically friendly products and design solutions. Long criticized for its chemical and pesticide use and soil and water degradation, the home textiles industry is turning to organic and sustainable fibers and environmentally sensitive manufacturing processes in an effort to have a more positive impact on the planet.

One of the most exciting developments is the use of sustainable fibers, including fibers derived from wood pulp, corn and bamboo. For example, luxury linens producer Schlossberg Switzerland has been a pioneer in the use of Lenzing's proprietary MicroModal cellulose fiber, a super-soft and absorbent fiber developed using beechwood pulp.

"The extraordinary properties of MicroModal make this fabric a perfect complement to Schlossberg's beautiful designs and quality standards, creating a new generation of luxury bed and bath products," explains Georgina Bliss, director of marketing. "All Schlossberg Switzerland products made from MicroModal are produced using only the most environmentally friendly standards accepted by Oeko-Tex throughout Europe. Schlossberg Switzerland prides itself on manufacturing a product that is not only good for our customer but also very good for our earth."

Schlossberg Switzerland offers the Urban collection of bed linens in 100% MicroModal; patterns include Lio, a large, simple tone-on-tone check; Nox, a more delicate and understated check, and Satin, a monochromatic look. The company also introduces the Millennium bath towel collection in

Lino shower curtains in a 50/50 blend of bamboo and organic cotton.

Pacific Coast Feather Co. expands its basic bedding program using NatureWorks Ingeo fibers, derived from corn; the company also offers down-filled bamboo comforters and bed pillows in its Calvin Klein basic bedding program.

WestPoint Home is taking a solutions-based approach to basic bedding, offering sustainable and environmentally friendly fibers, including Lyocell, bamboo and its own Eco-Pure fiberfill, made from recycled soda bottles; the company uses Sea Cell cellulose fibers infused with seaweed to promote blood flow to the skin.

Suppliers also are turning to organic cotton, which is grown and processed without the use of pesticides or harsh chemicals, and certified by various international agencies, such as Skal, based in the Netherlands.

Columbine Cody offers an entire range of home fashions made of 100% organic cotton under its new Haven brand. "Columbine Cody has always been an industry leader in trend forward-products," explains Jeffrey Lemansky, designer. "We recently formed an alliance with Alps Industries, an Indian home textiles manufacturer. Alps' motto is 'from field to fashion' and they have been a leader in the development and manufacturing of eco-friendly home textile products. They grow, process, weave and dye their own organic cotton, all of which is Skal-approved."

"More than 90% of our new product introductions use 100% organic cotton," Lemansky continues. "The fabric is dyed with natural, eco-friendly dyes and finished with non-aggressive additives and treatments. All our packaging is organic and our inserts are printed on recycled paper with soy inks. The benefits are to the earth, environment and consumer."

Richloom offers organic cotton and is moving to environmentally friendly manufacturing. "A big trend that will continue to grow is the emphasis on organic and eco-friendly products," opines designer Marci Cohen. "We have introduced duvet covers featuring organic cotton; partnering with a mill that grows its own organic cotton, spins its own yarn and finishes everything in a special 'organic' section of the factory. Organic cotton and bamboo/cotton blends respond to the growing trend in eco-friendly product."

"In our window area, we show several heat transfer prints—although you print on 100% polyester, the heat transfer printing process is eco-friendly because there is no water involved in processing," Cohen continues. "We are working with a transfer paper company that uses eco-friendly dyestuffs and the paper for printing is recyclable."

American Homeland showcases sheets constructed of environmentally friendly fibers, including bamboo, linen, soy and milk; the company also uses wool in its top of the bed offerings. "These products speak to the consumers' concern about the environment, and at the same time, offer value-added benefits, such as a more comfortable sleeping experience," remarks Rick Rogers, managing director.

Interman uses a variety of natural materials in its home fashions. "The bedroom should meet physical and emotional needs, and therefore natural materials on the bed become the focus of attention," points out design manager Shan Xue.

Park B. Smith, one of the first home textiles suppliers to introduce environmentally friendly products in the early '90s, updates its popular Eco-ordinates line with a variety of new looks, including Eco-Thai, a ribbed texture, Eco-Floral, Eco Jewel Check, a plaid, Eco-Plisse, and Eco-Cross-Stitch, all



Columbine Cody's Aspen sheets and quilted coverlet use tuxedo pleating and 100% organic cotton to make a stylish and ecological bedding statement.

in vegetable-dyed shades of green, blue, white and ivory.

Turkish supplier Forza & Co. won the bath award in the New York Home Textiles Market Week *Best New Product* competition for its Bamboo towels, constructed of 100% bamboo steamed in natural spring water, spun and hand-loomed into waffle weave towels; the company also offers towels and bathrobes in 100% organic cotton.

Home Source International, known for its Skal-certified organic cotton bed and bath products, expands the collection with a new two-ply organic cotton towel in white, ivory, aloe and linen; the company also expands its use of bamboo with a new 100% bamboo pique blanket, a 50/50 bamboo/cotton herringbone blanket, a 50/50 bamboo/cotton latex-backed bath rug, and a 70/30 bamboo/cotton low-twist towel.

Donna Karan Home adds a new 65/35 cotton/bamboo towel with a special soft finish in 11 solid colors; Crestline offers a broad selection using environmentally friendly dyes in its BamCool fabric, a 55/45 bamboo/cotton blend; and Baltic Linen offers bath towels and rugs in a variety of fiber blends, including MicroModal/cotton, silk/cotton, bamboo/cotton, soy/cotton, and organic cotton.

Jasmine offers home fashions constructed of organic cotton, bamboo, Modal and other environmentally friendly fibers. "Functional materials and new fibers are always a popular theme for manufacturers to promote," states design director Amy Lin. "New fibers are appealing to consumers, because of their unique hand, skin-friendly feeling and environmental functionality."

Virtually every category features some environmentally friendly products. The Vitre collection from Welspun adds a new bath towel and robe blending 60% organic cotton with 40% bamboo, and highlights cotton and silk in towels; Textillery Weavers introduces the Bamboo Collection of throws created using 75% bamboo/25% acrylic in a boucle weave; and Bacova Guild offers two styles of organic cotton bath rugs, Tailor Made and Splendor, as well as cotton/bamboo blend rugs, Bamboo Stripe and Bamboo Shag.

Ogallala Comfort Co. uses pure syriaca oil from the milkweed plant in its Escapes body care and aromatherapy collection; Ex-Cell Home Fashions offers Eco-Soft shower curtain liners made from EVA, a new material that is biodegradable, chlorine free, mold-resistant and odorless; and Next Creations offers an environmentally friendly basic comforter program using Ingeo fiberfill in either a bamboo comforter shell or an organic cotton comforter shell colored using eco-friendly dyes.

In kitchen textiles, John Ritzenhaller Co., offers the solid-color Organic Kitchen collection manufactured using certified organic cotton and dyes; Red and White Kitchen Co. introduces Home Green Home, a line of kitchen textiles made with a

70/30 bamboo/cotton blend; Danica/Now Designs offers a line of Organic tea towels in three styles, including a flat-woven, waffle weave and herringbone weave; and Foreston Trends enters the category with Organic, a collection of kitchen towels, potholders and oven mitts all constructed of certified organic cotton and dyed with vegetable dyes.

Many environmentally friendly fibers have the added benefit of being perceived by consumers as luxury fibers. Loftex, for instance, highlights luxury towels, including Sensuously Silk, Sublimely Supima, Perfectly Pima and Lavishly Low Twist, and also uses Viloft, a specialty viscose fiber.

"The elite cottons are what everyone is interested in now, including Pima, Egyptian and Supima," explains chief operating officer Gretchen Dale. "And we are seeing a lot of use of more than one type of fiber in a towel. It is not longer just 100% cotton—bamboo, silk, and Viloft are just a few other fibers that are adding interest and functionality to the towel." Loftex also was one of the first manufacturers to use wool and cashmere in its towels.

Several suppliers highlight wool, alpaca and baby alpaca. Zambaiti USA offers luxury reversible throws in 100% baby alpaca in either ivory/beige or taupe/gray, as well as a 100% alpaca knitted throw; Faribault offers a new heathered blanket in blend of 60% wool and 40% alpaca; and the Court of Versailles collection from Springs offers throws woven of baby alpaca in three natural colors: ecru, heather gray and heather brown.

Even basic bedding suppliers are adapting fiberfill and foam formulations to be more ecologically sensitive. Louisville Bedding offers a new Eco Smart foam formulation in its foam mattress pads and pillows; the process uses 20% less petroleum and effectively saves 8,000 barrels of crude oil per year. Sleep Studio expands its line of eco-friendly ViscO₂ memory foam products, adding domestically-made, molded memory foam pillows, including a contour shape, traditional pillow shape, and a "Duet" foam/fiber combination pillow. Soft-Tex offers the Earth Care line, featuring pillows and mattress pads constructed of soy-based foam and natural latex; covers are constructed of bamboo or organic cotton.

Springs highlights the Wamsutta Eco Luxe brand in basic bedding, featuring fabrics made from organic cotton, bamboo, unbleached cotton and soy fibers, as well as fiberfill made from recycled soda bottles. Springs also uses a new formulation in its convoluted and memory foam bedding, substituting 20% soy for the conventional petroleum-based chemicals used in foam production.

Additionally, the company uses new, biodegradable polybag packaging that takes only three months to break down in a landfill. And in window treatments, Springs offers E-tex by Wamsutta, energy-saving thermal draperies and Roman shades with



Jasmine is offering home fashions constructed of environmentally friendly fibers, including organic cotton, bamboo and Modal.

eight fashionable colors: chocolate, cayenne, cognac, ivory, blanc, pearl, olive and plum. "The Millennium towel collection is incredibly soft, with a beautiful and natural permanent silk-like sheen," Bliss notes, adding that because MicroModal fibers are super-absorbent, "Millennium towels absorb 50% more moisture than cotton and dry in half the time."

A number of other companies use cellulose fibers. Peacock Alley offers the Paradiso blanket, a blend of 70% MicroModal and 30% Egyptian cotton with a pure silk binding. United Feather & Down expands its use Lenzing's TENCEL and Lyocell fibers in comforters, pillows, mattress pads and featherbeds, as well as using a patented blend of Lyocell Down in fiberfill. The company also offers Lyocell sheets by designer Joseph Abboud; the designer's bath licensee, Creative Bath, features



style

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blackout lining.

Window treatment suppliers spotlight energy efficiency. Ellery HomeStyles broadens its Eclipse brand of energy-efficient window treatments to include Therma Weave, a triple woven fabric; Therma Back, a back coated drapery; and Therma Liner, a pair of panels with hooks included that can be attached to a current drapery. Softline Home Fashions features energy-efficient draperies with both blackout lining and interlining in more than 30 yarn-dyed colors.

Some home fashions firms actually go beyond product construction and focus on manufacturing with a conscience. For example, Margarita Andrade and Goya Gallagher created Malaika in 2000 as a way to help underprivileged women in Egypt learn high-quality embroidery, providing a source of income within the confines of the home.

"The most significant trend that Luxe Brands International and Malaika are promoting is 'meaningful consumption,'" explains Lee Anne Downey, president, Luxe Brands, which distributes Malaika in North America. "Trendease recently reported that significant numbers of consumers pay attention to corporate responsibility. Luxury purchasers want to know that they are contributing to others well being when they spend their money. For both Luxe Brands and Malaika, social responsibility is not a passing fad, but a permanent part of our business philosophy."

Similarly, Creative Women offers hand-woven textiles created by in Ethiopia and Swaziland; the new collection includes mohair throws, blankets and decorative pillows in Old Gold stripes; Textured Reds, allover textures; and Boshimela, neutral shades and textures.

Other corporate campaigns include Mohawk's Greenworks program, encompassing everything from recycled products to renewable fibers. More than 500 Mohawk products contain



The Plissé bed ensemble from Luxe Brands International uses rows of expertly-sewn tiny pleats to make a luxury statement.

recycled materials and the company diverts more than 1.75 billion pounds of pre- and post-consumer waste from landfills each year, including nearly three billion plastic bottles per year; Mohawk also is the largest supplier of rubber door mats made from recycled tires. Mohawk bath rugs use fibers ranging from organic cotton and linen to milkweed and silk.

Perfect Fit developed the "Green Fit" basic bedding collection and participates in the 1% For The Planet initiative, an alliance of businesses donating profits to environmental organizations; the Green Fit collection uses Wellman's EcoSpun fibers made from recycled soda bottles as a fiberfill as well as a woven fabric. The collection also uses sustainable bamboo fibers and certified organic cotton fibers.

DIGS offers the Marin collection of wooden bath accessories handmade using wood harvested from forests certified by the Forestry Stewardship Council, in collaboration with indigenous Indians, the World Wildlife Federation and artisans in Peru. The company also introduces its first line of soft goods, the green Spa collection, which includes a hand towel, fingertip towel, waffle glove and waffle

tub mat, all made using Skal-certified organic cotton.

Veritas Fine Linens uses certified organic cotton, eco-safe bleaching and azo-free dyes in its fine hand-embroidered bedding; the company also offers 100% bamboo duvets and Nepalese cashmere throws. The products are manufactured in Italy and India, at manufacturing sites certified for fair labor practices.

With all of the emphasis on fibers, it is no surprise that features and benefits are becoming a much more important part of the product introduction discussion. Many suppliers are turning to new technologies to deliver products that offer superior performance.

Both Biederlack and United Feather & Down use X-Static silver fibers from Noble Biomaterials. The X-Static technology offers natural protection from odor-causing bacteria and allergy-producing dust mites, is naturally anti-static, helps wick away moisture, and regulates body temperature for a more comfortable sleeping environment. The silver fibers are permanently bonded to the fiber and will not wash out or wear off. Biederlack offers blankets, throws, sheet sets and towels using the X-Static fibers in two collections, a better line called Natural Elements, and a luxury program called Silver Comfort. United Feather & Down uses X-Static fibers in its fabrics, and also an exclusive SilverFill fiberfill that combines the company's own proprietary down alternative fiber with the X-Static silver fiber.

Similarly, Pacific Coast Feather offers Ultima Silver comforters, featuring silver fibers in the tick and silver fibers blended with a down alternative fiberfill in its licensed Eddie Bauer collection; WestPoint Home introduces Microban towels that inhibit the growth of bacteria and control odor for the life of the product; and Ritzenthaler offers potholders, oven mitts, gloves and Ritz Grips made of neoprene and a scorch-resistant silver fabric; the construction protects against temperatures from 500 degrees to below freezing.

Hollander introduces Nano-Tex fabrics in a collection of mattress pads; the Nano-Tex process uses molecular modification to create fabrics that repel water and resist stains without the use of harmful chemicals. Because the fabrics are changed at the molecular level, the process is guaranteed for the lifetime of the product. Springs uses Invista's Stainmaster technology to repel and release stains in its basic bedding line; the company also uses Nano-Tex fabrics in basic bedding products. Carpenter Co. uses Outlast technology in its Iso-Cool mattress pads, bed pillows and specialty shaped pillows; the Outlast technology helps regulate body temperature to provide a better night's sleep.

Perfect Fit is focusing on the beauty and wellness properties of copper in its line of copper-infused basic bedding products using Cupron technology; the company also uses IonX technology to help increase the blood and oxygen flow to the skin.

In addition to having varied beneficial properties, silver, copper and gold continue to make a significant style statement. Metallic accents and shimmering embellishments add texture and surface interest to many fabrics; while metals, pearls and shells are popular finishes in bath accessories.

"Gold is still an important color for us," relates Martine Pasquale, creative director, Zorlu USA. "Our Ming Garden ensemble is a jacquard design of apple blossoms and leaves with soft, metallic gold stitching. Metallic colors that look 'oxidized' are becoming more popular. This is especially true in beads, sequins, pearls and trim. Also, metallics on velvet—whether printed or sewn on as beads or pearls—are strong."

American Homeland's Rogers points out, "Metallics are a very big story for us, both woven into the jacquard fabrics as well as printed metallic accents on the fabrics. We see all types of metallics as important, including gold, silver and copper."

Richloom highlights metallic accents in its



Richloom Home Fashions spotlights metallic accents in its Gold Leaf bed ensemble, featuring a textured solid color-blocked design accented with gold ribbons.

Bellingham Shimmer window treatments, as well as its Radiance draperies, embellished with beads. In bedding, Richloom offers Gold Leaf, a textured solid color-blocked bed accented with gold ribbons.

Shades of India received the "Best of Market" award at the New York Home Textiles Market Week for its Terra Cuite table runner, featuring actual gold leaf printed on a linen base. Noted jewelry designer Lisa Jenks uses "warm" accents of copper, gold and bronze and "cool" touches of pewter, steel and silver in her bedding and accessories collection for Homestead; designer Geoffrey Beene uses copper and silver in his menswear-inspired bedding designs, also for Homestead.

Croskill highlights the Sloan bed ensemble, a faux leather look with gold and silver accents, as well as Terrazzo, a contemporary geometric in silver and gold. In bath accessories, Croskill highlights Geneva in platinum and bronze finishes, as well as Paparazzi in black or white with silver accents.

Donna Karan's Opaline bed uses metallic silver embroidery in a contemporary geometric design on a pure silk ground; the designer's Black Glamour bath ensemble features quilted metallic silver accessories. Bacova Guild offers Capella bath accessories featuring a faux capiz shell texture in nine colors. Revman uses bronze accents with faux ivory in its Ivory Coast bath accessories, and highlights copper matte and shine glazing in its Luxe bath accessories.

GTT International features gold metallic highlights in its Nepal bed ensemble, an allover floral design; Fino Lino highlights gold tones in its rich woven damask bed and coordinating silk charmeuse throw; Matteo features Due, a sterling silver matelassé coverlet with a coordinating floral in pink and gray; and Trendex uses bronze, gold and pewter in its napkin rings, which also are embellished with beads and jewels.

In bath accessories, Blonder Home Accents highlights Contour, a two-tone metallic design pairing stainless steel with copper; Radiance, a shimmering foil design in copper; Capiz, featuring real capiz shells accented with gold; and Moonlight, an allover crushed glass design with silver highlights. India Ink spotlights Kakura bath accessories, an architectural look with a copper crackle finish, as well as Jardin, a pearlized solid color embossed floral texture.

Waterford by W-C Designs features real capiz shells in shades of pink, white and gold in its luxury collection of freestanding placemats and coasters; the collection encompasses marble, shell, lacquer and leather. W-C Designs' new bath accessories line uses bronze finishes, metallic reactive glazes and jewelry accents to add textural impact.

Surface interest is a fundamental necessity in today's home fashions, and suppliers continue to view elaborate embroideries and intricate stitching techniques as an essential decorative component. "Embroidery is a very, very important part of our line," notes Rogers of American Homeland. "We offer a large variety of both traditional and contemporary looks in embroideries. Most of our new line is very crisp and clean. We also feature a lot of textured effects, including a number of flocked designs."

Jasmine uses a variety of textural effects in its home fashions, including embroidery, embossing and crinkle cloth. "These processes are another way to enhance the display of home textiles prod-

ucts," comments Lin. "And the techniques are more artistic and more complicated now."

Zorlu spotlights floral and paisley designs in embroideries, and also highlights updated looks in lace. "Historically laces were perceived as 'grandma' or 'bohemian chic' looks," remarks Pasquale. "Our Anna Lace Paisley is a modern, updated lace that is soft and drapes luxuriously; it uses a new technique called 'brochette,' a crochet look that is fresh and new."

Many luxury linens suppliers highlight dense, detailed needlework. Sferra Bros. spotlights the ultimate in embroidery with its Burano bedding, featuring intricate, handmade Point de Venice lace inset into 1,020-thread-count Egyptian cotton sheets; Sethi & Sethi showcases allover dense leaf embroidery in its Phylo bedding; Anali highlights Breeze, an allover leaf motif, and Pink Orchid, an elegant floral design; Studio Chic offers Blossom silk decorative pillows featuring intricate floral embroidery embellished with actual Swarovski crystals; and Ann Gish uses French knots on her solid-color silk bedding.

Schlossberg Switzerland is offering traditional embroidery and cutwork lace in its Floralie, Amelie and Diana bedding as well as its Prestige embellished towels; the company offers a more modern embroidery style in the Josephine bed, featuring a white-on-white design of tree branches.

Taking a more contemporary approach, many suppliers are using mini-pleats, pin-tucking, smocking and ribbed effects.

Columbine Cody highlights its Aspen sheets and quilted coverlets, constructed of 100% organic cotton. "The sheets are a twill weave, and the coverlet and shams are finished with tuxedo pleating for a fashion look," explains Lemansky.

Home Source International introduces the aptly-named Tuxedo bed, constructed of a fine 1,000-thread-count fabric and featuring multiple rows of pleating; Blissliving Home uses vertical bands of pin-tucked and pleated silk in its Stefan duvet set; Donna Karan highlights horizontal pin-tucking in its Loft Stripe bed, which also features a woven jacquard shirting stripe, all in shades of purple and white; and WestPoint Home uses French knots and frog closures in its Lhasa bed ensemble.

KeeCo offers Naja, a duvet featuring rows of mini pleats coordinating with an ikat floral design; Newport highlights its Calais bed, an asymmetrical floral embroidery with pin-tuck accents; Custom Comfort/100% Pure uses horizontal ribbed fabric in a color-blocked layout in its Maestro bed; and Park B. Smith showcases Peyton, a ribbed texture in window treatments; Veranda Stripe, a ribbed look in window treatments and shower curtains; and Summer Stripe, a soft green and blue stripe in shower curtains.

Caldeira USA highlights pleated suede decorative pillows, featuring rows of mini-pleats in a variety of layouts, including allover pleating, corner pleating, and asymmetrical pleating in a range of pastel colors. The company also uses mini-pleats in its line of faux silk taffeta pillows, in shades of teal, sienna, black and chocolate.

Richloom showcases pleating, pin-tucking, smocking and embroidery in both window treatments and bedroom ensembles. Cohen points out, "We continue to offer a lot of pleating and pin-tucking as ways to embellish our product and create a more stylish look." ●



new & noteworthy

Creative concepts lead to product category expansion, packaging innovations and intriguing branding programs

Product research and development is the lifeblood of the home fashions industry, and suppliers are constantly coming up with original and inventive ideas to spark sales, including entering entirely new product categories, developing novel packaging and merchandising concepts and giving new twists to traditional products.

Zorlu USA, for instance, enters the bath category with a comprehensive assortment of shower curtains, bath towels, embellished towels and bathrobes. "This completes our one-stop-shopping," remarks creative director Martine Pasquale. The fabric shower curtains are offered in a range of colors in solids, stripes, baroque scrolls, leaves, textures, sheers, corduroy and seersucker.

Zorlu's towel collection includes Organic solid colors in ivory, beige and leaf green; a soft Modal/cotton blend in cosmetic shades of ivory, gold, celery, mushroom and blush; and all-over textured Waffle towels. Embellished towels include the Seaside collection, featuring embroidered seashells and lighthouses, and Black & White, a modern novelty look with black and white flowers.

A number of manufacturers are entering the indoor/outdoor market with products designed for the deck, yard or beach.

Lintex Linens unveils four designs in outdoor table linens, all constructed to be stain-resistant, water repellent and mildew resistant; Bacova Guild introduces Grill Mats, a new category of indoor/outdoor woven polypropylene mats featuring ink-jet printed images; and Orian

Rugs offers the Veranda



The Seaside collection from Zorlu USA features embroidered seashells and lighthouses.

Breeze collection of indoor/outdoor rugs in 30 patterns, ranging from traditional florals to contemporary geometrics.

Newport offers an indoor/outdoor collection of decorative pillows, chair pads and settee cushions in more than 40 styles; PHI introduces Beach in a Bag, a beach-themed quilt with a matching tote bag; and Bardwil expands its indoor/outdoor table linens with a Hydrangea, a purple and yellow floral; Hadley, a blue and white tile look; Sea Breeze, a classic stripe in aqua, green and white; and Lobster, a kitschy retro look; the company also offers a roll-up beach mat with a tote handle and a 60-inch square picnic blanket.



Zorlu USA enters the bath market with a comprehensive collection of shower curtains, bath towels, embellished towels and bathrobes.

Biederlack goes to the beach with the Beach Towel Backpack, a towel that folds up into a backpack for easy transport; Style.Lab expands its beach towel line with the addition of a host of coordinating accessories, including umbrellas, chairs, coolers, beach balls and even flip-flops; and Tommy Hilfiger Home expands its popular beach towel program with the addition of a beach roll, a beach towel that rolls up around a decorative pillow: the pillow attaches with buttons and can be removed for washing.

Other manufacturers are bringing the outdoors inside with scented products. Zambaiti USA introduces Fruit Essence, a line of brightly colored—and scented—throws packaged in vividly colored gift boxes in six mouth-watering scents: lemon, apple, raspberry, orange, strawberry and, of course, chocolate.

Springs offers lavender-scented pillows, mattress pads and down alternative comforters, all detailed with lavender colored trim.

Zambaiti also introduces pet sets, incorporating a polyester throw, dog bone pillow and dog bowl packaged in a "dog house" box, all featuring the phrase "I love my dog."

Croskill takes aim at the upscale pet market with the addition of dog beds in luxurious fabrics. The company offers three different shapes and two sizes of dog beds. Croskill also expands into the accent furniture category with a range of small tables, dressers and screens, as well as a selection of table and floor lamps.

Other suppliers are offering new adaptations to existing products. Creative Bath unveils the Zip On shower curtain, featuring a decorative header with a hidden zipper; the body of the shower curtain can be removed for easy cleaning. Louisville Bedding has developed a patented fitted sheet, the Simmons SmartFit, that uses double-wide elastic and fits mattresses ranging from

six to 20 inches deep. India Ink's latest invention in the window and bath category is a decorative magnetic attachment to transform existing hardware from blah to beautiful.

New packaging and merchandising programs also are in evidence. Columbine Cody is highlighting its innovative "Bachelor in a Bag" program. "The uniqueness of this item is that we replaced the flat sheet with an attachment to the duvet," explains designer Jeffrey Lemansky. "It makes up as a European bed but offers the same function as a traditional U.S. sheet set, only without the flat sheet." The company also is packaging its matelassé and chenille bedding in sets, using a bag made from the same material "so that consumers can see the pattern and touch the fabric."

Welspun goes for convenience with its Hangups and Down Under bags. Both feature a complete bedroom ensemble in packages designed to be reused for either closet or under-bed storage.

On the merchandising front, home fashions suppliers continue to develop collections in conjunction with well-known apparel designers and celebrities, and also seek marketing synergies through licenses with firms in related categories such as tabletop.

Blonder Home Accents licenses celebrity Kathy Ireland for a collection of bath ensembles, wallpaper and wall appliques; Colonial Home Textiles offers G Beds, based on the lifestyle and furnishings of well-known entertainer Whoopi Goldberg; Sunham Home Fashions launches a bed and bath collection from Lacoste, the casual apparel brand known for its signature crocodile logo; and Town & Country Living offers two new licenses: a collection of table linens and kitchen textiles by television personality Rachael Ray; and the Bill Blass Home collection of bed and bath ensembles, based on the archives of the late apparel designer.

Park B. Smith unveils two new licensed collections: a line of shower curtains and bath rugs by sleepwear designer Eileen West, known for her painterly floral patterns; and a collection of table linens and kitchen textiles coordinating with popular dinnerware patterns from tabletop manufacturer Pfaltzgraff. Hedaya Home Fashions also is

showcasing a collection by Eileen West, offering 100% cotton handmade patchwork quilts with coordinating decorative pillows, pillow shams, bed ruffles and draperies.

Baltic Linens has developed a collection bed and bath ensembles using famous designs from English tabletop company Spode; patterns include Blue Italian, Floral Haven and Stafford Flowers. Ellery HomeStyles is adding a license with Dena home, featuring eclectic vintage styling; patterns include Spring Vine, a green and white floral; White and Blue, an allover damask; White on White, an embroidered floral; and Hula Girls, a fun tropical toile in pink and brown.

Basic bedding supplier American Textile offers an upscale collection of pillows, mattress pads and comforters based on the homes of film and television star Jane Seymour. Ex-Cell Home Fashions offers a collection of bath ensembles and table linens in conjunction with the Breast Cancer Research Foundation; 7% of the proceeds will be donated to the foundation.

Dan River and Ebony Magazine are collaborating on a complete bedding collection targeted at African American consumers, with geometric patterns inspired by traditional African kente cloth designs.

On the juvenile side, Dan River unveils Bindi The Jungle Girl, a juvenile bedding collection based on the television adventures of Bindi Irwin, daughter of the late Steve Irwin of "The Crocodile Hunter" television show.

GTT is marketing the Freckles line of upscale juvenile bedding and accessories from Australia, featuring patterns like Outback Trail, with images of Australian animals, and Butterfly Lane, highlighting tropical butterflies.

JLA Home is licensing designs based on one of 2008's most anticipated movie sequels, the fourth installment in the immensely popular "Indiana Jones" series by Lucasfilm Ltd. and Paramount Pictures.

Blonder Home Accents reveals interactive shower curtains and bath accessories through a new license with Crayola, including peel off stickers and fabric crayons for kids to use to help personalize the shower curtains—putting a bit of "fun" in a fundamental product. ●