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Lifestyles

HOME AND GARDEN



ELEGANT: The bubinga table lamp stand created by Clark Renfort is made of lathe-turned wood and accented with bent cherry tendrils. The upturned lamp shade is decorated with a dark amber hand-formed slump glass shade.

Crafting a green decor is getting much easier

By PJ Bremier
IJ correspondent

WHAT DO YOU put in a green-built home? Ideally, green furnishings and accessories. Fortunately, these are getting easier to find.

When the American Craft Show, sponsored by the American Craft Council, rolls into San Francisco next weekend, shoppers can peruse a variety of home and garden objects from furniture, lighting and tiles to flatware and teapots.

"All the pieces at the show are handmade and one-of-a-kind," says ACC's Mary Fichter. "The design and detail involved is extraordinary. Each piece also has its own story and visitors have a rare opportunity to meet the artist and learn about the work's history and its inspiration which is really special."



Fine Living
P.J. BREMIER

The 250 juried artists from throughout the United States were hand-picked out of thousands who applied, "allowing us to showcase truly exceptional, high-quality work," she adds. "The artists who are accepted are highly professional craft artists — many have spent years studying and working as apprentices. Craft is a career for them, as opposed to a hobby."

And, for many, their craft is taking on a green slant which is mirroring the public's interest. "People are excited about beautiful and distinctive work that is also good for the earth."

— Mary Fichter

Next year, she says, there'll be a special category for artists who use eco-friendly materials and techniques.

For now, here are a few of the artists who'll be showing their artistic "green" side.

'Green' quilts

San Francisco artist Sonya Lee Barrington scouts for vintage garments at second-hand stores, washes and deconstructs them, and pieces them together for her "green" quilts and pillows filled with recycled wool. She also uses the material for ottoman covers.

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FINE LIVING: Artists use eco-friendly materials

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Natural light

Andrew Macdonald will come from Lafayette, Colo., to show his custom reclaimed-barn wood furniture and "glowing" alabaster lamps illuminated by compact fluorescent bulbs.

Another lamp-maker is Clark Renfort, just up the highway in Laytonville. He works in wood, too, using Brazilian-grown, sustainably harvested eucalyptus.

Wild wood

Deborah Kermode of Sebastopol also works in wood — found or responsibly harvested California redwood, maple and walnut — to craft dynamic turned-wood trays and bowls while Santa Cruz's Ronald Cook uses recycled, salvaged or sustainably harvested woods to hand-craft his one-of-a-kind reproductions of early American and early European folk instruments based on historic originals.

Ethical jewelry

Jeweler Alexandra Hart, who calls San Diego home, supports underdeveloped countries by buying from gems from reputable fair-trade companies and reducing the impact of mining on the environment by using recycled metals.

Her fellow Southern Californian artist, Aaron Kramer, has been working with found and reclaimed materials since the late 1980s. He weaves recycled street sweeper bristles and reclaimed hardwoods into compelling organic forms.

Forward-thinking furniture

Furniture makers Leslie Guinan and Rob Matthews use expanded polystyrene (made



Provided by American Craft Council

LESS FOR THE LANDFILL: Leslie Guinan made the base of this bench from a walnut tree salvaged when the orchard was removed. The concrete bench top contains EPS cement, which incorporates recycled polystyrene. This material makes the concrete lighter while removing Styrofoam.

IF YOU GO

What: The American Craft Show
Where: Fort Mason Center at Marina Boulevard and Buchanan Street in San Francisco

When: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Aug. 10 and 11 and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Aug. 12.

Tickets: \$12; \$18 for a two-day pass, children under 12 admitted free
Information: www.craftcouncil.org/sf

Parking: Valet parking available; free shuttle buses at the Marina Green

with recycled Styrofoam) and fly ash, a byproduct of coal-fired power plants, in their concrete. By redirecting these products into furnishings, they keep them

out of the landfill. Fly ash also requires less energy to produce than Portland cement. Their wood is mostly recycled from demolished buildings or salvaged street or orchard trees; the rest is certified-sustainable.

There's more than just "green" at the show — you'll find two pavilions full of artisan crafts using conventional materials, metal and glass, flame-working demonstrations, wine tastings and a special evening discussion, "The Convergence of Craft & Design."

PJ Bremier writes on home, garden, design, and entertaining topics every Saturday. She may be contacted at P.O. Box 412, Kentfield 94914 or pj@mindspring.com.