

# Textile Style

*Fabrics & wall coverings go for the glamour*



*Above: Oyster Point by Maya Romanoff*



*Left: Bloomsbury by York Contract Wallcoverings*

*Below: Flirt by Stacy Garcia for York Contract Wallcoverings*



BY BRUCE SERLEN

**G**iven the rebounding national economy and improving industry RevPAR, it's no surprise that hotel owners are again starting to think about making capital improvements at their properties. In many cases, it has been three or four years since owners had the confidence—no less the means—to put dollars aside for renovations. From the brands' perspective, these investments are long overdue. They've seen their properties get increasingly run down, but were willing to delay the deadlines for implementing new brand standards, considering the financial distress owners and franchisees were living through. But now, they've waited long enough and are pressuring properties to start upgrading.

Of course for the manufacturers of fabrics and wall coverings for the hospitality industry, this turn of events is welcome news. Their craftsmen and designers have been busy tracking changes in consumer tastes, developing new product lines, experimenting with new materials and technologies, and extending existing product lines—all in anticipation of a market recovery.

With the help of some of the top fabric and wall covering manufacturers in the industry, Hotel Business DESIGN® highlighted some of the top trends to watch in 2011 and beyond:

## Vinyl Alternative

Created with natural fibers harvested from managed forests, York Contract Wallcoverings is one of many companies offering an alternative to vinyl with its CLD Pure Collection by Carey Lind Designs. The technology also employs synthetic fibers originally used for tea bags and coffee filters. To enhance their aesthetic appeal, York screen prints the designs and enhances them with soft metallic and pearl effects.

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#### Focus on Trimmings

As the market has rebounded, companies like Chella Textiles have recognized that there would likely be renewed demand for drapery trimming, specifically tassel fringe and tiebacks, particularly in the luxury tier. Accordingly, the company has introduced lines of such items incorporating mahogany, opalized quartz, and diamond braid.

#### Color Explosion

Today's clients are eager for a brighter and stronger color palette. In response, Kravet continues to promote its Modern Colors line of velvets, leathers and embroideries. According to company president, Cary Kravet, the design community has responded positively to the product line's purples, aquas, corals, and chartreuses.

#### Better Blackouts

With the increase in international travel, more guests are checking into hotels, having spanned numerous time zones. Hence, they need to sleep, even when the sun is shining. Fabric Innovations has rolled out a line of taffeta-faced blackout drapes available in 10 colors off the shelf as well as custom orders. Fabric Innovations director of sourcing Margarita Leon explained that the "Taffeta Lover" line is intended to achieve two objectives simultaneously: "enhance a guestroom's appearance, while also filling a functional need of blocking light."

#### Going Green

Valley Forge Fabrics has had success with Tencel+Plus Lyocell, the only certified textiles made from the flowering eucalyptus plant, according to senior vp Michael Dobin. The company derives the fibers from the plant by means of an organic solvent.

Another example of manufacturers' commitment to the environment is Crypton Fabrics with products that are made with recycled polyester yarn, are stain resistant, mold and dew resistant, and meet all required flammability codes.

#### Expanding into Hardware

Fabricut, long known for its fabric and trimmings businesses, has introduced decorative drapery hardware, consisting of six collections—some classic, others contemporary—of finials, poles, brackets, end caps, and related accessories. "It was a natural product progression for the company. Our research indicated an unmet need for additional styles and finishes in the category," said CEO David Finer.

#### Asian Opportunity Continues

For years China has been a focus of fabric and wall covering providers as both a source and a purchaser of product. And in terms of hotel development, the brands continue to view China as a top priority along with India with interest spreading from the primary urban destinations to secondary and tertiary locations. Richloom for years has positioned itself as a global operation, sourcing and manufacturing fabrics and finished products worldwide, while shopping the world for the newest looks and fabrics. While still headquartered in New York, the company also now operates an office in Shanghai.

#### What's Old is New

Granted, fabric and wall covering manufacturers are understandably focused on new trends and styles. But for a company like Maya Romanoff, there's also something to be said for embracing history. Celebrating its 42nd anniversary this year, the company has rolled out its Anniversary Collection, which features three tie-dye wall coverings inspired by company founder Maya Romanoff's earliest textile works. Those original designs have been re-imagined with a more contemporary look by New York designer Amy Lau to be relevant to today's tastes.



*Above: Volcano, Makena, and Wailea from Fabricut's S. Harris Contract brand partnership with Hable Construction*



*Above: Sketchbook Floral by Chella Textiles*



*Left: Fabric Innovations' Taffeta Lover blackout drapes*



*Left: Tencel+Plus Lyocell Eucalyptus Upholstery by Valley Forge Fabrics*