

# Fabric forecast

Sustainability is a trend for fabrics during the coming years, with increasing demand for materials that are recyclable and manufactured from green materials.

"Obviously, environmentally responsible materials are going to be important not only in fabric but in all building material choices," says Jennifer McConnell, VP of design, Pearson Company. "Responsible manufacturing is going to play a huge role in determining which fabrics and furnishing are specified for all large hospitality projects."

According to Deborah Schwartz, art director for Valley Forge Fabrics, sustainability and recycled fabrics have very much

become commonplace in the hospitality industry, although she notes that in the current economic conditions, sometimes designers are choosing lower-priced fabrics rather than paying a premium for sustainable fabrics.

"I think that it will be important to continue to develop fabrics that are a mix of new and exciting materials," Schwartz says. "Instead of a simple texture, maybe [we'll see] a mix of vinyl and fabric to create a 3-D effect. As technology develops, we will watch the trends from that market and transition it into hospitality."

Schwartz hopes customers will "look beyond labels and misleading marketing and understand a truly green choice is to review the entire process of how a

fabric is a made and then disposed."

Brian Coughlin, VP at Fabtex, thinks the interest in green fabrics will continue.

"But [interest] will be tested by the market's response to cost premiums associated with environmentally friendly products," Coughlin says.

## Hot in 2010

Satins and sleek fabric will continue to be in high demand, according to Graham Noakes, sales and marketing director for Osborne & Little.

"Although neutral colorways will be the premier choice, there will be a place for tones of lilac and lavender and stronger colors, such as petrol. Luxurious velvets will be used as highlights but are unlikely to be the predominant fabric in a scheme," he says.

Noakes also feels there will be increasing demand for waterproof fabrics suitable for spa and poolside lounge use.

Lee Menichella, president, Chella Textiles, believes 2010 will see more sustainable, solution-dyed fibers with an expanded array of color choices, as well as faux leathers and PVC materials fixed into weaves and patterns.

"Colors will reflect the tastes of a new generation of European weavers highly skilled in developing the



latest performance textile yarns in colors with urbane sensibilities," Menichella says.

Schwartz says solids and textures will remain a trend next year.

"The two exciting accent colors that can be used with any neutral color palette emerge straight from the fall 2009 fashion runway: classic red and dandelion yellow."

She feels there are three main neutrals that can be used as a base before selecting accents:

- Tuscany (Pantone 16-1219), a warm beige,
- Dried Herb (Pantone 17-0627), the ultimate green neutral, and
- Eucalyptus (Pantone 15-0513), the eternal, practical gray.

McConnell sees color becoming popular again.

"It's so nice to see warm tones of reds, oranges and purples, as well as bright greens and yellows," she says. "Traditional is making a comeback. Natural fibers are becoming more important as designers and manufacturers become more environmentally responsible."

Coughlin agrees, saying that color is returning to

guestrooms as hotels move away from white bedding, due in part to the operational difficulties associated with maintaining the clean look of the white bed.

"This evolution has implications in the design process, as designers are again using the bed as the focal point to begin their selection of colors and fabrics," Coughlin says.

"Watch for fabrics with big, bold patterns and bright colors, especially in bed coverings and window treatments, which provide large-sized visual palettes."

Schwartz says because many designers are inspired when traveling to other countries, one of the new prevalent designs will be bold ikat patterns reminiscent of the blue waters of Capri, Italy, with a mix of deep navy, serene aquarium blue and also a mix of jungle greens to create animal and safari patterns and prints.

## Fashion forward

While inspiration sources are all over, many fabric designers are definitely influenced by fashion.

"Our studio is full of color mood boards with cuttings from the fashion pages of glossy magazines," Noakes says. "I think a repetitive corporate look is definitely passé."

And McConnell says her staff is "captivated by the New York and Paris fashion week clips on YouTube."

Schwartz says there are five main areas of inspiration for her company: fashion, residential lifestyle environments, pop culture, sustainability and globalization.

"Fashion is always at the forefront when viewing trends or inspiration," she says.

— Paul J. Heney



Brian Coughlin



Graham Noakes



Lee Menichella



Deborah Schwartz