

# VISION

32 years of window treatment inspiration

## THE HIGH-END DESIGN ISSUE

Finishing touches that will add  
glamour to projects

The latest trends in trims,  
finials and more

### IWCE 2020 PREVIEW

A NEW vision for the Construction Zone

A NEW lineup of dynamite speakers

MEET our panel of top Charlotte-area designers

**PLUS: INCREASE SALES AND VISIBILITY  
THROUGH BETTER BRANDING**

# SEEKING AUTHENTICITY

*Now is an important moment for makers, as the desire for one-of-a-kind goods is providing a revival for many high-end artisans*

BY JANA PLATINA PHIPPS

**W**e are having an awakening in design as people everywhere seek authenticity. Consumers are increasingly acknowledging the ever-rising social and environmental costs of "cheap goods" and want to make a statement against our soulless mass consumption of the past. That is giving them pause to reconsider most purchases.

There are many other contributing factors to the desire for authenticity. Aging baby boomers are downsizing and want more meaning from the "things" in their homes. Millennials are living in smaller spaces and carefully curating their furnishings. Author, designer and 50-plus demographic specialist Mitzi Beach writes about this phenomenon in her book "Design Smarts: Inspiration for Home+Life." "Boomers and millennials are zestfully seeking experiential living in their homes and in their lifestyles by exercising their status of curation, purchasing unique items that have a backstory. This allows bragging rights so they can impress others with its history and where or from whom they purchased this one-of-a-kind item."

The evolution of the farm-to-table movement has also opened our eyes to the importance of knowing where our food originates. This awareness has translated to all the goods we consume and even how we travel.

Though this means less consumption on a whole, it creates a rise in "conscious consumption" as a décor trend. This is excellent news for our industry because workrooms are the ateliers of interior design, the couturiers primed to take a bigger share of the design pie. From the artisanal provenance of materials to the exquisite fabrication of custom upholstery and window treatments, suppliers, workrooms and designers are creatively collaborating and catering to this burgeoning consumer craving for authenticity.

Workroom owner Lisa Salvatore of The Finishing Room in Simsbury, CT, recently collaborated with interior designer Cara Woodhouse with Cara Woodhouse Interiors in Brooklyn, NY, in creating unique high-end drapery for the bedroom of the Holiday House Hamptons. Woodhouse specified a rose quartz ombré alpaca linen fabric hand-



TOP RIGHT: The Yunnan tape shown in the Ink colorway debuts in Pindler's The Archive Collection in collaboration with the Museum of International Folk Art.

ABOVE and RIGHT: The Archive Collection from Pindler in collaboration with the Museum of International Folk Art.

loomed in Peru from the Rosemary Hallgarten Collection. "You can see the quality of products so clearly when things are handmade by true artisans," Woodhouse observes.

Salvatore loved brainstorming with Woodhouse on how to best fabricate the window treatments for a modern, feminine look. "We mocked up sample pleats based on how the exquisite fabric draped. We wanted to take advantage of the soft hand and, in essence, the material inspired the design. The fabric was specified in panels with a feathered (fringed) edge, and the pleats we did required lots of hand stitching. I wish more designers took time to experiment like this." The results were stunning.

The appreciation for custom-made and artfully unique products has never been higher, claims Brooklyn-based Van

Gregory of the Van Gregory & Norton studio. He shares, "Handmade objects have a soul—they carry the energy and enthusiasm of their makers, the texture and feel only hands can generate." Even after 25 years, the studio continues to experiment, as true artisans do, with materials such as wood, bamboo, cast resin, crystals, textiles, beads, papier-mâché, clay, plaster and wire.

The newly launched Frank Ponterio trimmings collection for Clarence House also combines fine materials and takes a sartorial spin on trimmings fabrication. Tapes of pleated wool and linen, woven brass with suede, and braided faux leather constructed in Italy and India create a rough-hewn, menswear style that designers and workrooms will be able to apply thoughtfully to projects.