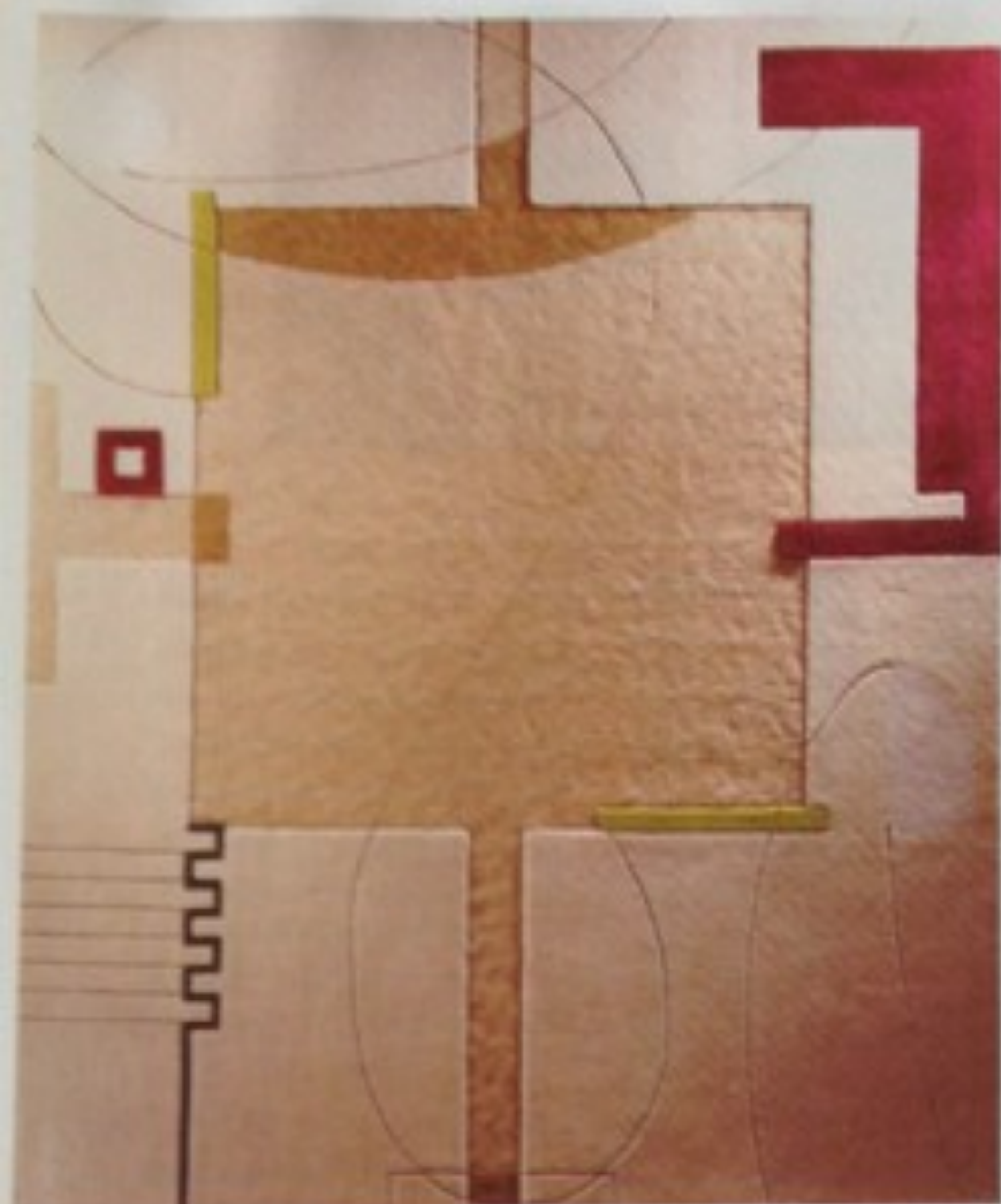


By Travis Neighbor



**Floor Show** If you see allusions to the Russian Constructivists or early Kandinsky in the rug above, you're probably not far off. Its creator, Vicki Simon of Rugs by Vicki Simon, freely admits that she draws from the great modernist movements in art such as Cubism and Expressionism. Hers are bold rugs for bold spaces, primarily about texture (achieved by varying the pile) and form, not pattern. Simon works in New Zealand wool and silk; the rugs are hand-tufted one row at a time. Rugs can be made into various shapes, such as this seven by nine-foot wool and silk geometrical pattern (above) that went into a Princeton, New Jersey, home. Completion time ranges from two weeks to six months. 442 Post Street, Suite 302; 415-576-0500; fax 415-576-0501. **T**

**The Hand-painting on the Wall** Nature abhors a vacuum; Mark Evans and Charley Brown abhor a blank wall or ceiling. The duo, virtuosos of trompe l'oeil, translate



styles as diverse as Renaissance and Art Deco into sophisticated, often whimsical wall and ceiling murals. The wall mural shown here, done for the Renaissance Sapporo hotel in Sapporo, Japan, has all the central-casting props: mythical figures representing the four corners of the Earth, each tugging on a rope attached to a large map of Japan. Like most of Evans & Brown's work, this mural was created in the studio using acrylics on canvas, then transported to the site. Prices range from a few thousand to a few hundred thousand dollars. 3450 Third Street, Suite 1D; 415-648-0464; fax 415-648-4535. **E**

**In the Spotlight** McGuire's artfully crafted rattan furniture pulls off a delicate balancing act—being tropical yet classic and contemporary. Similarly, most of the table lamps in McGuire's first lighting collection echo the shapes of gourds, urns, or bamboo (right). The bases are handcrafted in copper repoussé, then finished in hand-hammered black copper, silver plate, 24-karat gold plate, or antique copper. Shades come in natural ivory linen or black lacquered parchment. 151 Vermont Street; 800-662-4847; 415-986-0812; fax 415-621-4903. **T**



## Handles with Care

Susan Goldstick was a designer of jewelry before turning her eye to home hardware. That's evident in the almost Christmas-ball-like quality of her pieces (right), which are made of hand-sculpted resins in shades of coral, lapis, jade, and amber, and are embellished with Austrian crystals and plated metals. \$16-\$70 apiece. Knobs by Susan Goldstick, 415-332-6719; fax 415-332-6830. **E**



**Go Fish** Sue Fisher King Co. is widely regarded as the best decorative home-furnishings store in San Francisco, offering everything from handblown Bollen glassware from Czechoslovakia and Astier de Villatte pottery from Paris to hand-painted plates from Siena. One of her newest attractions is a collection of velvet bolsters, runners, and bed- and tablecovers, all hand-dyed and hand-blocked by Venetian artisan Mirella Spinella. Here, a lavish assortment of Spinella's throw pillows (\$295-\$595). 3067 Sacramento Street; 415-922-7276; fax 415-922-9241.



**Custom Cuts** André Watson of Intaglio is one of a handful of American artisans who employ the ancient Italian *pietre dure* (or "hard stone") technique: the art of inlaying semiprecious stones in a ground of marble. "He's in the tradition of Renaissance craftsmen," says Dallas designer David Cadwallader.

"He combines artistry with incredible technical ability." Watson used the technique to create this \$6,500 Lapis Star tabletop (24 inches in diameter), which required more than 80 pieces of stone and took 60 hours to complete. The lapis lazuli center is surrounded by chrysocolla (similar to turquoise), red jasper, and brown, black, and red marble. Watson has a limited retail stock selection, as most of his work is done on commission. By appointment only. 1427 Egbert Avenue; 415-822-1246; fax 415-822-1270. **E**



**Oh, Boyd** "At Boyd Lighting we try to achieve a transitional look—not too modern, not too historical," says David Stier, senior marketing manager. "Our new Opera Collection, designed by Orlando Diaz-Azcuy, is meant to satisfy those needs." That collection includes wall sconces, chandeliers, table lamps, and candlesticks finished in natural bone white, dark coffee, flaxen brass, talpa steel, and earthen bronze—as well as this 76-inch-tall, incandescent Turandot Torchiera (left), finished in hand-applied, Italian satin white gold leaf. Boyd's—which has been around for more than 75 years—also features one-of-a-kind designs by Barbara Barry and Michael Vanderbyl. 944 Folsom Street; 800-224-2693; 415-778-4300; fax 415-778-4319. **I**



**Family Style** Lucinda Grisham of Specialty Textiles uses fabric and yarn to handweave rugs on floor looms, some 12 feet wide, to create her signature look—plaids, checks, and color blocks taken from traditional American handweaving patterns. She uses lamb's wool and chenille as well as cotton specially processed into tubes. "My great-grandmother was a weaver too," Grisham says. "I used to live on a farm where I raised sheep, spinning and dyeing their wool myself." 301 Eighth Street, Suite 205; 415-861-2850; fax 415-861-2970. (Also represented at Sloan Miyasato, San Francisco Design Center, 2 Henry Adams Street, Suite 207; 415-431-1465; fax 415-431-1397.) **I**





**Strong As Iron** At Ironies, cast-iron is tendril-light, as on this Bamboo Bed (above). The 50-piece collection also includes chairs, custom-crafted Venetian-style lighting, painted wood armoires and bedside tables, cast-stone tabletops—even a line of hand-printed, hand-color-washed wallcoverings in a variety of shades. “Our approach mixes ancient and modern influences, but we twist ideas to make the final product our own,” says co-owner Brad Huntzinger. “We aren’t interested in pure reproduction or ostentation. Furniture shouldn’t jump out at you. Quiet beauty is best.” Represented at Kneidler-Fauchère, San Francisco Design Center, 101 Henry Adams Street, Suite 170; 415-861-1011; fax 415-861-1905. (For further information, contact Ironies: 510-562-9211.)

**Strong Pull** At Bauerware there are more than 1,600 cabinet knobs and pulls from 100 artisans and manufacturers, all squirreled into walls and walls of drawers. They’re made from just about anything—polished brass and vintage



Bakelite mah-jongg tiles to rocks or resin in the shape of the Virgin of Guadeloupe. The prices range too—from \$3 to \$183. If you have an object you’d like to turn into a knob, Bauerware is able to do it. “We encourage you to bring in your own objects—that famous ‘hole-in-one’ golf ball or antique baby block,” says Lou Ann Bauer. “We typically charge fifteen dollars per custom item.” 3886 17th Street; 415-864-3886; fax 415-864-3889.

**He’s the Man** Ron Mann of House of Mann aims for a “dramatic sense of proportion” in his designs. We particularly liked his corten steel furniture, such as this 76-inch-tall halogen torchiere Lulu lamp (\$1,250). 1900 Bryant Street, Suite 104; 415-551-9798; fax 415-551-1846.



**Garden Variety Objects** Large. Formal. Robust. Exuberant. The words turn up again and again in the garden-antiques catalog of Ed Hardy San Francisco, the leading such dealer in the Bay Area. They perfectly characterize the merchandise here: villa-scale pieces that lend a patina of antiquity (second-century Roman Corinthian column excavated in Syria; \$38,000), the stylized rusticity of 18th-century Italy (pair of Italian Baroque terra-cotta lions; \$19,420), or the eclecticism of the 19th-century—numerous pieces, from red Verona marble garden chairs with lion’s head armrests (\$14,285) and a French enameled cast-iron jardiniere (\$18,750) to a dark-red, terra-cotta ovoid urn from Spain (left; \$2,900). All displayed in a superbly designed gallery and adjoining gardens. 188 Henry Adams Street; 415-626-6300; fax 415-626-6360.

**Ancient Revival** Therien Studio Workshops' latest limited-edition Phiale lamps, such as the Lekythos (below), combine solid, bone-stained hardwood and ebonized geometric patterns to reproduce woody versions of fourth-century B.C. Greek wine vessels. Like all of Therien's antiques and eclectic fine furniture reproductions—from multitonned tabletops to their Cottage Wing Chair—these have

what Robert Garcia, one of the company's principals, calls "a lighter touch."

151 Vermont Street; 415-864-0212; fax 415-864-0214. Also in Los Angeles: 716 North La Cienega Boulevard; 310-657-4615; fax 310-657-2819. **T**



**Legwork** "My clients are well-traveled, intelligent people who want the feeling of an antique or a certain place," says Mark Sommerfield of Derapage, explaining the appeal of his custom reproduction furniture, which ranges from a Venetian rococo-style, hand-carved and painted gilt dining table (detail right; \$42,000) to a Louis XVI, two-arm, fluted-giltwood wall sconce (\$2,250). Sommerfield got his start by creating pieces for clients weary of searching for the antique version. One advantage of his work: The scale can be changed for contemporary rooms. By appointment only. 227 Fell Street; 415-552-9037; fax 415-552-9036. (Also represented at Shears & Window, San Francisco Design Center, 101 Henry Adams Street, Suite 256; 415-621-0911; fax 415-621-1357. **T**)



**Hail Hail** Barbara Beckmann of Barbara Beckmann Designs, Inc., has created hand-printed, hand-painted fabrics for more than 30 years—and her patterns are right with the times. "Fabrics with interesting textures that look like classic, vintage textiles are getting lots of attention these days," says Jack Shears, owner of the Shears & Window showroom. "No one wants busy-looking, distracting rooms. Restful, soothing colors look right now; brightly colored chintz does not." Beckmann's most recent work, the Hali Collection (left), inspired by antique Kilim rugs from Turkish highland weaving villages, features rich carmine, antique green, and blue—all printed on pale raw silk or bronze dupion silk (single-color patterns are available on monk's cloth silk). Also new is Beckmann's Verona Collection, featuring Renaissance patterns on velvet and silk. San Francisco Design Center, 2 Henry Adams Street, Suite 331; 415-863-0304; fax 415-863-6679. **T**

**Floral Arrangement** Samantha Renko (right) will add colorful decorative detail and faux finishes—cracked ivory, marble, tortoiseshell—to just about anything, from porcelain plates and furniture to tabletops. "My passion is eighteenth-century decorative arts, especially French and Italian," she says. "I like to go back to the historical source and do my own take on it." The mural in this round breakfast room in San Francisco (detail below) was inspired by her client's favorite reproduction ca. 1790 Royal Copenhagen Flora Danica plates. Projects take from a few days to several months, and range from \$3,000 for partial detailing to \$35,000 for an entire room. For information: 415-332-3293; fax 415-332-2373. **T**



**Something  
Concrete**

Buddy Rhodes and the designers at Buddy Rhodes Studio Inc. are known for creating unusually shaped furniture and objects, such as this Cone Table (30-inch diameter, 44 inches high; \$1,500), originally designed for The Orbit Room Café in San Francisco. They're also experts at mixing pigments with pressed concrete to make it look like Italianate stone—and applying it to anything from kitchen and bathroom counters to fireplace surrounds and tabletops. 2130 Oakdale Avenue; 877-706-5303; 415-641-8070; fax 415-641-1575. **E**



**Bellissimo** Juliette (below) is a chair with pedigree. It was made under the supervision of Markus Miretsky, owner of Belmar Company. He learned the art of upholstery in Kiev from his grandfather, who restored furnishings in the Hermitage, then worked in an upholstery factory in the Ukraine. Miretsky came to the United States in the late 1970s and established Belmar in 1985, which is to upholstery what bespoke tailors are to suits. What makes the 35-inch-wide Juliette chair special is not just the button-tufted, 80 percent cotton-muslin fabric, but the custom-designed alder frame, springs hand-tied 10 ways, and stuffed feather-down cushions. It took five craftsmen approximately 50 hours to create it. "I've worked with upholsterers for more than thirty years, and Belmar is absolutely the best," says interior designer Thomas Bartlett. 2525 16th Street,

Second Floor; 415-621-7447;  
fax 415-621-7465. **I**



**Picture Worthy** It took The Painters Place 40 hours to complete restoration work on this 22-karat gold-leaf, Italian rococo-revival frame from the 19th century (45 by 57 inches; \$6,000). It's typical of the work here: subtle, sophisticated, superbly done. In particular, it shows off the firm's forte: frame gilding, a process rarely used today because it's so labor-intensive. "It's time-consuming and requires years of practice to get it right," says owner Matt Painter. "Ninety-five percent of the process we use has been around for a thousand years." Top San Francisco designers like Orlando Diaz-Azcuy have frames gilded here; however, they could just as easily ask Painter to produce one of wrapped brass or even with a faux rust finish. The company makes frames from scratch, and fine mats with hand-painted French lines, and watercolor-washed panels. Painter's prices can be high, perhaps \$1,000 for a 20 by 24-inch gilt frame. 355 Hayes Street; 415-431-9827; fax 415-431-7113. Also in Larkspur: 1139 Magnolia Avenue; 415-461-0351; fax 415-925-0857.

**Wide Variety** Limn offers one of the most comprehensive selections of high-end contemporary lighting and furniture on the West Coast. B&B Italia, Driade, Flos, Cassina, and Ligne Roset, as well as products from Herman Miller, Montis, and up-and-coming California designers. 290 Townsend Street; 415-543-5466; fax 415-543-5971.



## Men Of Steel

"You can use machinery to bend cold metal, but then the finished design has neither soul nor life," says Italian-born artist and blacksmith Angelo Garro, owner of South of Market's Renaissance Forge. "You can also machine-stamp metal or cast it, but then each piece is identical and looks like it came from a production run. Connoisseurs of traditional handcrafting can always tell the difference." Garro, who is particularly inspired by 18th-century Italian style because "designs from that period are elegant and not



too ornate, so they work especially well with Victorian and Edwardian houses," smiths just about anything in iron, from door handles and balconies to sconces and railings—including this lovely Atherton residence handrail and balustrade (above), which cost approximately \$60,000. The only caveat: "Because the work is done by hand," Garro says, "it's slow and expensive." 47 Juniper Street; 415-864-6033; fax 415-864-6047. **E**

Eric Cogswell's delicate floral ironwork—wall sconces, chandeliers, candelabra, and table decor—displays the airy romanticism of 17th-century France and 19th-century Italy. It's also in such demand that he's not taking custom orders right now. However, his stock pieces, including this 37-inch-high, seven-branch Pompeii Candelabra (right; \$790), are available through Brambles: 9760 Willow Avenue, Cotati (Sonoma County); 888-271-9374; fax 707-664-9881. **E**



"I love transforming a cold bar of steel into a graceful design element for a modern home," says Jim Austin, who apprenticed in Germany and Bavaria. He and his partner, Frank Trousil, who was raised and trained in Prague, perform just such sleight of hand at Alchemy Metalworks, their forge in the Bayview district. Pieces include forged steel tables, bathroom and kitchen hardware, candlestick holders, and wall sconces, such as this 19-inch double version with polycarbonate shades (right), which costs only \$100. Every piece is hand-forged. "We even handcraft the tools needed to create the pieces," says Trousil. 1199 Thomas Avenue; 415-822-1866; fax 415-822-1413.



"Surrounded by technology, people still have a longing and appreciation for handmade things with no hidden circuitry," says blacksmith Jefferson Mack of Jefferson Mack Metal, Inc., who built a coal-heated forge in his family's garage when he was 16, then later trained at a traditional smithy in London. "At home we need objects that won't be obsolete next year." The appeal of his handcrafted metal gates, candlestick holders, andirons, and railings (including the residential railing above made of forged mild steel, copper, and brass; \$26,000) is that they are simple and durable. "My style may be contemporary," explains Mack, "but the techniques are ancient." 2261 Shafter Avenue; 415-550-9328; fax 415-285-3365. **E**



**Italian Style** Carlo Marchiori is famous for creating lifelike murals in any style (such as the one in the Raffles Hotel in Singapore), but his Venetian heritage dominates his custom-designed ceramic plates and stone plaques. "I like ancient mythical figures," Marchiori states. "But I especially favor Pulcinella, the seventeenth-century clown." At right, Pulcinella can be seen leaping over a ladder. Plate prices range from \$300 to \$1,200. 1206 Cedar Street, Suite 1206, Calistoga; 707-942-3900; fax 707-942-3939. (Store opens in April. For information prior to store opening: 707-942-0212; fax 707-942-8213.) ■



**Cool Shades** Where there's light, you're likely to find Cecilia McGuire's custom lampshades. They're made of woven paper, fabric, or hand-cut, hand-painted paper and are so innovative that top designers and manufacturers alike want them. "Her craftsmanship is absolutely the very best," says designer Orlando Diaz-Azcuy. "She's very creative when it comes to experimenting with new shapes." Here she wove together Taos kraft and hand-painted gold paper (top), and hand-shaped bark paper (bottom). McGuire is represented by Sloan Miyasato, San Francisco Design Center, 2 Henry Adams Street, Suite 207; 415-431-1465; fax 415-431-1397. ■

**Wallflowers** Vinylized cotton wallcoverings from Surfaces by David Bonk are handmade, hand-textured, and hand-painted in custom colors to resemble bamboo, stone, metal, papyrus, and silk. Below, left to right: Kyoto Leaves, Bronze Verté, Tatami, and Kyoto Stream wallcoverings; Vizcaya and Star Band borders. Available through showrooms, including Enid Ford Ateher, San Francisco Design Center, 101 Henry Adams Street, Suite 130; 415-255-1777; fax 415-255-2777. For information: 415-239-1078; fax 415-239-1328. ■



**Big Ideas** Scale. Presence. Grandeur. Since it was founded in 1875, Gladding McBean has thought—and created—big, from statuary to ornaments for spaces such as the Wrigley Building in Chicago. Its late-19th/early-20th-century garden urns and jars, which the firm is now remaking using the original molds, glazes, and colors, are right in line with company tradition. This one (above) stands 34 inches tall and is glazed in laguna, a custom color. The price is big too—\$970. For information, call Helie Robertson: 415-457-7083; fax 415-457-6174. ■