



# FALL DESIGN TRENDS

*by Steve McKenzie*

With home sales reaching double digit growth over last year, demand for home interior design and growth are also reaching new heights. This should lead to demand of art and framing at nearly record levels as well. As gatherings for the holidays might be back, consumers may want to spruce up their homes for hosting, meaning it is time to look ahead and get ready for the influx.

Preparing for the busy upcoming selling season, it is important to be aware of emerging trends in the home decor market. I completed a week in June as a Style Spotter for High Point Market, the largest home show in the world. I was granted access to all showrooms and could really study the latest emerging trends in new furniture and accessories introduced. High Point Market offers a unique vantage point for designers with over 2000 vendors and nearly 10 million square feet of showrooms exhibiting their latest creations and best sellers.

It is exciting to say that pretty is back in style, and the market was filled with new beautiful products. Luxurious fabrics were prevalent everywhere, especially the use of bouclé--a yarn of three plies, one of which is less taut, cre-

ating a looped or curly texture, made into fabric. The use of these fabrics is an indication of the optimism and confidence in the marketplace.

There were many trends springing up, however 3 really stood out as having the potential to create an impact in the custom framing market. It is always advisable to frame the best you can for the art, as it creates timelessness for the piece. However, it is also important to be aware of the environment the final framed art will live in. These following trends were prevalent across many products and will translate to framing at your design counter as well.

## BEAUTIFUL BLACK

The first and probably the biggest trend seen at market is black wood finishes. Many dark and moody rooms were featured in larger showrooms. Deep rich finishes in black that let the woodgrain continue to be the hero. They took on many different versions: beautiful ebonized wood, some with a very matte topcoat, just celebrating the beauty of the wood. Black was also featured in many pieces as part of a pattern mixed with other materials like brass hardware or even inlaid brass in the wood.



One manufacturer, Hooker Furniture, actually introduced a sideboard in the Japanese finish treatment of Shou Sugi Ban. This technique was developed in the 18th century in Japan to treat cedar siding to make it waterproof. It is created by charring or burning the wood surface to a beautiful charcoal-black finish.

Black is obviously a time-honored tradition in framing, but these black finishes that celebrate the natural beauty of wood are truly special. Sherwin-Williams 2021 color of the year Urbane Bronze illustrates the popularity of these dark charcoal colors. Pairing a dark, ebony frame with botanical artwork was seen in several showrooms. As was the emergence of many more drawings especially ink and charcoal, framed in similar ebony wood finishes. This fall, embrace the black as a statement especially if it celebrates the beauty of the woodgrain.

## NATURAL BEAUTY

The celebration of wood continued with this trend of beautiful unstained materials. Wood of all types was finished with only a clear coat, thus allowing the organic beauty to accent the piece. Walnut, oak, pine, maple all were shining in all their natural glory. Another trend was rattan and bamboo, both presented in their natural state. Using these naturally growing rattan vines give us furniture that is lightweight, durable, flexible, and attractive. All this leads to honest looks that celebrate the form of the item that is not encumbered with fussy finishes.

This look in framing would be especially beautiful on contemporary works of art as well as drawings. A float frame in a natural wood finish around a contemporary abstract is a timeless classic and really sets the stage for the artwork to truly shine. The patina that gathers over time on natural finishes only enhances the look as the pieces age, lending an air of polished natural sensibility. In the Antique District at High Point there was an abundance of vintage and antique bamboo pieces, a highly sought-after category in the world of design, the most popular draw being the natural materials.

This trend of natural wood continues in the materials used in the home building industry. Kitchen cabinets are emerging everywhere in natural walnut, French oak, and maple. Hardwood floors in these same natural finishes are showing up in homes at all price points, including the evolving category of luxury vinyl flooring, with stunning



results. Make sure you have many samples of these natural wood finishes to offer this season.

## ART INSPIRED

Many pieces in the home furnishing industry are reflecting their roots of inspiration from the fine arts. Brancusi, the Romanian sculptor, painter and photographer, who made his career in France, inspired trends at market. Known for his beautiful, lyrical plaster sculptures of curves and lines there were table bases, console fronts and lighting which







Vincenza Dining Table by Dome Deco in Ebonized wood

reflected inspiration from this artist.

The textured figures of sculptor Giacometti, the Swiss-born artist who kept his studio in Paris, inspired the metal work of étagère, cocktail tables, drink tables and lighting. This same textured work can be seen in the ironwork of home construction today. All of this a celebration of hand wrought metal work and lends a visual celebration of the material. This same texture would be beautiful in frames adding visual interest to the completed piece.

With all three of these trends, the honesty of materials and the mark of a handmade look provided exciting details to the furnishings. The same is true in framing. Give the consumer choices that offer a real beauty and honesty of materials. Let them delight in the finished piece.

Now is the time to make sure your sample wall has the latest looks for this selling season and the ability for you to capitalize on the larger home decor trends.

If you are interested in reading the entire Style Report of all 8 of the High Point Market Authority Style Spotters you can read it here <https://www.highpointmarket.org/products-and-trends/summer-fall-2021-style-report>. Follow along on my Instagram account when we return to High Point to Style Spot again during Market October 16 - 20th. **PFM**



Sonoma Console by Selamat Design with Woven Natural Rattan front



### Steve McKenzie

Steve is an artist who has been working in creative industries throughout his career. It was most notably at Berkshire-Hathaway-owned Larson-Juhl, a custom frame manufacturer and distributor, where he took on the role of Senior Vice President of Marketing, leading the company's national advertising and public relations campaigns. Steve was appointed the company's President and CEO by Warren Buffet. After a 20+ year tenure with Larson-Juhl, in 2012 he launched the home decor business Steve McKenzie's which has become a destination for interior designers and design lovers alike. A practicing artist for more than 25 years, Steve has developed a unique technique, painting with walnut ink and an eye for organic composition. Along with the retail shop's opening, McKenzie Design LLC was launched as a full service interior design business and has completed projects throughout the Southeast and Midwest, been published in Atlanta Homes and Lifestyle and Casual Living, and recognized by other national publications, including House Beautiful and Traditional Home for curation of their showrooms.