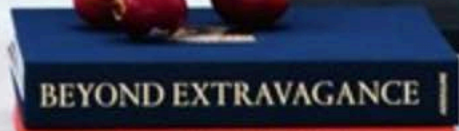


PATTERN PLAY ■ DALLAS ■ ART+IDS CONFERENCE

JUNE 2018

HOME ACCENTS

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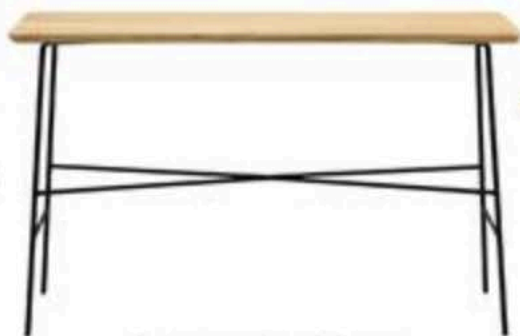
BEYOND EXTRAVAGANCE |

PAIRINGS

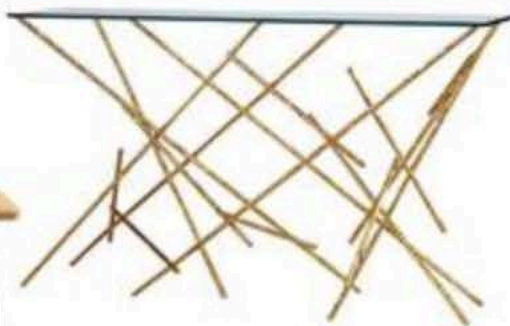
BY TRACY BULLA



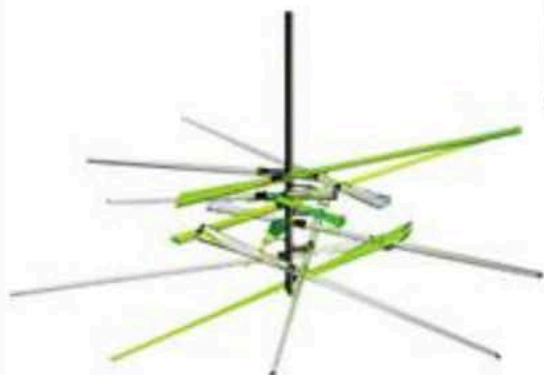
Tracy Glover Studio, \$2,400 | Kindel Furniture, \$4,388



Surya, \$381 | Ethnicraft, \$609



Currey & Company, \$2,490
Century Furniture, \$2,997



Lasvit | Modshop, \$2,295



Louis Poulsen, \$996 | KGBL, \$13,700



Nelicote for Resource Décor, \$1,169
Thomas Bina for Resource Décor, \$2,319

*First credit, pendants; second credit, consoles



FROM THE FLOOR UP

CECILE B. CORRAL

Manufacturers tap into new opportunities with outdoor rugs

THE FENCES THAT ONCE kept outdoor rugs confined to the spring/summer selling season and predictable patio-type patterns are coming down.

Innovations in synthetic fibers and manufacturing plus demand for smarter fashion looks are creating new opportunities at retail and fueling the imaginations of rug companies to take this segment of the business to the next level.

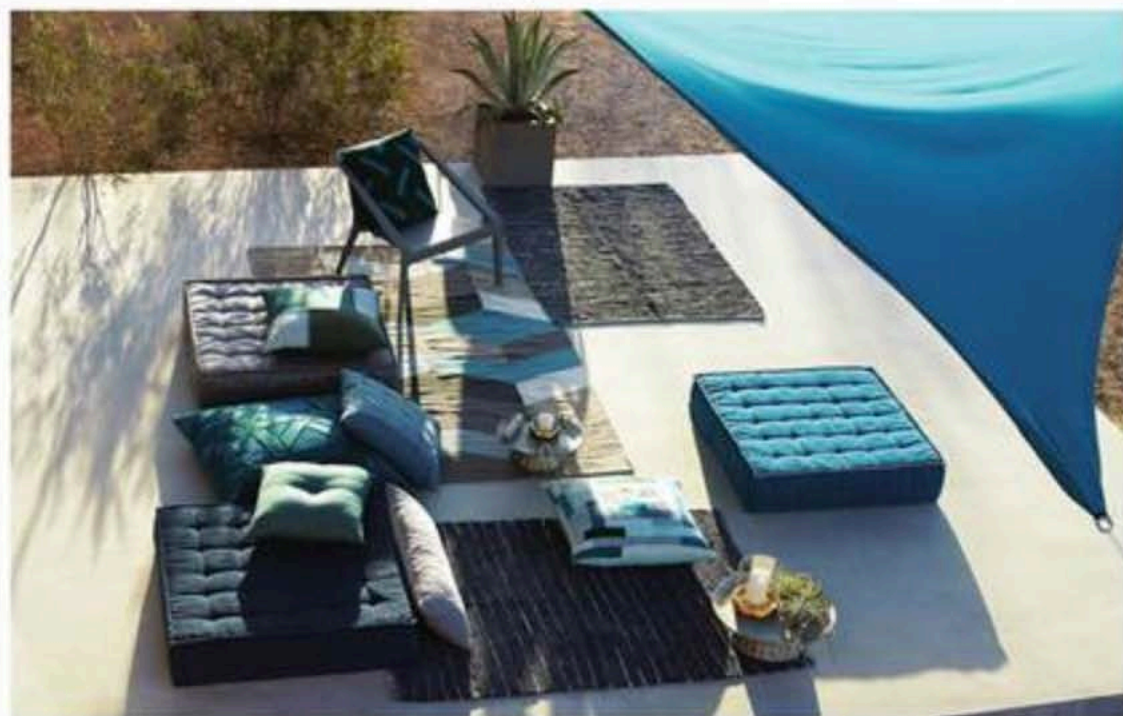
"Performance is key, but the design and hand of textiles is just as paramount," Greg Voorhis, executive design director of Glen Raven Custom Fabrics, told Home Accents Today.

The company is a pioneer of the outdoor-friendly home furnishings industry, having created the performance fabric category in 1961 with the introduction of Sunbrella, a source of fabrics that are fade-proof, easy to care for, and bleach-cleanable.

"The outdoor category is huge. It's the fastest growing sector of the home furnishings industry, and that includes rugs, without a doubt," said designer and decorator Libby Langdon.

Last fall Langdon debuted a rug program — including outdoor styles — with Kas Rugs. In April, it was expanded to include coordinating outdoor-friendly decorative pillows.

"People are realizing they can live outside for longer than Memorial Day to Labor Day, and that includes people living in cooler weather climates," she continued. "They are seeing their outdoor spaces as additional square footage to their homes that they can really use, and because of that they are blurring the lines between indoor and outdoor décor trends."



Sunbrella fabrics have many outdoor décor applications — rugs, pillows, cushions and shades.

That all adds up to "good news for home textiles companies," Langdon said, "because it means people want to bring the same creature comforts they use inside to their outdoor spaces. They want everything from rugs to drapes to throw pillows; they want the whole thing. And they want to work with more looks, more fabrics."

Based on the 2018 Fabric Survey by sister publication Casual Living, which surveyed 42 retailers and designers from 1,085 storefronts, performance features are top-of-mind for most outdoor décor consumers — fade resistance (88%), stain resistance (79%) and mildew resistance (74%) representing their three leading demands.

But design, too, is important — and evolving for outdoor décor shoppers, with 41% seeking abstract/geometric patterns when it comes to outdoor rugs' coordinate category, decorative pillows. That is more than double the percentage preferring stripes (17%), a longtime favorite in outdoor décor trends. Still more surprising is that tropical looks, animal prints and solid-colored styles are each preferred by only 3% of shoppers.

On the color spectrum, blue reigns supreme — the favorite among 48% of decorative pillow and 38% of cushion shoppers. But gray, popular indoors but newer to the outdoor décor space, came in second: 13% for decorative pillows and 27% of cushions.

Sunbrella is listening and responding, Voorhis said. "One of the biggest trends is originality and looks that feel one-of-a-kind. As our customers' interest in home furnishings grows and they have a greater hand in the design process, they are more often forgoing the rules, blending formality with informality."

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"We're going to see more personality and juxtaposition infused into spaces; mixing of pattern, color and scale in an unconventional way; modern and vintage, collected with inherited, new designs with classics," Voorhis said. "Texture is also more important than ever ... tactile, simple and humble materials alongside textiles that mimic natural, raw, weathered materials. Contrast in texture is also trending — matte fused with shiny; flat textures paired with high gloss finishes; and mixtures of natural and synthetic textures."

Added Allen Gant III, casual market manager for Glen Raven: "We are also elevating the design and style of Sunbrella fabrics to better match our customers' needs. From introducing luxurious plush chenilles, sophisticated patterns and colors, to developing new partnerships like those with The Shade Store and Pendleton, we are constantly looking for innovative ways to bring new possibilities to both indoor and outdoor applications."

Two major rug companies — Surya and Capel — are among those working with Sunbrella for parts of their respective outdoor rug programs.

Capel Rugs' "Creative Concepts" program offers shoppers customization options. The first step is to choose from a selection of eight bases — all made in Dalton, Ga., of polypropylene. The next step is to choose from 120 different Sunbrella fabrics to create a border, with the option to use one, two or three fabrics for the border design. Orders are shipped within two weeks.

"Outdoor is still a small category, but it is really, really our fastest growing — outdoor and the internet," said Cameron Capel, president of sales and marketing. The company has been offering outdoor-friendly rugs for more than a decade and has an ample assortment of synthetic styles that fall under its "Anywhere" label to point to their versatility of use for both outside and indoor spaces.

"We use polypropylene for just about everything in this line, but our latest development is a PET-fiber flat-woven for the Anthony Baratta designer program," she said.

Surya takes Sunbrella yarns

and weaves them in India into flat-weave or dhurries or hand-knotted rugs, Surya President Satya Tiwari said.

"With our Sunbrella rugs, people can spill wine or juice on them and nothing happens. They just hose it down," he said. "Plus, these rugs have a nice hand; they feel soft, not like plastic, which people really like so they can sit on them when they are outside."

Outdoor rugs and carpets account for 30% of total sales at Couristan. To build on that, the company is expanding its outdoor carpet line to include its largest size to date — 16-foot, 4-inch width. Hand woven, the product comes in three designs and three colorways.

Taking its quality up a notch to carve a new niche in the crowded category is Natco Home.

"We are gaining a lot of market share with the customer who doesn't want the fly-away, lightweight outdoor rug," said Mark Ferullo, executive vice president of the woven rug division. "What we are manufacturing is a nicer product for a higher retail dollar. We are doing some things in manufacturing with yarns that will add more colorations, textures, dimension, shading that will translate into a more high-end look. More neutrals, blues, grays and blacks."

Mohawk Home is picking up on this trend and acting quickly to become a serious player.

"We weren't heavy into it until only about a year ago," said Neil Hegwood, Mohawk Home's vice president of design and product development. "We've always had outdoor but never producing in the States; it was all imported."

Then about two years ago, the company purchased looms specifically made to weave outdoor product. "We installed them here in Sugar Valley (the company's headquarters in Georgia) and spent a year developing the yarn system, the colors, the product. And we are very happy with the result," a polypropylene flat-weave rug featuring five colors.

For next season, Mohawk Home is working on a new construction — "it's still too secret to talk about," Hegwood said, "But it's a new technology and new yarn system. Everything about it is new." ■



Creative Concepts by Capel Rugs



Malibu by Mohawk Home