

STYLE

FURNITURE – MAKERS’ NEW MISSION STATEMENT



■ **For the purists:**
Frank Lloyd Wright’s iconic
Talesin barrel chair (\$999),
from Copeand Furniture.



■ **For the budget-minded:**
Zocalo’s Hampton Library lingerie chest (\$449)

Arts and Crafts and Prairie designs are the ‘it’ look at High Point

Tran Ha | Tribune staff reporter

Chicago landed a surprise leading role at the International Home Furnishings market here as designers and manufacturers looking for the next big thing in furniture found their answer in the Arts and Crafts styling of the city’s historic bungalows and clean-lined Prairie designs of Frank Lloyd Wright.

Nearly 25 percent of manufacturers introduced collections referencing Wright’s work and that of his early 20th Century counterparts at the furniture industry’s spring market, according to a survey conducted by trade publications Furniture/Today and Home Accents Today. The twice-yearly market in High Point is a kind of fashion week for home furnishings where manufacturers unveil their latest looks.

Why Arts and Crafts, and why now? The answer is simple - as in simple, functional design for our hectic, cluttered lives. A tradition grounded in quality and craftsmanship in an increasingly impersonal, e-mail driven world.

“Arts and Crafts is a feel-good kind of style,” said Kim Shaver, vice president of marketing for Hooker Furniture, which introduced a Mission-inspired collection called Simply American. “Consumers are hungry for simplicity and authenticity.”

Furniture insiders expect the Arts and Crafts introductions to do well amid booming bungalow sales and the homes’ growing popularity among young families. For consumers, the trend means more choices — and more affordable choices — in a look that was previously only available to high-end shoppers and antiques collectors. The multitude of choices also means that homeowners don’t need to deck out an entire room in Arts and Crafts-style furniture. Some of the more modern takes on the style would work especially well with contemporary decor, said Jorge Jaramillo, design director for Zocalo.

“The nice thing about Arts and Crafts is the simplicity of the lines,” Jaramillo said. “It’s obviously a more minimalist style, which makes it more versatile and less imposing than more ornate pieces so that it blends well with other styles.”

This spring’s market seemed to have an Arts and Crafts line for every taste. Here’s a road map of sorts to help you find the best match among the new collections.

For the purists

This was an especially exciting market for Copeland, which unveiled the first 14 pieces for its new licensed Frank Lloyd Wright Collection to much fanfare.

The introductions focused on Wright’s Prairie Period (1899 to 1910) and included the classic Talesin barrel chair (\$999), the Meyer May bedroom group (bed, \$3,999; nightstand, \$1,499; five-drawer dresser, \$3,499) and Dana Thomas dining set (table, \$5,499; side chair, \$899; arm chair, \$1,099) as well as occasional seating and several occasional tables.

The furniture, manufactured in Vermont and based on Wright’s original drawings and on-site measurements, stays true to form with a few modifications made for modern-day living. The seat of the barrel chair is removable and upholstered in easy-to-clean microfiber; the backs of the Dana Thomas dining chairs are slightly slanted to make them more comfortable.

Also of note was Hooker Furniture’s Simply American collection, with more than 30 pieces of bedroom, dining and home entertainment pieces designed with authentic Arts-and-Crafts touches including quarter-sawn oak veneers, cedar-lined drawers and mortise and tenon pegs.

For the budget-minded

Those looking for style without breaking the bank will find their match in Zocalo’s Hampton Library collection, which adds curved panels and leather handles its design.

The 20-piece collection includes bedroom, dining and occasional furniture, with prices ranging from \$149 for the One Drawer Nightstand to \$999 for the Hampton Library Armoire. Hampton Library hits stores in mid-August.

Bargain shoppers also should check out Fashion Bed Group’s collection of Arts and Crafts-inspired beds, available in September and ranging in price from \$399 to \$699. Styles include the Fresno, in a painted ebony finish; Jasper, a four-post design combining wood and iron, and Glasgow, an all-metal bed with square posts and spindle details. Fashion Bed Group designs are sold at Value City, American Mattress and Mattress Giant.

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