

Designs assume variety of style

By PATRICIA BEACH SMITH
CHICAGO—The home furnishings industry isn't too far behind the apparel industry in its approach to fashion.
The looks are either classic, funky or pure and simple.

The classics run from elegant English and colonial American through the Oriental gamut to Scandinavia.
These styles pervade furniture, whose manufacturers are cleverly

gearing up for the bicentennial more than ever, preparing fabrics for upholstery as well as window treatments to flooring and wall coverings.
Furniture manufacturers have apparently decided to choose sides. Many are featuring contemporary bentwood numbers; others are sticking strictly to colonial styles.

LIKE MOST fads, the art deco mood has been distilled to include only the best examples in furniture, while the wall coverings and fabrics remain esoteric and have limited application in most furnishing situations.

The Oriental influence, to include the Near East more than ever, is about the strongest attitude in all phases of the market.
Jack Lenor Larsen's handsome afghan collection is expressed on fabrics and flooring. Its mood is that of a Persian rug.

Translated to flooring, many carpet companies, impressed with their new ability to print on carpets, have used these Persian rug-like patterns to excess.

CONSIDER THE colonial American home and you have the bulk of the fabrics and wall coverings on the middle of the scale.

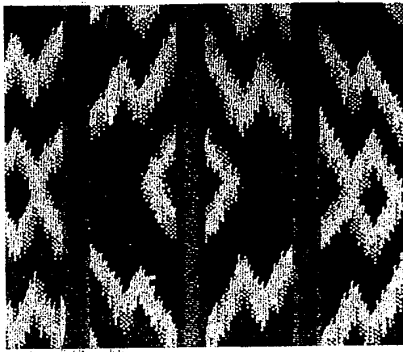
They are charming crewels, large and tiny prints, stripes and plaids. The colonial colors like brick red, maroon, Delft blue and forest green are visual helpers, too.

At the clean end of the scale are the geometries and huge patterns of the Scandinavian look. The colors are pure red, blue, yellow-green, black, white and brown with a little orange thrown in for amusement.

The bold window pane plaids are especially fresh looking, but definitely will not fit in a traditional American scheme—if you're working toward a period room, for instance.

THE THRUST of the summer Chicago market is aimed at the contract furnishings industry—furnishings which will be used in non-residential applications.

As such it must meet durability standards of rigid stature plus all the new flame retardant laws.



A JACK LENOR LARSEN afghan pattern as expressed in carpeting was featured at the furnishings show.

Basically, this causes a purity of form which is not as apparent in the residential market.

Hopefully, however (and one can see a slight trend that way), these clean looks will filter down in their best form to the residential market.

Several important flooring introductions are occurring at this end of the scale. One is the introduction of elegant carpet which is non-woven and non-tufted and resembles a ribbed sweater inside out.

The colors of this kind of flooring are neutral. Neutrality appears to be the way to go in coloration—either that, or monochromatic in the contemporary market. And that's for walls, floors and furniture, too.

TO THE DELIGHT of the cotton and wool industries, no doubt, and probably to a lot of synthetic fiber haters, as well, many new introductions are using pure natural fiber and natural fiber blends to achieve the still popular "natural" look.

There is no denying the "hand" (feel to the touch) of 100 percent cotton, linen or wool.

Unfortunately the luxury of this fine hand and elegant look is expensive considering the world market price of most natural fibers. But most designers agree people are starting to expect more from their residential or contract furnishings and they're willing to pay for it.



PEGGED WOODEN FLOORS, a needlepoint throw rug and pewter with enamel accessories were used with Kroehler's classic collection at the recent home furnishings show in Chicago.

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