

DESIGN INSPIRATION: BDNY Hits the High Notes

Specifiers discover pretty can be efficient too at this specialty contract show.

By Stefanie Schwalb

If reactions from exhibitors at the second annual Boutique Design New York (BDNY) are any indication, there are positive signs of things to come in hospitality. More than 200 interior product manufacturers came to Javits Convention Center this past November to show off custom, high-end goods. The show took place during the giant International Hotel/Motel & Restaurant Show (IHMRs). Amid the educational seminars covering high-profile renovations, making the most of social media, and trend forecasting, fashion and efficiency played big roles in the lighting and accessories capturing the attention of the 4,600+ registered specifiers.

Quebec-based **Illumination Lighting**, which was able to participate for the first time when a last-minute space was offered, is representative of many of the lighting exhibitors which found the traffic at the show good. "We think this is a good replacement for Miami. We do mostly regional custom work. This show is designer and trend-oriented," observes Jason Wood, project coordinator. Among the trends Wood notes are nature-focused design embracing recycling and more use of LEDs and green fixtures.

Brooklyn, N.Y.-based designer **Babette Holland** in her second appearance at BDNY reflects on the change in atmosphere. "It's much better than last year. People have work now," she notes. Her designs showcase newly scaled lamps, oversized pendants, and

Brooklyn, N.Y.-based Babette Holland's Broken Square Maroon table lamp and oversized Spinner pendant illuminate the multiple color trends of brown, black, green, and silver.



The foot traffic flows into the Quebec-based Illumination Lighting booth where project coordinator Jason Wood and his team take names of leads for future projects.





As an editor's choice nominee, Trend Lighting's stainless steel LED task lamp is a bright idea in sustainability. The material is recyclable and the LED can be upgraded if needed.

all sorts of colors: solids, washed, patterned multiples, brown, silver, black, and greens. "We're not using one single color, but expanding the color palettes. We're inspired by modernist textiles and tweak the look to make them unique. We are currently using 20 different colors on over 100 pieces," she explains.

Holland also addresses the impending changes in lighting regulations. "Now CFLs are affordable. Once LEDs start coming down [in price], all will be good, but people can use CFLs until they do. The variety is incredible. I think everyone is jumping the gun too early on LEDs. They are super expensive for interior settings and common spaces," she comments.

Holland finds her customers want

expediency. "Give them options," she concludes. "Serve your customer, and try to make it in America."

Rob Bruck, vp/contract sales at Irwindale, Calif.-based **Trend Lighting Corporation**, has shown in Las Vegas (among other shows) and this is his second year at BDNV. "This show is really terrific," he states. "There has been lots of traffic with some people com-

The eye-catching creations of Andarina Designs are made from colorful Swizzle Stick fixtures.

ing from out of the area – people from Florida and even a few from the West Coast. There has been a big push for energy efficiency with LED task lamps. The market is starting to recover, and people are willing to spend for better quality."

Trend Lighting's stainless steel LED task lamp was an editors' choice nominee this year. The steel is recyclable and the LED can be upgraded to 4 watts. "Most of this technology can quickly become out of date," Bruck cautions.

Roseanne Percivalle, a lighting design consultant for New York City-based **Andarina Designs**, has a positive view of business going forward "Projects that were on hold are now back on," she says. A big boost for this first-time exhibitor was the inclusion in the Trend Walk exhibition (see sidebar). More colorful and functional art than lighting fixtures, Andarina's custom chandeliers were part of the Acid Hip segment. The colorful Swizzle Stick fixtures, inspired by a vintage collection of the cocktail accessory, are the vision of designer Stacy Harshman, who also experiments with glass bulbs for different effects using 20- and 40-watt incandescents and shaped versions.

In the Trend Walk's Dark Fairytale display was second-year exhibitor **First Light**, of Scottsdale, Arizona.



THE CONTRACT SCENE

"Last year was a good test," explains designer Alan Radin. "We do custom restaurant and hotel work using fabrics of any color that are flexible – it's the basics of what we do." Most of First Light's fixtures come lamped with CFLs, but Radin feels with the new regulations that within the next year or two, LEDs will be more affordable and prominent in the industry. This lighting veteran finds that some things just don't change, however. "I worked with Home Depot, and hospitality is a different animal, but lighting is still the last on [everyone's] list. It should be planned at the same time as everything else. The culture just hasn't caught up."

"We're not in many shows," reveals first-time exhibitor and designer Adam Jackson Pollack of Elkader, Iowa-based **Fire Farm**. "This hits the market at a good time. It's fresh, and the scale makes it easy to walk and re-walk." He especially likes the size and duration of the show. "This section of the industry relies on relationships. When shows are too big people just grab literature. Stronger relationships can be built this way. It's refreshing. With only two days, it's easier on everyone's schedule," he adds, "and the size of the booths is more efficient."

Pollack sees today's hospitality de-

signs as being all about effectiveness, materials, LEDs, dimming, and light output. Embracing the latest technology is all part of the design process, Pollack says. "Since it is custom work, I am paid to explore new materials so it's more about finding solutions to problems versus pure style."

Style with substance is not an issue for first-time attendee Union, N.J.-based **American Brass & Crystal**. Ahmed Kandil, national sales manager, appreciates the client base at BDNY, which he thinks will result in a lot of projects from the amount of leads and contacts

they received. According to Kandil, the drive is toward contemporary and transitional with Polished and Antique Nickel finishes plus cleaner, less ornate arms. "Customers want higher-end products that are also made in America. That's very important," he continues. "There is a lot of business going on here, and quality lighting really steps up the atmosphere."

Creating an atmosphere is what **Tracy Glover**, the Pawtucket, R.I.-based artist and glassblower, achieves with her colorful fixtures. "There are current projects that have an immedi-



First-time exhibitor and designer Adam Pollack of Fire Farm talks with prospective clients about the company's capabilities.



Alan Radin of First Light showed off the variety of fabrics and colors the company offers.

THE CONTRACT SCENE

Three new handblown glass pendant shapes by artist Tracy Glover are the Barrel in a two-tone Primavera in Aurora, the Enoki in a lace pattern with an Olive colorway, and Fishbowl in the Licorice Stick Life-saver pattern.

ate need for table lamps, wall sconces, recessed lighting, and refurbishing pendants," she notes. An avid gardener and oarsman, Glover draws her color schemes from plants, water, and sunlight. Inspired by the patterns off the water and bubbles, she uses a simple household chemical that causes the surface of glass to fracture. Glass is a natural extension of her creative inspiration and a perfect pairing with light. She is currently working on more shapes with bubbles and a cloud light fixture she hopes to present at ICFF® this May. "It's like bubbles in an aquarium," she teases "and how they come together."

Glover introduced three new pendant shapes that are available in 6 patterns, 20 colorways, and 15 trans-



lucent colors with a choice of LED or halogen lamping.

First timer Denise Bovell, retail sales manager for Mt. Vernon, N.Y.-based, **Global Lighting**, finds the show fantastic. "It's great that it attaches to the IHMRS, which lasts four days. These two days fall in the middle of that so it

brings in more traffic. It also seems as though projects that were on hold and are now back," she observes. For Bovell, playing a major part in the designing landscape are the themes of reusable, sustainable, and recyclable. "It's still the look and style of materials, but part of the reason we choose what we do is to be green and sustainable. For example, we specify things with vegetable dyes so they're non-combustible, and fixtures must be energy efficient."

Another major eco-player is Brooklyn, N.Y.-based **Lights Up!** This is designer Rachel Simon's second BDNY, and as a green designer she is very excited by the turnout. "They've done a fabulous job with the show. There is a lot more traffic this year," she notes. Lights Up! finds it easy to be green by using sustainable wooden bases and compact fluorescents. "We

create contemporary lighting you can actually read by," she adds. "We have over 40 fabrics, so customers can just pick the

lamps and we make the shades in our factory." Simon has found an increase in business with outlets such as privately-owned Holiday Inns. "We have been doing several sconce refurbishments for them."

Plans are already in the works for BDNY's third edition, which is scheduled for November 11-12 in the Javits North Hall. The IHMRS runs November 10-13 (exhibits run November 11-13). BDNY is a joint venture of the American Hotel & Lodging Association, the Hotel Association of New York City, the NY State Hospitality & Tourism Association, and ST Media Group, and is managed by GLM.



Ahmed Kandil of American Brass & Crystal was impressed with the prospects he gathered at BDNY this year.



Lights Up! illuminated their booth with their hanging fixtures and portables in a variety of prints and solid shades all made in New York.

THE FUTURE IS NOW

With that as its theme, the collaborative Trend Walk exhibition, curated by the Stacy Garcia Design Studio, forecasted upcoming design trends. Garcia revealed eight fashion directions in a special seminar and four were interpreted in the Trend Walk by leading hospitality designers and design firms who used products from exhibitors. Displayed within the walkway to BDNY were the themes Calcified™ and Dark Fairytale™, interpreted by A/1 Design Lab, New York City; Mid-Century Ideal™, composed by J/Brice Design of Boston; and Acid Hip™, created by Dovetail Design of Toronto.

For Garcia, the challenge was to surpass the demanding standards of the show's audience. "This show has a very discerning audience. We're talking about people who are educated, who know what it means to have a design aesthetic, who know what good design is, where the influences come from, and who have art history and architecture as their backgrounds. These are the movers and shakers of the industry," she confirms.



Acid Hip's bright and neon colors signal a rebellious energy but with good vibes.



Calcified explores the "natural" trend through neutral colors but a variety of textures, focusing on nature's intricate patterns.

Dark Fairytale uses light to create a mood of seduction, mystery, and drama.

