

Summer 2020 Textiles

by Mallory Budy

Summer blazes on, and the contract textiles industry is heating up along with it – launching standout new collections that we'd love to experience in person. Below, find some of our recent favorites...

We also spoke to **Marybeth Shaw**, Chief Creative Officer, Marketing & Design at **Wolf-Gordon**, about her team's experiences and the textile industry's challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"At first, we looked at our portfolio of bleach cleanable products, and were really focusing on the safety aspect of all this," Shaw said. "We also have a lot of woven textiles that are useful as well. Now, we've had more time to understand and think more creatively about the touchpoints we have with our customers."

"Customers are still very, very interested in seeing new product in any way you can get it to them. We're doing a lot of virtual sales presentations now, making sure we're being super respectful with the length and format of those presentations."

The challenges in getting face-time with customers and in getting samples out has presented an opportunity for many companies to fill out their digital presence. Wolf-Gordon had fortuitously rolled out a brand-new website in advance of the pandemic in February.

"Over this time, we've had sample manufacturers closed down, mills closed down and other road blocks. But we've also been able to increase our social media presence and focus more on all the ways we're interacting digitally with our customers."

"I am a great believer in the agora – in the getting together. We're missing NeoCon and all of the other events that bring us together physically. Those events are much more important than just a place and time to launch new products. They're important places where people come together and where magic happens, and I'm hoping we can get back there as soon as possible."

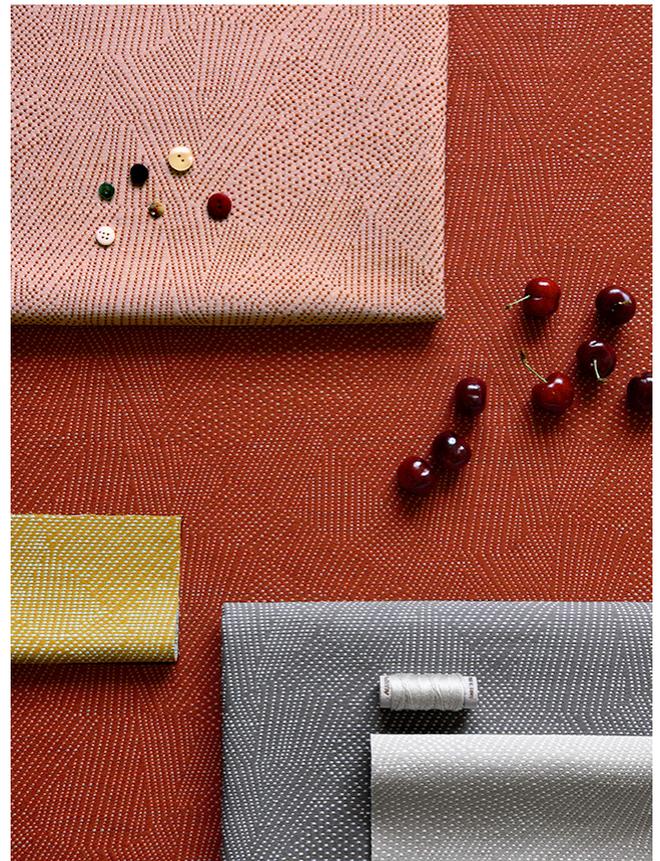
Us too! But without further ado...

>WOLF-GORDON

Nakata and Stroma were borne of a Wolf-Gordon Design Studio focus on designing with Nature. Influenced by exhibitions during 2019 in Milan and New York that analyzed themes of "Broken Nature" (Milan Triennale), "The Marvels of Nature" (Palazzo Reale), and "Nature: Collaborations in Design" (Cooper Hewitt), the Studio reflected on how these current themes could impact our product line. Senior Textile Designer Kathrin Hagge challenged herself to develop two new high-performance fabrics that celebrate the wonder of Nature from dramatically different viewpoints.

Influenced by Gaia, the Greek goddess that represents a personification of the Earth, Kathrin began researching trees and plant life in her development of the two new woven upholstery textiles. Using a wine vineyard as inspiration, she began sketching line drawings based on the meandering pattern. The drawings evolved from linear trails to an all-over pattern. When interpreting the design into a woven fabric, Kathrin found the solid lines overpowering and replaced them with a stitched effect. The result is **Nakata**, a graceful organic pattern woven in durable polyester.

Where Nakata takes a macro view of woody vines, **Stroma** evolved from a micro view of a petrified wood fragment. The cellular structure of wood seen under a microscope has a lace-like effect that Kathrin sought to emulate. By constructing the material with twisted float yarns in a mesh pattern bound to a tightly woven ground, Stroma has a delicate appearance while maintaining ACT performance standards.



Wolf-Gordon: Nakata

officeinsight

product design

The palettes of both designs are compatible and manifest contemporary sensitivity to Nature with earthtones, aquatic colors, neutrals and warm harvest colors.

Wolf-Gordon is introducing new products that will hold up to more aggressive cleaning and disinfecting, joining existing options qualified to meet the challenges posed by the pandemic. Additions to the company's RAMPART® wall protection, wallcovering, and upholstery textile lines include a multitude of anti-microbial and bleach-cleanable properties that can help prevent illness and reduce the risk of cross-contamination of infections in commercial facilities.

In order for a fabric to be considered bleach cleanable, it cannot weaken or fade when exposed to diluted bleach. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that a solution of 1 part household bleach (sodium hypochlorite) to 10 parts water (1:10) be used for disinfecting. Since bleach will degrade most dyes and weaken many of the yarns used for woven upholstery, textiles that use solution-dyed fibers work best. This is because the color pigments are integrated throughout the fiber, not just on the surface.

“These are two products that truly meet the need for aesthetic beauty *and* high performance,” said Marybeth Shaw, Chief Creative Officer, Marketing & Design, in an officeinsight interview. “They’re both bleach cleanable and are a mix of recycled material. And we’re excited to continue in this vein; in the fall, we’re introducing two new textiles that are inspired by this same design charrette.”



Wolf-Gordon: Stroma



Wolf-Gordon: Nakata



Wolf-Gordon: Stroma and Nakata