

Spring 2007

design directions

by Donna Boyle Schwartz

Passionate purples, pale neutrals and warmer tones dominate color palettes; home design takes on apparel trends; elaborate handicrafts, appealing fabrics and organic textures add surface interest; and technology brings new benefits to home fashions

Home Textiles ^{Today}

COLOR

Home fashions suppliers spotlight trendy apparel hues including purple, black, new neutrals and warm, spicy shades

At last...home fashions are finally "hip" to the trends in apparel.

A case in point: the color purple, which was declared "the new black" at the 2006 Emmy Awards and adorned high-wattage TV stars including Evangeline Lilly, Ellen Pompeo, Sandra Oh, Leah Rimini, Cheryl Hines and Jamie Pressly.

Home fashions showrooms are awash in shades of purple, ranging from pale lilac, orchid, mauve and lavender to rich aubergine, amethyst, plum and grape.

Westgate (ADF/HFI), for example, is highlighting purple tones in decorative pillows, window treatments and fabrics. "I believe that we will see a resurgence of the eggplant, purple and mauve family along with spice colors that fit into the 'organic' concept," notes Amy Bell, vice president of design for Westgate decorative pillows and accessories. "I also believe that naturals, beige and cream will gain more momentum."

Cheryl Johnson, Westgate vice president of window fashions agrees, noting, "Amethysts, plums and lilacs are up and coming colors, along with pinks, from dusty to deep tones and saturated fuchsia, especially combined with browns and blues."

Mauve figures prominently in Homestead's new Belle Maison collection, based on Southern style; PHI offers Atherton bedding in a soft lilac shade with metallic accents; fine damask table

linens from Le Jacquard Francais combine brilliant shades of eggplant, grape, burnt orange and red; and Melrose Home offers Laura, a dramatic purple floral bed ensemble.

Odelia is a soft mauve and blue leaf design with accents of pink, from the Dorma bed linens collection by International Textile Group; Xochi presents table linens in rich hues of mulberry and eggplant as well as brighter shades of magenta and amethyst; Anne De Solène offers bedding and accessories in small tossed floral design in a pale lavender shade; Twinkle Living's Dew sheeting features a contemporary stencil-look floral in shades of lavender and gray; and India Ink's Ella bath accessories feature contemporary geometric and folkloric motifs in lavender and white.

Back in Black

Although purple may be "the new black," black itself is still important, particularly when acting as a neutral shade or paired in that eternally chic combination, black and white.

"Black is still an important basic coloration in the market," notes Charles Cilley, national sales manager, Cuddledown. "Color families that are coming up are neutrals, including black, ivory taupe and chocolate, mixed with grays and gray-toned colorations. These colors will be important decorating foundations as interiors transition to more soothing environments. Interest



Cuddledown Willow Sateen



The Sunset Beach ensemble from Arrow Home Fashions features a warm color palette of ginger, saffron and tobacco.

will be built around texture and new interpretations of traditional design, with color coming into play as peripheral accents."

Croscill Home's Monterey ensemble is a dramatic woven stripe in black, charcoal and platinum; Chilewich offers its Ribbon Weave placemats and runners in Midnight, Patina, Pebble and Brass; American Dawn showcases High Definition, a collection of graphic black and white designs in decorative pillows including a flocked floral, herringbone, geometric and allover fern motif; and Missoni Home offers a graphic contemporary floral design in black and white.

Finnish design firm Marimekko features its classic graphic geometric designs in black and white, or black and lime; while another Scandinavian firm, Per Swedish Inspired, features interesting contemporary swirls, dots and geometric motifs in black and white.

Blossom Silhouette is a positive/negative contemporary floral bath ensemble from Tweel Home; Zenobia embellished towels from Stitchesations feature ribbon embroidery and beaded trim in black and white; Studio throws from Biederlack highlight upscale urban looks in black and white; and Suburban Silk offers a stylized contemporary floral design bed ensemble in black and white.

Neutral Territory

Neutral shades and barely-there tints are increasingly popular, especially mineral tones and pale metallic hues

"We are seeing a return to neutrals, as natural and organic looks gain momentum," comments PHI creative director Kirsten Sedestrom, pointing to PHI's Eucalyptus Grove as an example. "Neutral grounds with pops of key accent colors such as salmon also are being well-received, as a way to show fashion and remain highly salable at retail. We have had a lot of reaction to two of our Indigo blue beds, including Morocco.

"We have had a lot of interest in our Cottage colors, which are updated pastels with a vintage feeling," Sedestrom adds. "We feature quilts and comforters along with accessory components such as cut-work and embroidered duvet covers, bed skirts and sheet programs."

Bill Spencer, national sales and marketing manager, GTT International, points out, "Metallic colorations such as bronzes and golds will continue to add interest to our new bed designs. We strongly believe trend-right colorations are a very important factor in any of our new products. Our design teams believe ruby is still important color, as is red, clay, and russet. Further, many of our designs for Spring 2007 will incorporate sage greens with

COLOR

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mellow butter yellows. In our Simple Elegance trend, we will focus on mahogany, mink, soft blues, pale yellows and golds."

Croskill Home focuses on soft neutrals in its new White Label luxury bed and bath collection; key colors include silver, pale gold, ivory, blush, sage, and faint robin's egg blue.

In its Waterford bedding collection, W-C Designs highlights Foxford, a woven jacquard design in shades of pewter, silver, bronze and gold; the company also features designer Sigrid Olsen's Natural Metallic ensemble, a yarn-dyed cotton chambray overprinted with metallic hand-stamped floral designs.

SKU, the window division of Saturday Knight, features the Mineralist style, with a hint of color; Baltic Linen offers the Orsay bath ensemble, featuring metallic silver on white, and Bliss, an abstract floral in pale aqua and green; Textillery Weavers highlights shades of platinum, oyster, light sage, copper, dark pecan and teak in its Multi-Texture Tweed throws; and Espalma by Cobra adds Seedling Green, Oxygen Blue and Petal Pink to its Ecstasy towel program.

Pink is emerging as an interesting new accent color, ranging from pale petal and cosmetic blush tints to richer coral and salmon shades.

The W-C Home Fashions division of W-C Designs uses a two-tone blush pink in its San Simeon bed ensemble, and pairs pink with pewter in its Remembrance jacquard design.

Loftex presents a fresh palette of rich and spicy shades, including paprika, curry, olive and adobe in its towels. "We are telling two very distinctive color stories," notes Gretchen Dale, senior vice president. "Our fashion towels are in the spice tones of traditional colors, and new solid towel introductions are done in a modern color palette."

Monica Lowe Graves, design director for Arrow Home Fashions points to a warming trend, including "natural dyes and deep vegetable palettes including tomato red, saffron, metallic copper, rich aubergine and also more toned down variations using dustier shades of pomegranate, yellow ochre, ginger and natural tones." For example, Arrow's Kapalua Blossoms bed highlights swaying palm fronds and a grass cloth tonal texture in bamboo brown, earthy green and sand dollar gold.

Cilley of Cuddledown comments, "We are concentrating on saturated jewel tones. Colors and combinations we expect to do well for us are jewel tones including topaz, twilight and garnet, as well as color combinations including gold/navy, gold/garnet, ivory/garnet and russet/basil."

Examples of rich jewel tones abound, including Melangé Home's Europa and Moroccan throw collections, all based on Old World designs including paisley, scrolls and damasks; Biederlack's new Borbo throws, offered in more than 30 styles, all with a European influence; Legacy's lush Chrysanthemum bed ensemble



Eucalyptus Grove from PHI highlights the combination of neutral grounds with organic, natural motifs.

Maffei-Toolan, Waverly vice president of design. "The rich chocolate tones are moving towards lighter brown like latte." She points to Waverly's Felicite and Serene Stripe in Mineral, noting that these show "latte brightened with glacier colors. These colors have a calming influence and are more livable."

"Cappuccinos and warm browns mix richly with terracotta and neutrals," points out Graves of Arrow, which is offering several bed ensembles in brown hues, including Sarina, a lovely diamond pintuck bordered in a floral pattern in cinnamon and chestnut; Sunset Beach, a pieced comforter featuring stylized palm leaves and a textured basketweave texture in tobacco, ginger and saffron; and Tranquility, featuring palm leaves, textural tweeds and awning stripes in hues of wicker, sandstone, sea grass and wind.

High Country Linens offers Jacinda, a pieced and embroidered ensemble in chocolate and copper with aqua accents, and La Playa, a chocolate diamond quilt design; United Feather & Down highlights an intricate floral jacquard design in an espresso brown in its Casa Poggesi collection; and Oxford House is adding a range of fashion colors in laces, including nutmeg, mushroom, flax, pewter and black.

Designer Barbara Barry adds a rich Mocha color to her solid-color bedding from DWI; Springs offers Azia bedding, a woven rose motif in chocolate and taupe, as well as Pavillion bedding, a formal woven damask in chocolate and gold; and in window treatments, Richloom offers Rhapsody, an allover damask in brown tones, and Rockford, a contemporary geometric print on a semi-sheer ground in brown;

Twig from Amenity is a stencil look offered in cocoa and cream, cocoa and almond, and cocoa and peacock blue and received a Best New Product award at the New York Home Textiles Show.

The combination of brown and blue continues to be a strong seller throughout the home fashions market. For example,

Dea marries aqua, chocolate and white in its coverlets; Studio Chic highlights an allover woven damask in aqua and chocolate; Lili & Co. offers the Landsdown velvet bedspread in ice blue with an inset of cream embroidery in its English Home collection; and India Ink pairs turquoise and chocolate as well as copper and teal in bath accessories.

"We are still seeing a strong demand for the mocha/blue combination in our decorative fabrics, as well as mocha paired with shades of pink," comments Denise Matlack, Westgate vice president of sales.

Westgate's Johnson agrees, "We are featuring a lot of the blue/brown color combinations; they are very much in demand. Blues continue to be important, especially in shades of turquoise ranging from lights to darks."

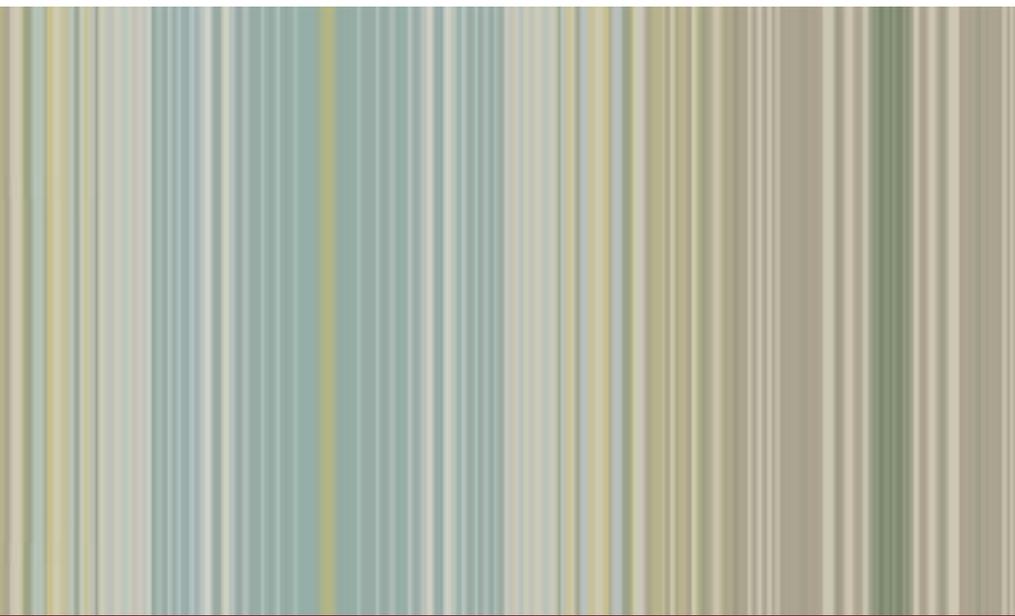
Blue is a perpetual décor-friendly color, and this season's blue hues range from icy glacier and pale aqua to deeper turquoise and periwinkle.

Croskill's hip new District collection features fashion-forward color combinations, including turquoise, apple green and orange; aqua and melon; apple green and chocolate; and black and linen.

New solid color towels from Abyss feature shades of turquoise, lime, pink, burnt orange, chocolate, charcoal, coral and kiwi; the company also shows a jacquard medallion design in chocolate and turquoise.

The Patina bed from Veratex features shades of aqua, blush and sage; the company's Eastman bed is a taffeta plaid with a diamond quilt stitch in aqua, coral, vanilla and caramel, and the Mystic bed is an allover quilted microfiber sateen in brown reversing to aqua.

Bardwil offers April, an aqua floral tablecloth, in its Liz Claiborne line, as well as Montego Bay, in aqua and yellow, and Patio, in aqua and orange in its indoor/outdoor table linens; designer Tommy Hilfiger highlights Captiva bedding in periwinkle, navy and ivory. ❖



Waverly's Serene Stripe design uses a latte ground brightened with calming glacier colors.

China Doll bedding from Dan River's licensed Baby Phat collection features cotton-candy pink; Plush Living offers decorative pillows in a contemporary scroll design in pink and chocolate; and Baltic Linen's Miranda bed ensemble features pink floral elements on a cocoa ground,

Global Warming

On the opposite side of the color wheel, jazzy jewel tones, rich earthen hues and exotic spice shades are garnering attention.

ble in rich shades of terra cotta, harvest gold and brick; Thomasville's Kalinjar, an updated tree of life design in jewel tones of ruby, gold and emerald; and Shaw Livings classic Persian and European designs in its Accents collection of rugs.

Perhaps the most pervasive colors in this warm trend are those in the brown family, including rich deeps like espresso and chocolate as well as lighter shades of latte and cocoa.

"Brown, a color that goes with everything, is still strong," remarks Pam

design

Paisley proliferates, stripes spread and updated florals flourish in home fashions

dging hippies, rejoice—paisley, that wardrobe staple of the '60s, is back, and reinterpreted in myriad variations for home décor.

Today's popular paisley patterns and colorations run the style gamut, from literal recreations of classic design elements to wildly overscaled motifs with a contemporary bent.

"One key design direction is the reinterpretation of the classic Jacobean, tapestry and paisley motifs, whether through new color combinations or scale of design," remarks Charles Cilley, national sales manager, Cuddledown. "Amador, one of our opulent holiday introductions, is a new twist on the classic paisley. We have reinterpreted paisley into a medallion motif, and then oversized the scale of the design for a dramatic presentation on the bed. As a soothing complement to the large-scaled, top of the bed jacquard, we have grounded the look with gold sateen sheets."

Other examples of paisley are plentiful: GTT offers Royal Paisley, a dense, intricate paisley in gold and red with a hint of metallic gold; Paisley Flower is a rich paisley bed ensemble in gold, turquoise and magenta on white from Arliktext; and Elrene's Garden Paisley indoor/outdoor table linens feature a rich traditional paisley in spice tones.

The Dylan bed ensemble from Arrow is a traditional paisley in soothing tones of gold, amber, sage and cocoa; Fandango table linens from Harvey & Strait feature a classic paisley design in updated shades of lime, turquoise and coral; and Soleil de Serra is a yarn-dyed paisley from Home Source International's Mirabello collection.

Westgate highlights Regina, a lovely woven paisley bed in rich colorations; Greenhorn Trading is offering luxurious cashmere and lambswool blend throws in intricate paisley designs; Sferra's Tommy

Bahama collection unveils a new woven paisley bed in rich orange and aqua shades; and Persia from Thomasville is a textured paisley in shades of honey, ginger and chive on an espresso ground.

"We are continuing with paisley designs and adding in an exotic 'Marrakesh' look to compliment the spice tones; we're also adding interesting embroideries," says Amy Bell, vice president of design for Westgate decorative pillows and accessories. "At the other end of the design spectrum, we're showing beautiful old document damasks in many colors with elaborate trims."

If paisley is prolific, so too are its kissin' cousins, Jacobean and damasks, especially in overscaled varieties.

PHI's Fantasia window design is Jacobean chenille in an interesting reversible construction; the company's Yasmine bed is an allover Jacobean embroidery in spice tones.

Avignon from Peacock Alley is a timeless Jacobean floral in ivory, taupe and gray or blue, lavender and dusty rose; Crossill Home's Summer Breeze bed is a Jacobean on a silvery gray ground; and the Cottage Collection from Sphinx by Oriental Weavers features an allover Jacobean design in rich shades of persimmon, brick and indigo.

PHI spotlights Malacca, an expansive woven damask in chocolate, burgundy and gold. "We continue to update damask patterns into different constructions such as embroidery, metallic and flocked linen," points out creative director Kirsten Sedestrom.

Waverly is offering a range of beautiful, classical prints and wovens paired with more modern designs in its New Traditional collection. "For example, a geometric balances the femininity of a floral," points out Pam Maffei-Toolan, Waverly vice president of design. "Also, damask remains strong in new multi-col-



Cuddledown reinterprets and updates a traditional paisley design in its Amador ensemble.

ored tonals. These are more organic in feeling, less framed and freer flowing."

Arrow's Ella bed is a large damask design in a softened spa blue shade with a coordinating embroidered trellis and Swiss dot border; Salzburg is a huge woven damask bed in gold from Westgate; Baroque is a large scale contemporary damask from Buffalo Home; and Baroque Jacquard from DWI's Royal Sateen line is a traditional jacquard in an overscaled layout in pale shades of lavender and almond.

Earning Their Stripes

With the emphasis on apparel fashion looks, it is no surprise that stripes and plaids are a dominant factor in home fashions in everything from yarn-dyed wovens to prints to textures.

"We are offering a collection of modern tailored linear shaped designs, featuring bedding ensembles in stripes, plaids and geometric combinations," says Monica Lowe Graves design director for Arrow. "For example, Bianca reflects a relaxed lifestyle and features a lyrical verse of subtle color and intricate texture that create simplicity with a modern sophistication. Multiple textures form vertical bands and the harmonious shading is created by merging soothing light blue, tan, bone, gold and hint of sienna." Other examples include Antigua, an exaggerated shirting stripe in coral, cream and sea grass, highlighted with a tiny tweed; and Rolex, a sharp tailored geometric block plaid in gold, sienna and kiwi.

Springs presents interesting plays of scale and coloration in its Plaids/Stripes

trend, including unusual pairing of saturated colors and neutral shades. Stripes also play a key role in the company's Modern lifestyle, often paired with houndstooth or other menswear motifs.

Lincoln Avenue is a classic multi-colored striped bed from designer Tommy Hilfiger; the designer also features Brant Point, a patchwork of traditional stripes, plaids, checks and solids, and Photojournalist, a herringbone and awning stripe in khaki and olive shot with red.

Towel producer Nakshbandi, represented by American Linen Co., features a wide array of yarn-dyed stripes in youthful colors, solid color towels with multi-stripped dobby borders, and reversible striped towels; Commonwealth showcases Berkley, a vertical stripe with metallic tones, Media Stripe in soft spa shades, and Rita Square, a windowpane plaid semi-sheer panel in six colors; Brasilia is a horizontal woven stripe in silver, blue and olive from Creative Bath's Joseph Abboud collection; and Merengue is a textural stripe in hot pink, orange, lime, indigo and white from Bay Linens.

GTT is highlighting its Metropolitan solid-color program using ribbed faille cloth to create a textured stripe. "Faille cloth is a step out for us," notes Bill Spencer, national sales and marketing manager. "Metropolitan adds an updated and clean feel to the core solid color comforter business."

Plaids also are ubiquitous this season. For example, Lintex Linens offers a classic gingham check in 11 colors in its Kristal Kleen kitchen towels, constructed



Arrow Home Fashions combines technically advanced fabrications with a traditional paisley in soothing shades of gold, amber, sage and cocoa.

design

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using a special weave designed to be highly absorbent and to leave glassware lint-free.

Anchor Home is offering a wide selection of plaids and stripes in its table linens, kitchen textiles and window treatments, in both classic and fashion colors; Cabana is a seersucker plaid shower curtain from S. Lichtenberg; Weekend East Hampton offers attractive table linens in classic plaids and stripes, accented with grosgrain ribbon; and Kennebunk Weavers highlights Donegal plaid and Donegal herringbone throws in traditional menswear motifs as well as Netherlands, an updated sweater knit.

Sure Fit offers a variety of plaids and stripes in slipcovers, including Stretch Plaid in six colors; Verano, a woven plaid in toast and gold; Jasper Stripe, in brown, gold and ivory; Ticking Stripe in sage, burgundy and navy; and Avalon Stripe, a wide awning stripe in burgundy, sage and toast.

Where The Wild Things Are

Stripes of the animal variety are returning in force—if indeed, animal skin looks can ever be said to have gone away. Westgate, for instance, pairs animal skin with modern menswear accents in its Catz chenille bed ensemble.

The Ernest Hemingway collection from CHF offers Ocelot, a woven chenille animal skin in a stripe layout as well as a new Zebra towel. Traditions by Pamela Kline spotlights the Out of Africa bedding collection, encompassing baby panther, snow leopard and Bengal tiger designs with chocolate suede.

Safari decorative pillows from PHI feature textured animal skin in six colors accented with large grommets.

with flowers.

CHF features Newport and Montauk, a complete nautical story in bath, as well as Coral Reef, a lovely coral bath ensemble in soft ivory and Porthole, a towel embellished with large, cut-out holes. Mosaic Sea and Shadowbox Shells bath ensembles from Saturday Knight feature underwater flora and fauna; while the Coastal collection of hand-hooked rugs from Momeni features tropical fish, seashells, palm trees, and lighthouses.

Designer Tommy Hilfiger uses small lobsters as a printed sheet motif; High Country Linens offers Montauk bedding, an oversized shell embroidery on a pewter ground; Croscill embroidered decorative pillows showcase lobsters, crabs, frogs and shells; and handcrafted decorative pillows from The Sandor Collection include Conch shell, Nautilus shell and Lighthouse.

Designer Marlo Lorenz is using a variety of undersea motifs in her signature line as well as the Thro collection, including starfish with beads, semi-precious stones, coral, sea horses, shells and jumping fish; Dakotah offers myriad coastal motifs in spa colors, including starfish, shells, embroidered coral fronds, fish, mosaic tiles and lighthouses; and Thomasville's Coral Reef is a patchwork of coral fronds in buttercup, emerald, admiral blue and fiesta red on a sand ground, accented with lighthouse decorative pillows.

Floral Fantasy

No home textiles assortment is complete without a selection of fresh-picked floral fashions, and this season, suppliers are highlighting traditional looks with a twist.



Loftex highlights exotic floral motifs and an eclectic mix of textures and rich colors in its new Turkish Delights towel collection.

fabrications that add visual delight with their deep hues and tactile differentiation."

Indigo Home offers Hydrangea, a beautiful botanical floral in apple green on white; the Josette bed ensemble is a classic Old World vintage floral in fresh colorations from International Textile Group's Dorma collection; and table linen supplier Sylvie Jordan highlights classic Provencal florals in updated colorations, including berry red and avocado green.

Croscill features its Anya bed, a lush heat transfer floral print on a golden woven ground; Hollander's Laura Ashley bedding collection offers Springtime, an allover embroidered floral, Villa Fleur, a small scale Jacobean floral and the complementary Villa Fleur Stripe, an engineered stripe; and the Red and White Kitchen Co. brings back classic flour sack kitchen towels in retro '50s fruit and floral designs.

Many traditional florals feature interesting design companions flitting amongst the blooms and branches: butterflies.

Bardwil uses the popular Butterfly Meadow design from Lenox in both a jacquard woven tablecloth and a tossed print on a damask ground; the company also interprets the design in bath with an overprinted jacquard shower curtain, embellished towels and butterfly-shaped shower hooks.

Dan River's Lilly Pulitzer collection spotlights the Butterfly Garden bed in lime and pink and white ceramic embossed Butterfly bath accessories; Blonder Home Accents highlights Butterflies in purple and bright pastels; Monarch is an embossed butterfly design in lilac from India Ink; and Mariposa from Elaine Smith Pillows features delicate butterflies in shades of coral, sunshine, persimmon and aqua on a white ground.

Other interesting variations on traditional florals are stencil or silhouette looks, many reminiscent of Indonesian woodblock designs.

For example, Homestead features bed ensembles based on the hand-block-printing fabric designs of Philadelphia-based designers Galbraith & Paul; CHF's Indian Bazaar bed ensemble is a traditional Indonesian block print design; and

Ferran Home puts a modern spin on traditional hand-block looks, offering hand-screened contemporary looks in robin's egg blue, lime, butterscotch and gold.

Company C features Medallion bedding, with the look of hand-blocked prints on an antiqued ground in green, gold or copper, with Bohemian velvet accents, featuring hand-blocked motifs on plush velvet.

House + Wear features graphic contemporary hand-screened prints in its Hau Hau collection from Finland and won a Best New Product Award at the New York Home Textiles Show.

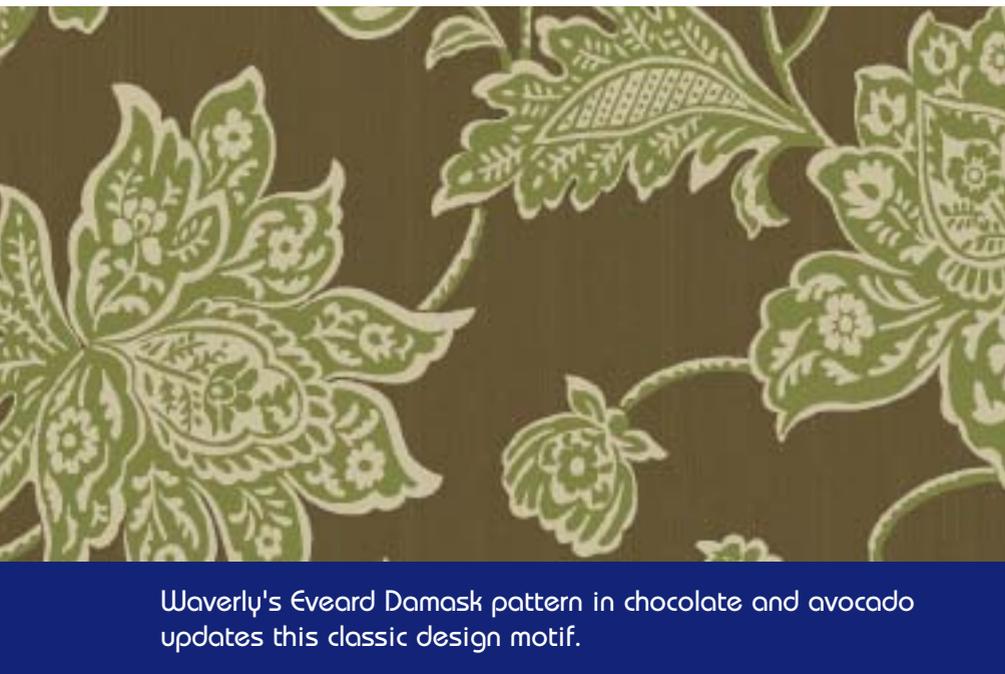
Chic Contemporary

Moving beyond florals, contemporary and geometric designs continue to take their inspiration from the mid-century modern look—although the definition of mid-century has broadened beyond '50s-inspired designs to encompass looks from the '40s, '60s and even early '70s.

Poppies, a contemporary window design from SKU, is straight out of the '70s; designer Jonathan Adler highlights retro look contemporary geometrics and hugely-scaled houndstooth in his table linen collection for Elrene; Dwell offers Sketch, a contemporary fretwork design in black on ivory, and Talon, a large contemporary scroll in charcoal on ivory.

Created by British designer Terence Conran, Dorma's Bed by Conran collection captures the essence of contemporary fashion, encompassing sophisticated architectural motifs, retro geometrics, textures and even whimsical elements such as measuring tapes, buttons and marbles.

Lintex Linens offers Squares, a woven retro-look rounded square motif, and Calvin, a contemporary woven alternating thick and thin vertical lines; the Circles throw from Klippan of Sweden features retro circles in red, black, taupe, yellow, blue and lime; Twinkle Living highlights Zig-Zag and Lego geometric bedding in chocolate and ivory; Revman's Modern Squares bed is a contemporary geometric from the licensed Echo collection; the Islands area rug from Angela Adams features random circles tossed on a solid ground and the designer's Mammy rug features asymmetric cut-off ovals. ❖



Waverly's Eveard Damask pattern in chocolate and avocado updates this classic design motif.

Stitchsations features In the Wild, an abstract cheetah motif in embellished towels.

Animals of the undersea form also are popular, particularly in bath. Newport offers a variety of bath ensembles using sea creatures, including Corfu, using fossilized shells, Coastal, a shell and nautical design, Barbuda, a realistic shell pattern, and Savannah Shores, pairing seashells

Loftex is highlighting exotic floral motifs as part of its Turkish Delights towel collection. "We offering fresh twists on florals, giving them an exotic feel," notes Gretchen Dale, senior vice president.

"We're seeking inspiration from around the globe with an eclectic collection that marries color, concept and chic style. This collection features jacquards, solids and embellished towels, all in different cotton

style

Elaborate embroideries, supple silks and environmentally-friendly fashions spark interest

Grandma would be proud: age-old handicrafts married with today's technology translate into a wealth of decorative options in home textiles.

Embroideries, laces, crewelwork and other forms of stitch-craft are hugely popular in all home fashions segments, on myriad fabric substrates and in virtually every conceivable design motif.

"Waverly is taking embroideries to the next level with application on natural fibers like linen, rayon, and cotton sateen ground cloths," comments Pam Maffei-Toolan, Waverly vice president of design.



Westgate Rustican Curtains

"This is a move away from the more common embroidered silks and faux silks that have saturated the market in the recent past. Another new treatment can be seen in Devine Damask which has pearlescent printing on a chenille ground for subtle, tonal rich look. Also, Waverly is moving in a more luxurious direction with printed velvets and a new high count jacquard ground cloth."

Arrow Home Fashions is highlighting stitching details in its new bed ensembles, including Brilliance, a pleated and pin-tucked design in champagne and eggshell; and Luminaria, an intricately stitched design in bronze, copper, henna, sienna and beige. "We add textures for a fresh new look and enhanced surface interest," remarks design director Monica Lowe Graves. "Highly textured fabrics add detail that you want to touch and feel, soothing all of your senses."

Embroideries are an important cate-

gory for Westgate in bedding, window fashions and decorative pillows, such as Tuscan Vine, a bed ensemble featuring allover embroidery. "We offer intricate embroideries, including our Grandi Flora design which uses one million stitches per linear meter," says Denise Matlack, vice president of sales. "Also, our Flamboyant style uses a fil coupe floating yarn effect—we take a traditional look and blow it up in an oversized jumbo repeat to create a more modern feel." On the decorative fabric side, Westgate is offering a variety of crewel look embroideries.

The Donna Karan home collection takes its inspiration from the designer's apparel line, and features layers of lace, eyelet, ribbons and embroidered Swiss dots; ensembles include Floating Lace, an eyelet and sheer design, Spring Meadow, a chunky floral embroidery, Blossom, featuring Swiss dots, and Floral Fields, a sheer flower appliqué and embroidery design with a three-dimensional effect.

Other examples include Fiore Orientale, an embroidered desert flower design from Valentine; American Vintage bedding from Homestead, highlighting pastel crewelwork embroidery on a linen ground; and asymmetrical leaf embroidery from L'Erba.

KeeCo creates a handcrafted appearance with several bed ensembles, including Stitched Leaf, an embroidery design on voile, Voile Leaf, a raw-edged leaf appliqué, and Linen Blossom, a cotton embroidery on linen.

Several suppliers are updating embroidery with more contemporary looks. "We feel that embellishments and trims are more important than ever in adding interest to the bed," comments Charles Cilley, national sales manager, Cuddledown. "This market, instead of using the standard satin stitch, hem stitch and attached border embellishments, we decided to add some new twists to these



PHI is offering a fresh assortment of design motifs and intricate stitching fabrications in traditional pieced quilts, including this Diana ensemble.

traditional embellishments. We are introducing a new 600-thread-count sateen program, framed with a hexagon embroidery. As a mid-price-point introduction, we frame our bordered, 400-thread-count percale bedding with an attached single pleat."

Karen Alweil Studio takes a contemporary approach to embroidery with its Jiti bedding, featuring stylized squares, curves, spirals and seastars embroidered on silk. Similarly, George Henry Ltd. launches the Colors of Madeira, a collection of hand-embroidered bed, bath and table linens in bold fashion colors and simplified, contemporary designs.

Springs highlights fancy stitching, elaborate trims, laces and sheers with embroidery in its Boho trend, and also spotlights handcrafted laces and crewel looks in its Cabin trend.

Melangé Home offers The White Bed,

a simple white bed accented with crochet, ribbons and ruching as well as Hemstitch, a classic hemstitch embroidery in white, green, blue, yellow and burgundy; Elrene offers Beaujolais Crewel table linens in sage, lilac, ivory, blue and cream; and Columbine Cody features Louise, an eyelet bedspread with either white on white or black on white embroidery, Gypsy, a rich ribbon embroidery, and Gabriella, a crochet coverlet in white and ivory.

Divatex offers decorative pillows with crochet in classic white and ivory as well as an array of fashion colors; CHF's Crochet embellished towels feature appliqué lace, embroidery and crochet; Anali highlights exquisite embroidery in its Coral & Shell bed ensemble, offered in blue, white, red, ivory or pink; Sethi & Sethi showcases Tree of Life, an intricately embroidered bed ensemble in silver, blue and beige, and an elegant Jacobean embroidery on turquoise; and Fortuny, from Better Living, features hand-embroidered French knots on a silk jacquard,

Oxford House highlights Carman, an updated Cluny lace look; Floret, inspired by antique French laces; and Peony, a reverse crush floral style. Richloom offers Avondale, a cottage look eyelet embroidered panel, and Colette, a folk art embroidered bed ensemble.

Celebrating its 115th anniversary, Sferra introduces the limited edition Burano, a 1,020-thread-count Egyptian cotton sheet with an inset of handmade Point de Venice lace; a queen or king set retails for \$15,000. In its regular line, Sferra highlights Saxon, a solid white 406-thread-count Egyptian cotton sheet intricately detailed with a wide Art Nouveau



Arrow Home Fashions features a striking assortment of intricate stitching in shades of bronze, copper, henna, sienna and beige in this Luminaria ensemble.

STYLE

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band in white, honey or chocolate embroidery.

The surge in traditional handcrafts is spawning a renewed interest in authentic pieced quilt designs. PHI, for instance, is offering a huge collection of pieced quilts created by designer Kathleen Field. "We are thrilled to see the market requesting traditional pieced quilts," declares creative director Kirsten Sedestrom. "It is where we started, so it is nice to see this trend reemerge. We are known for our ability to add special embellishment for a great price. We do many hand embroidery and specialty techniques, as well as continue to research new and interesting fabrics in China."

Silk Road

Silk, with its subtle shimmer and sheen, continues to be an important home fashions fabric in a wide range of colors

Karan Collection features subtle stitching and cording on a pure silk ground; Newport highlights a major collection of silk decorative pillows, featuring pleated, appliqué, embroideries and pieced styles in a vast array of solid colors.

CHF offers the Silk Road collection in its upscale Peri bedding, featuring a solid, plaid, woven jacquard and printed faux silk in thyme, maize, persimmon and delft; while Kearsley won a Best New Product Award at the New York Home Textiles Show for its decorative pillows constructed of luscious antique silks, vintage velvets and elegant trims.

Many suppliers are bringing extra texture to fabrics with the addition of flocking, puff printing, puckering, seersucker, crinkle and crashing techniques. PHI, for instance, offers the flocked Velvet Rose design in window treatments and shower curtains.



Arrow Home Fashions uses lush braids and tassels in this Wellington ensemble, featuring soft shades of aqua, ivory, gold and taupe.

and constructions, including silk blends and faux silks.

"We are featuring a lot of our silk looks and receiving a lot of interest in pinch pleated draperies in silk-like fabrications, including our Silkara and Shaitung fabrics," comments Cheryl Johnson, Westgate vice president of window fashions. "These are being placed in both plain and embroidered versions. Also, we have a five-inch long, very luxurious trim called Tessa that we are putting on our silken fabrications."

Silk and faux silk are a major focus for Beacon Looms in window and bedding ensembles, including Covent Garden, a delicate vine and floral print, Marquesa, a dot embroidery, Windswept, a stencil look grass design, and Sterling, a large scale damask.

S. Lichtenberg spotlights Calista, a traditional floral embroidery on a silk blend fabric, and Secret Garden, a solid silk blend with a hint of shimmer; the Modern Silk ensemble from the Donna

Creative Bath uses a variety of texture effects in its shower curtains, including Island Mist, a flocked tropical leaf design on a sheer from the licensed Echo line; and City Limits, a puff-printed geometric look. Catina from KeeCo is a printed bedding design with a flocked design on top, creating a "fishnet stocking" effect. Sumatra is a flocked Jacobean and animal skin ensemble in copper shades from Commonwealth.

Amazon is a linen-texture with a flocked leaf print from SKU, the window division of Saturday Knight; Revman offers a flocked Jacobean with pleating in its Manor Hill bedding; American Dawn features Milano, a flocked scroll and medalion design in black on ivory; and Melrose Home is offering a variety of flocked styles in bedding, window coverings and decorative pillows, including contemporary geometrics, scrolls, florals, dots and a Greek key design.

The finishing touch for many designs is trim, of which there appears to be an



GTT Courtney

endless variety. "Trims for traditional and opulent designs continue to be important and extremely elegant," says Amy Bell, vice president of design for Westgate decorative pillows and accessories.

Arrow is introducing a variety of new trims, including organic jute and coconut buttons. "All bedding ensembles are enhanced with decorative trimming, including tri-tonal and multi-twisted braiding, gimp and tassel fringe," notes Graves.

Earth First

Organic fibers and ecologically-friendly constructions are gaining wider acceptance in the marketplace as consumers prove there are willing to pay more to protect the planet.

Home Source International offers towels and sheets certified by SKAL, the international agency, to be 100 percent organic cotton grown in pesticide-free fields; Welspun is offering sheets and towels constructed of certified organic cotton, as well as cotton/bamboo and cotton/silk blends; and Forza & Co. offers hand-loomed Waffle Weave, Melange and Dots towels, all constructed of organic cotton.

Caesarea Creations is offering eco-friendly bath and accent rugs under a new license with Under the Canopy, which creates apparel made of organic

cotton, hemp, silk, wool and Tencel cellulose; Safavieh is offering printed area rugs constructed of sea grass and bamboo; and Chateau X table fashions are constructed using renewable exotic woods including bayong, kamagong and roma, as well as rattan, raffia, bamboo and abaca; the company also uses cowry shells and capiz shells.

S. Lichtenberg highlights its Naturals collection of window treatments, all constructed of 100 percent cotton and dyed with eco-friendly dyes; embellishments include coconut or shell buttons and wood beads.

In basic bedding, Pacific Coast Feather Co. offers Ingeo fiberfill, based on corn, covered with 100 percent bamboo fabric.

Park B. Smith expands its popular Eco Ordinates collection with Eco Ordinates Resort, a line of upscale eco-friendly designs created from organic cotton, a bamboo/cotton blend and a corn/cotton blend.

Springs introduces the Wamsutta Natural Wonders collection, offering unique fabrications, natural fibers and eco-friendly dyes in bedding and accessories. Fibers include bamboo, organic cotton, corn and wool; the all-natural dyes are drawn from sources such as pomegranate peel, maju phal fruit and acacia catechu plants. ❖



Westgate Flamboyant

new & noteworthy

Technological innovations, new licenses and creative novelties add excitement

Technological innovation may seem a somewhat strange bedfellow for home décor—but technology is fueling new combinations of features and benefits throughout the home fashions industry.

Nowhere is the impact of technology quite so evident as in the basic bedding category. Sleep Studio, for instance is offering NexGen memory foam under its SleepJoy brand. "This revolutionary memory foam offers superior features and benefits," explains Chris Ann Ernst, co-Founder and vice president. "NexGen solves common consumer complaints such as hot sleeping temperature, slow recovery to original size when first opened and foam odor. As a result, it builds consumer satisfaction.

"We believe that true luxury can be found in a great night's sleep," she continues. "In today's world, we feel that what we do to pamper ourselves, such as a day at a spa or climbing into a comfortable bed, is the ultimate luxury. Sleep Studio's innovative high-performance bedding helps the consumer realize the luxury of a great night's sleep and the ultimate expression of this luxury in the form of personalized comfort."

Sleep Studio also features new Performa memory foam pillows, molded in sleek, functional designs to provide the ideal shape for a perfect night's sleep and constructed of high-density memory foam. Performa pillows are offered in four styles, Contour, Soft, Firm and Duet, each designed for a specific sleeping position. The Contour, Soft and Firm designs are covered in Coolmax fabric, and the Duet pillow features a combination of memory foam

ing its own Densifill, a dense and resilient polyester batting as an alternative to foam.

United Feather & Down combines function and fashion with its new patented Fusion design, which marries a down blanket with a decorative topper in five different fabric styles; the company also offers five Fusion styles in its licensed Joseph Abboud collection.

Biederlack is helping consumers cut energy costs with its Solutions program, including the Roommate, a shoulder wrap; the Big Enuff Blanket, designed for today's larger mattresses; My Better Half Blanket, a double-sided construction that is thicker and warmer on one side than the other; and the Warm & Wooley Blanket, constructed of a blend of 45 percent wool, 45 percent Dralon and 10 percent polyester, to maximize both warmth and softness.

Towel manufacturers also are maximizing new technologies. For example, Loftex is using new fibers to produce softer, more absorbent towels, including the Super Thirsty, a cotton/Wiloft blend, and Oasis, a cotton/microfiber blend. "We're giving consumers what they really want — performance driven towels that look and feel great," asserts Gretchen Dale, senior vice president. "Loftex has introduced multiple variations of blends that are geared towards performance and aimed at getting back to the basics of what a towel really does — absorb moisture."

WestPoint Home brings new technology to towels with the exclusive Tactix towel, a patented polyester/nylon construction designed to enhance absorption, softness and color-retention.

Other suppliers are addressing consumer needs by offering new packaging and innovative set configurations.

GTT spotlights its Four Seasons Bed Ensembles, which allow the consumer to change the look of her bed with the change of seasons. Each ensemble includes a reversible coverlet, reversible decorative pillows and reversible shams. "One side of the coverlet is in spring colors, while the other side is in fall colors," explains Bill Spencer, national sales and marketing manager. "The customer has several different options for how to make her bed each season. It is, in our opinion, a very functional configuration.

Arrow Home Fashions was a pioneer in the "super set" concept, and is offering 20 new designs in this category; new components include throws and accent rugs.

CHF introduces eight styles in a new Flip It concept: these complete bed ensembles can be flipped and turned to create 16 different looks with one set. Both the flat and fitted sheets are printed with two different patterns top and bottom so that they can be flipped head-to-toe for a different look; comforters, shams and pillowcases are all reversible.

Zambaiti USA showcases supremely giftable packaging for baby blankets—the Sweet Night collection includes a teddy bear, cow, frog and duck, all with a rolled blanket inside.

Newport also is targeting the gift market with four-piece sets of placemats and napkins, in solids, stripes, plaids, checks or straw mats, all tied with a color-matched ribbon.

PHI is offering a new pyramid packaging system for its solid-color Egyptian cotton sheets. "Our packaging team has been busy coming up with new concepts for our core sheet programs," remarks Kirsten Sedestrom, creative director.



Sleep Studio is offering revolutionary new Performa memory foam pillows, molded in sleek, functional designs, including this Contour shape, covered in Coolmax fabric.

The Name Game

Licensing agreements are a cornerstone of home fashions assortments, and this season boasts a host of new partnerships.

Revmann presents Latin-inspired ensembles under a new license with Havana 1515, including Cha Cha y Mambo, a red animal skin with a floral rose print; Vizcaya, a stained glass look; Ocean Drive, a soft paisley paired with a modern crocodile print; Hojas, a tropical palm leaf, and Porcelena, a blue and white porcelain look.

Fashion designer Betsey Johnson debuts her first bed and bath collection with WestPoint Home, offering an outré selection ranging from Betsey Bombshell, an outrageous leopard print with tossed rose accents and Betsey Bardot, a satin quilt with an oversized heart to the more livable Betsey Bahamas, a pintucked white cotton bed with crochet lace and satin ribbons and Betsey Boudoir, featuring layers of silk charmeuse, silk crepe and embroidered organza in peach.

Baltic Linen is offering bedding based on designs from Viyella Home, a British decorative fabric supplier founded in 1784, including Kinross, a woven paisley; Mayfield, a mix of eyelet and crochet; Ashbourne, a printed bouquet floral; and Elton, a yarn-dyed floral damask.

Faribault unveils its new Kathy Ireland blankets and throws, focusing on five different lifestyles, including Southern Splendor, Architectural, La Vida Buena, Metallica, and Russian Style. Dan River adds "Stuff by Hilary Duff," a bed and bath collection by the teen singing sensation, in four lifestyle groups including Gothic Romance, Global Hippie, Broken English and Night Flight.

Well-known Americana designer Julie Ingelman returns to the home textiles market with a new collection of table linens for American Dawn in her signature country style; jeans giant Levi Strauss & Co. is offering the Levi's Home collection of bedding and accessories through a license with Algo Group, a Canadian manufacturer; Fashion Industries is offering Chester bedding created by handbag designer Tiffany Lerman, including floral, plaid and striped ensembles; and Perfect Fit is producing a collection of luxury basic bedding items under a license with luxury linens supplier Peacock Alley.

Blonder Home Accents has a new license with Woolrich, the apparel and lifestyle firm

known for its lodge looks; bath ensembles include Pine Woods, Canoe, Oak Leaves & Acorns, and Wildlife.

Rose Tree is offering six bed ensembles under a new license with Elizabeth Arden, the beauty and spa brand; Sleep & Dream introduces a wool bed topper and duvet under license with baseball great Cal Ripken; Nourison debuts area and accent rugs under a new license with Liz Claiborne Home; and Windham Weavers is licensing the popular and colorful Fiesta dinnerware line from Homer Laughlin China Co. for table linens and kitchen textiles.

Just For Fun

Sometimes, you just have to loosen up and let a little whimsy into your life—and home textiles suppliers have just the ticket! Aprons *a la Donna Reed* are the hot new thing in kitchen textiles. AvonHome is offering more than 15 styles of aprons under the "In the Kitchen with Dinah" label. The aprons use authentic designs from the '40s and '50s and have a distinctively retro flair, with accents such as rickrack, ball fringe and tulle.

Park B. Smith is expanding its Eco Ordinates kitchen collection with Eco aprons, and also adding the Wipe Off Apron, a slicker-style apron in seven colors. Now Designs is offering both full and half aprons in vast assortment of designs, including toiles, stripes, plaids, florals, fruit and bistro scenes. Moda Home features retro '50s fruit and floral prints in its apron line.

Also in the retro mode, American Dawn is offering cork-backed rigid placemats in 12 different patterns; Newport is offering 20 styles of hard placemats in more than 20 styles; Pimpernel highlights a range of florals, plaids, dogs, roosters and scenic vistas in hard placemats and lap trays; and Sybaritic offers hard mats in embossed textures, including faux crocodile.

Other fun novelty designs include Twinkle Living's Imaginary Friend, a black and white bath rug shaped like the company's dog mascot, and the Glamour Girl bath mat featuring a close up of a woman's face.

And speaking of glamour, Sin in Linen offers unconventional Pirates & Pinups bedding, featuring actual '40s pinup girls in provocative poses under the tagline "Try something new in bed!" Sounds like a plan.... ❖



GTT International is offering this Climbing Vine pattern as one of its Four Seasons Bed Ensembles, which feature reversible coverlets, decorative pillows and shams.

and gel microfiber inside a luxurious, 300-thread-count cotton cover.

Other basic bedding manufacturers are spotlighting technology and health. Carpenter Co. is offering Ambient Comfort, which uses a special fiber that increases the oxygen level in the body; this in turn helps restore a person's energy levels. The company also is offering Wellcare, a fiber from Wellman that destroys dust mites.

Pacific Coast Feather Co. is offering the Sealy Cool Temp topper, using nanotechnology to regulate body temperature, and Holofiber, promoting oxygen flow to the bloodstream. Louisville Bedding is using covers made from Outlast heat-regulating fabric, and also offer-