

SAVING THE JAMES: THE FIGHT TO PRESERVE AN URBAN OASIS

Richmond

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THE CITY MAGAZINE

BEST NEW RESTAURANTS

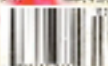


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HITTING THE HIGH POINTS

A designer looks at the latest trends at the International Home Furnishings Market and around the globe BY BETSY GATES MOORE



The Sunday Afternoon sofa and Lucille chair, part of Thomasville's Urban Comfort collection, just one example of a move toward a refined rusticism in furnishings

Speaking of the outdoors, there's something exciting going on right in our own back yard. Richmond's own master painter and portrait artist Fielding Archer of Midlothian is now a furniture designer and manufacturer, too. His premiere pieces are made of stainless steel and designed for outdoor use. The pièce de résistance for every rivah rat is the heron chair, a loveseat that attaches to docks and cantilevers over the edge above the water. On a recent visit to New York City by air, Archer said, "I was amazed at the number of docks there are on the East Coast. A true designer sees a need and fills it aesthetically with his gifts." The heron is in a class of its own — a rare bird, indeed. ■

at new and noteworthy trends from October's International Home Furnishings Market. The report is intended to include global trends as well as the latest developments viewed at the market, this past January. These trends will be coming soon to furniture stores nationwide.

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heathered fabrics. Big, chunky woven goods with lots of color and matelassés and double-cloths are quickly replacing the chenilles we've been seeing for quite some time now. This tweedy trend is spanning the globe with its French Chanel influence; it was the hit of Maison & Objet's show in Paris this past fall. Sofas and chairs, especially the transitional and contemporary pieces that have typically been shown in solid linens, are coming alive with these snappy fabrics du jour. Also important on the French fabric front were the patterns — ikats and paisleys led the pack, with art nouveau themes present as well.

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Another important influence from the Maison & Objet show was the trend in furniture shapes toward the curvy — sofas are becoming smaller, more rounded and less angular. "Deep seating" and "big" are still the buzzwords used to describe American upholstered furniture, but is bigger really better? There is the age-old saying that interiors follow fashion a season or two behind, but the lag is evaporating as it is becoming much more simultaneous between interior fabrics and trends and the fabrics and trends we are seeing in clothing. It's almost a "chicken or egg coming first" conversation, as the boundaries between fashion and interior design are becoming increasingly hard to find, according to former Vogue writer and globe-trotting trend guru Deb Johns of Washington, D.C.

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