

### Window and Wall Coverings Debut at Decosit Brussels



*Shifts to Accommodate Increasing Request for One-Stop Shop*



by Kelly Hushin

**B**RUSSELS, Belgium — In response to an evolution in the textile industry, the 30-year-old fabric show, Decosit Brussels, will for the first time focus on goods beyond upholstery such as window and wall coverings.

"Decosit has to be more than upholstery fabrics," show coordinator and general manager Patrick Geysels told *Fabrics & Furnishings International*. "We will promote Decosit '08 as a fair that's more than just upholstery

Left: Decosit 2007; Inset: Patrick Geysels, show coordinator

fabrics. If you look in the last five years, most upholstery fabric producers are producing other kinds of fabrics. When I started here, more than 50 percent of visitors were producers of sofas. Now those manufacturers are about 25

percent of visitors, the rest are big buyers and wholesalers. These people are buying not only upholstery, but also decoration, also lace, also wallpaper."

Geysels noted this "internal" *(Continued on page 6)*

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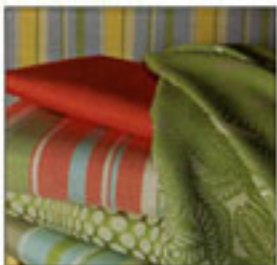
### Outdoor Fabrics Turn To Upscale Interior Looks to Capture Market

by Kelley Granger

**O**SSINING, New York — According to industry insiders, the outdoor fabric market is continuing its evolution to higher-end, interior-inspired offerings while green efforts remain a priority.

Gina Wicker, director of design for Glen Raven, said that 10 years ago there were not any products on the outdoor market to excite interior designers. "They're a very business savvy group of people," she said. "Now they have all the same tools to do the same thing outside as inside."

Wicker said the development of an outdoor room has turned into more than just furniture sitting on a patio, and has turned to less typical applications—the use



Casual Elegance by Joe Ruggiero for Silver State Inc. uses Sunbrella fabrics

of outdoor fabrics as room divider or window treatment and the use of sheers to overlay an umbrella or drape over a gazebo to create a romantic atmosphere. "The materials and products are available to create an outdoor area that is as

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### Outdoor Fabrics Goes Upscale-Interior to Capture Market

comfortable and attractive as what you might have inside," she said. "From a pattern perspective, we're seeing a demand for more refined designs and intricate artwork and more of a slant toward soft contemporary but also a mid-century, modern graphic geometric type design that looks good in an outdoor environment."

Marco Parravicini, the managing director of Para, also said he's seen the market growing in terms of style and design. "The outdoor is getting more and more similar to interior decoration in terms of sophistication and taste," he said. Parravicini said that Para has made huge investments to adapt to this change.

Ann Sutherland, owner of Perennials Outdoor Fabrics, also highlighted the emphasis on the outdoor market. "More people want to enjoy and live in the outdoor environment and desire coordination with their interiors," she said. "Particularly in the last five years, almost all of the design trade has recognized not only the popularity and demand for outdoor fabric that is resilient to water and sun, but more and more furniture companies are seeking a more versatile cloth. This has created a burst of creative design in this genre."

The reflection of interior spaces on outdoor fashions comes at the same time as the demand for high-end products escalates. At Cone Jacquards, part of the International Textile Group, Vice



Sunbrella product line

President Scott George said that there has been an elimination of the middle of the road.

"The volume houses have gone totally to Asia for supply, mostly for fabric and certainly totally for furniture," he said. "The upper-end segment has become even more elegant, with nicer, higher priced products used to attract the upper end and enhance sunrooms or outdoor settings. It's been an uncanny parting of the waters in that the lower end has done just exactly that, and there has been such a flight to the higher-end segment to capture business."

Parravicini said that Para concentrates on producing only high quality fabrics. "Para is concentrated only in the production of high-performance technical fab-

rics that are all covered with a limited warranty," he said. "We only use the solution dyed acrylic fiber as raw material which is the best performing material today available on the market."

Para distributes the fabrics under the brand name TEMPOTEST, and Parravicini said that its market is very small and represents a niche within the textile business.

George said that Cone Jacquards is taking a different approach — producing products for the upper segment while still addressing the lower end. "As it specifically relates to outdoor the market, we are committed to continue to supply to both the upper end and opening price points for this very important market segment," he said. "We certainly intend on taking what we learned as successful at the upper end and translating that to design-driven products at opening price points."

At Wearbest, President Irvin Ganser emphasized the beauty and durability of the company's Bella Dura fabric, as well as another growing industry mandate — its environmental story.

"[Bella Dura] is the only fiber on the market, synthetic or natural, that begins as a by-product of post-industrial waste and ends its life as fully recyclable," he said. "Its man-

ufacturing process requires substantially less energy to manufacture as it uses only a small amount of water and literally produces no harmful industrial waste."

Ganser said that Wearbest also recycles, conserves energy and actively pursues suppliers within close proximity.

Glen Raven is committed to a zero fiber or fabric waste policy. "We find alternative uses, whether sewn into car doors or sold for use in other products," Wicker said of the materials. All of the company's Sunbrella fabrics are tested and Greenguard certified to the most stringent rating.

In the past few years, Parravicini said that Para has been making large investments to help preserve the environment. "In our main production plant we have

invested in a state-of-the-art water cleaning plant that is capable to clean 3,000 cubic meters of water per day and to reach a 94 percent purification rate," he said. "Moreover we have invested in a co-generation plant that auto-produces combined electrical and thermal energy with the most advanced eco-friendly technology."

In spite of the progression of high-end quality and style, Parravicini is concerned with the state of the market itself. "I must say that this business is suffering together with the rest of the industry," he said. "I received many signals that show a reduction in purchases around the world and especially in U.S., where the financial crisis is affecting the real life and people have less money to spend." **FFPI**

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—Ann Sutherland

# Perennials Continues Ad Campaign with NetWorks

by Hannah Joseph

DALLAS, Texas — Striving to promote stylistic and technological advances in the outdoor fabric market, Perennials Outdoor Fabrics continues to run its Performance and Beauty Campaign, and has just launched its NetWorks collection.

The Performance and Beauty Campaign consists of advertising, promotion and a web-based feature entitled *From Fiber to Finish*, which chronicles high-technology based manufacturing processes at Perennials.

*Fiber to Finish* highlights the durability of Perennials fabric, citing its high standards of fade resistance due to a process in which base colors are injected into an acrylic polymer, binding color to fiber on a molecular level. Completed fabrics are submerged in soil-resistant coating to make it stain, weather and mold-resistant.

"More and more users realize that the best and most reliable product to present to the sun and natural elements is 100 percent solution dyed acrylic," said Ann Sutherland, owner of Perennials Outdoor Fabrics. "There are



Above: Perennials' NetWorks Collection; Inset: Ann Sutherland, owner of Perennials



many products out in the market that say they are outdoors-appropriate, but disintegrate quickly under the sun's UV rays. We actively test competitors' products for durability and color fastness and have not found anything to compare with 100 percent solution dyed acrylic."

Perennials insures its quality assertions with a three-year fade-resistant guarantee on all woven fabrics, and one year on prints. According to Sutherland, the quality of outdoor fabric products has drastically improved over the last 10 years. The 100 percent solution dyed acrylic, as

well as the guarantee backing it benchmarks this progress. "In the 80's I remember purchasing from a well-known textile source a fabric for a client promoted for outdoor use," she said. "It was a red/yellow/blue window pane design. After the first rain the red had run all over the white ground. Next it faded completely. No one could create a non-fade, durable, but more importantly, stylish fabric. At that time it simply wasn't available."

The newest spring 2008 collection, called NetWorks, exemplifies how outdoor style has

evolved from necessity driven to high-end and fashion oriented. Designed by collaborators Wendy Tsuji and Linda Ueda, NetWorks is comprised of four patterns that were inspired by the fishing nets of Polynesia. They come in color schemes inspired by coral reefs and volcanic terrain.

The four designs include: Mesh Around, Nothing But Net, Sheer Net and Shibori. Sheer Net is the industry's first printed solution-dyed acrylic sheer with a pattern.

Another collection is set to come out in the fall that will include a camouflage pattern and an abstracted zebra interpretation. It will also have a large group of sheers. "They are simply gorgeous," said Sutherland. "One [sheer] pattern has a large palm frond as the overall design. Perennials innovated and patented the first solution dyed acrylic sheer in the industry several years ago. Our next group coming out in spring of 2009 is a collaboration with Clodagh and we expect it to be a great hit." F&FI