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"THE FUTURE BELONGS
TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE
IN THE BEAUTY OF
THEIR DREAMS."

—ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

Spec Furniture's Focus on Mental Health Extends to Employees

Spec Furniture's expertise in the area of behavioral and mental health spaces has led to an even more important focus for the Toronto-based furniture maker: on the mental health of its own employees. Mental health is increasingly being recognized as an important issue and that is driving more public and private funding to help support it.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 4...



A Look at Trends in Wallcoverings

Anna Zappia takes us inside The Wallcoverings Association (WA), a nonprofit trade group that represents manufacturers, distributors, and suppliers of wallcoverings. She recently met with members to discuss what's trending and view the new products that will be decorating interior walls in 2024 and beyond.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 11...



Concurrents: Reframing Regenerative Practice

Columnist and IIDA National Vice President of Advocacy Stacey Crumbaker writes that we need to be ambitious when it comes to our commitment to create built environments that promote health, safety and well-being. And here's why: Getting to a point where sustainability is an integrated, holistic design approach is the ultimate goal, but no one expects it to happen overnight.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 17...



products



Products made of natural materials are increasingly popular, like this cork wallcovering from Wolf-Gordon. Photo courtesy of Wolf-Gordon

A Look at Trends in Wallcoverings

by Anna Zappia

The Wallcoverings Association (WA) is a nonprofit trade association that represents manufacturers, distributors, and suppliers of wallcoverings. The group brings together members in various segments of the industry, while promoting the use of wallcoverings in the marketplace. We recently met with members to discuss what's trending and view the new products that will be decorating interior walls in 2024 and beyond.

Sustainability is at the forefront as manufacturers strive to produce products that are better for people and the planet. Thatcher, a studio noted for its colorful fabrics, wallcoverings,

and tiles, is a Climate Neutral-certified brand, reducing carbon emissions at every stage from pre-production to shipping. Vinyl wallcoverings, while durable, contain volatile organic compounds, phthalates, mercury, or lead.

Avery Thatcher, founder of the eponymous company, explained that as large firms like Gensler request products without the toxic plastic polyvinyl chloride, more commonly known as PVC, others have followed. "We're seeing significant changes happening, and as the demand for more eco-friendly products continues, it will really drive the manufacturers to offer more PVC-free options."

Roysons produces two brands, HD Walls and Dreamscape. The family-owned business is committed to environmental stewardship, and in 2023 alone downstream recycled 142,000 kilograms of supported PVC vinyl. This scrap vinyl was then used to make other items.

In support of a circular economy, the leadership at Wolf-Gordon is working with the WA on a pre-consumer recycling program for the vinyl scrap and trim tonnage that otherwise ends up in landfills. All of these efforts help to reduce an estimated 286 million tons of the waste produced in America each year.

products



Brigid, a new graphic foliage pattern from HD Walls. Photo courtesy of HD Walls



Summit from Wolf-Gordon is a pattern of different perspectives on an abstracted mountainscape. Photo courtesy of Wolf-Gordon

WA members also noted that the materials themselves are organic, with unique colorations and textures that have appeal in corporate and hospitality settings. The Lingrove journey began when CEO Joseph Luttwak and his team invented a flat composite to replace the wood veneers used to craft guitars. The entrepreneur soon realized that they could fill more than one need. “We were getting a lot of inquiries from architects and auto companies,” said Norissa Giangola, chief revenue officer at Lingrove. “So we spun out a separate company to focus on delivering products for those industries.”

Lingrove’s low-carbon ekoa is made from flax fibers and plant resins. Ideal for use on walls, ceilings, and casegoods, this innovative material



The Calyptra wallcovering from HD Walls brings lush greenery indoors. Photo courtesy of HD Walls

is available in a variety of formats. Its natural translucence, when backlit by LED panels or other lighting, creates opportunities for signage and way-finding applications. “There’s a trend towards having people experience a space in a more warm and interactive way,” Giangola noted. “There’s interest in having this cool glow coming from a lobby desk or the walls of an office.”

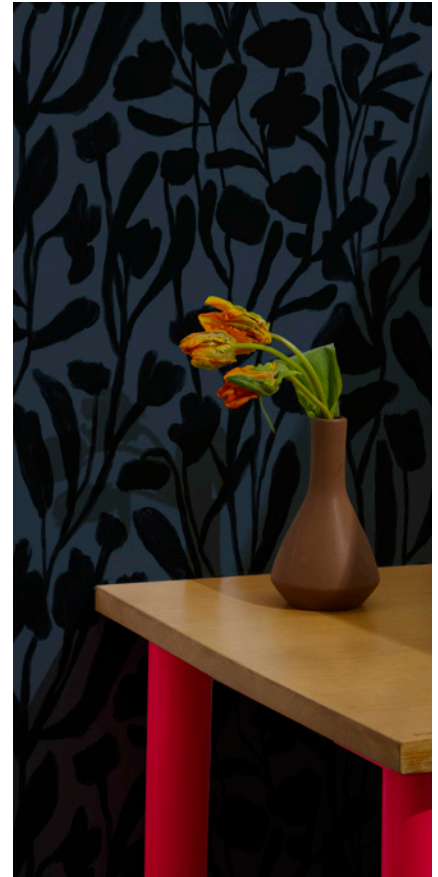
Marybeth Shaw, Wolf-Gordon’s chief creative officer, marketing and design, said that there has been an emphasis on natural wallcoverings since the company was founded more than 50 years ago. “From the beginning, we have had a whole series of very natural products that are even biodegradable. We have grasscloth wallcoverings. We have cork wallcoverings and upholstery, which are also super high-performing. We have always had those in

our line, and been a resource for our interior design specifiers when they wanted something natural.”

Earth and all of its elements still serve as a key inspiration for designs, from landscapes and flowers to leaves. Each member of the HD Walls team submits 10 of their own ideas. The creative director then creates a design roadmap and eventually curates a cohesive collection. “Botanicals are still very much asked for and on trend,” said Megan Stitt, project manager at HD Walls. Stitt previewed Brigid, a graphic foliage pattern, and Calyptra, a wallcovering with a lush greenery motif, from the upcoming line.

Wolf-Gordon continues to add to the popular Curated Collection, a series of digitally printed works created by a select group of artists. One of the new designs was created by Janie Roch-

products



Thatcher’s new Late Spring pattern features the silhouettes of flowers. Photo courtesy of Thatcher

fort, founder of Betty Larkin design studio. Summit is a pattern of different perspectives on an abstracted mountainscape, highlighted via clear and harmonious shade combinations.

Thatcher introduced the Late Spring wallpaper. Envisioned by studio designer Lindsay Jordan Kretchun, the pattern captures the brief time when spring is on the cusp of summer. Available as a clay-coated paper and a PVC-free Type II wallcovering, it features the silhouettes of flowers on richly colored grounds. Thatcher said she will continue to experiment with layers of tints. “I think we tend to differentiate ourselves with our palettes, especially now that we are doing so much with digital. We are less limited in terms of what we can do with color.” ■