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**[Annual Winter Market embraces ecology](#)**  
**[this year, but doesn't neglect the customary](#)**  
**[theme of luxury](#)**

- [Susan Forno](#), Chronicle Staff Writer

Wednesday, February 1, 2006



Ecology, sustainability and responsibility smartened up the San Francisco Design Center's Winter Market last week, but the "Beyond Green" theme didn't stop the showrooms from lighting up faces with their latest and freshest high-end offerings for the new year.

Ecological, sustainable, responsible? Sometimes. But what's new also included entire collections, pieces in established collections, color trends and even a few tenants.

Though much of the merchandise is available for purchase only through designers and most is decidedly unaffordable to the masses, this is where the next Target, Crate and Barrel, and Pier One trends begin. So take a walk with The Chronicle along the cutting edge of design. (Prices listed are to the design trade only unless otherwise indicated.)

Guilt-free glory: There's more to Chicago model and designer Jill Salisbury than meets the eye, and so it is for her furniture under the El label (short for "Environmental Language"). She spent two years working with an environmental consultant before she began fashioning the uniquely detailed tables and chairs that Sloan Miyasato partner Avner Lapovsky says serve as an eloquent definition of "eco-chic."

"We take responsibility for the entire life cycle of our products," said Salisbury, whose goal, she says, is to design the treasured antiques of tomorrow. If she misses the mark and someone has the nerve to toss her gorgeous bamboo and tagua nut Tian coffee table out, the materials she uses make it biodegradable enough so that it will return to the earth.

El is having its exclusive West Coast premiere at Sloan Miyasato; for an example of price, the Origami lounge chair -- "my favorite chair," said the designer -- lists at \$2,875.

Try it, you'll like it: At Eco 21's new 5,000-square-foot showroom in the Galleria, company President Adam Heller finds himself urging visitors to sit in too-good-looking slatted chairs such as the Pianno and the 24 R. They are amazingly comfortable for such sleek-looking pieces, made of sustainable woods from Brazil used by Eco 21, such as sucupira, teak, copaiba and black angico. The 24 R, which conforms to the body and also rocks, lists at \$1,695, the Pianno at \$2,600.

Downstairs in the Enid Ford showroom, customers were asking for a chaise longue; now they've got the luxurious Tiburon in leather with bronze piping from Marbello Design. Another spanking new Marbello piece, a chandelier of oak and steel called Lunara and stretching 82 inches across the showroom, is making a big impression on visitors. (Tiburon chaise, \$5,400; Lunara chandelier, \$3,600.)

Think soft: Upholstery at the Design Center this season demands touching -- with long-haired fabrics covering benches, and sumptuous suedes and buttery leathers over sofas. So at Randolph & Hein in the Galleria, Randy Arczynski proudly premiered the Prima Alpaca Collection by Sandra Jordan, a.k.a. "Mrs. Jordan" of Jordan Vineyard & Winery.

Jordan grew up in Peru, where the alpacas grow in "below Sierra temperatures" in the Andean Highlands. The first clip of the animals produces a textile warmer than wool, lighter than fleece, that drapes beautifully, doesn't feel scratchy and, says Jordan, "ends up being naturally hypoallergenic." Price: \$114 a yard to the design trade.

She also has a touchable toile and an irresistible silk she's calling Hopsack that Arczynski is showing as a drape around a bed.

Also new at Randolph & Hein: Corbin Bronze's sculpted "twig table," in solid bronze and glass top, with a bird perched decoratively on the base. \$7,875.

It's OK to inhale: Leave it to a mill called ADO back in South Carolina, where folks can still smoke in restaurants, to come up with a line called Smart Fabrics. One of them, ActiBreeze, eliminates odors to such an extent that one client last month lamented not being able to smell her Christmas tree. The other, BioProtect, eats bacteria that cause mold, mildew and other contaminants; it's starring in a Feb. 19 episode of ABC's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," in which a home is redone for a pair of twins with leukemia.

The fabrics are 100 percent polyester and washable; prices at the Galleria building's Brooks Collection start at \$86 retail. Next thing you know they'll be coming up with drapes that block cell phone waves.

Divine is in the details: At Donghia, which represents 12 lines as well as its own furniture, a vignette of the Hudson collection upholstered in an elegant green greets visitors. What's distinctive about the sofa and chairs lies behind the cushy seat: a floating back framed in the same black cherry wood that supports the pieces (club chair, \$3,450; sofa, \$7,050).

Also new at Donghia in the Galleria, the Bradley Collection of drapery hardware systems -- solid steel, imposing, ultramodern. Managing director Tom Behrens says the Fusion and Edge lines are proving popular for the San Francisco condo dweller who opts for curtains over shades or blinds yet wants a contemporary look.

A bed that makes a bedroom: At De Sousa Hughes in the Showplace building, the planet-friendly Q Collection by Jesse Johnson and Anthony Cochran took center stage in keeping with the theme of the market. Their new pieces included the concise Todhunter club chair, Tucker bench and Julia end tables.

Meanwhile, Marc Desplaines, designer for Antoine Proulx, pointed out his bamboo buffet for its green approach, but then led visitors to the window wall to show off his favorite creation, his Symmetrical Bed, made of walnut panels connected with steel but spaced to allow light to come through the back. A nightstand attaches to the sides of the bed, which is also available in an asymmetrical model. Price: \$13,500.

"People are really asking for the installation-type bed, where the bed makes a wall of the room," Desplaines said. "But I didn't want it to be a big heavy thing, so the panels are spaced to let light in."

New can be old: In September, the Pacific Heights antique shop Urban Chateau opened a branch in the Design Center Galleria. Unusual for the center because the showroom deals exclusively in antiques and sells directly to the public, Urban Chateau has recently offered an innovative new service for clients on the lookout for a specific piece, sourcing through a liaison in France who will seek out the piece, price it and ship it. For a showroom specializing in old, that's a new way of thinking.

New can be old -- and new: Interior designer Maloos Anvarian takes an 18th century French chair and fits it for the 21st century with Plexiglas in the seat back and bottom -- a fresh approach that she finds appeals to "the client with a sense of adventure." Anvarian has been creating a variety of custom furniture pieces for clients for years, however, and now DMW Interiors, in the Design Center's Showplace building, makes them accessible to a wider audience. Her chocolate and electric pink Turkish Delight table mixes whimsy and practicality - and is completely new (chair, \$2,600; table, \$2,699).

Downstairs at McGuire, the new collection by Robert Kuo gracing the windows drew in passers-by for a closer look -- and feel. The hammered copper repousse coffee tables -- one as heavy as 300 pounds -- and tarnished mirrors looked like fine Asian antiques. Particularly stunning: the massive Kuo buffet, in northern elmwood with a toadskin copper face. List price: \$16,335.

New may not be bold: The colors taking center stage in almost all of the showrooms -- yellow to orange to red -- could be found right there on one of the ADO sample fabric wings at Brooks. "What's hot? Right here, everything from butter to salmon to rust," Judi Brooks said. Green made a strong, bright showing too, but it wasn't clear if that signified a color trend or a bow to the "Beyond Green" theme of the market.

At Ann Sacks, the premier high-end design tile showroom, manager Jeff Fountain singled out the curvaceous Bamboo collection and the unique stand-up pebble tiles by Bali -- all in very natural, soothing (some might say boring), earth-inspired colors.

"We have 219 colors, but, in the end, people realize that what they've got in the bathroom they have to live with every day," Fountain said.

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If you go

The San Francisco Design Center, at 2 Henry Adams St. and 101 Henry Adams St., is open to the public 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and occasionally for special events. Some

showrooms are open only to design trade. For information about individual showrooms, visit [www.sfdesigncenter.com](http://www.sfdesigncenter.com) or call (415) 490-5800.

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