



# Bulletin

Published by the American Society of Furniture Designers

April 2000

## Kagan Receives Lifetime Achievement Award



Vladimir Kagan

On Saturday, April 8, at the peak of the Spring International Home Furnishings Market, the American Society of Furniture Designers honored Vladimir Kagan, ASFD with its Lifetime Achievement Award. The presentation was made before one hundred guests at a gala dinner, held at the Women's Club in High Point, N.C.

The presentation was preceded by tributes from industry associates including Frank Bingham, vice president of Preview Furniture and Henry Hacker, executive vice president of Alexander Julian Inc. Prior to the presentation, Kagan presided over a slide presentation highlighting five decades of his work as a furniture designer.

Kagan, who is renowned for his sensuous curving lines, has been a pioneer modern furniture designer for more than 50 years. His first works date back to the late 1940s. These early efforts were a reaction to the dearth of creativity in American furniture, which he said was a byproduct of the lean years of the depression and the devastation of the war that followed.

"After groping in the first years of my career, for a handwriting of my own, I began flirting with anatomically inspired biomorphic designs," he said. "These metamorphosed into the sculpted chairs and cabinets that became the signature pieces of my fifties designs." Today Kagan is highly regarded by both his colleagues and the many celebrity clients, collectors and museum curators who have sought his work for their permanent collections.

In his acceptance speech Kagan admitted that staying modern for more than fifty years has not always been easy. "I am a product of the 20th century and as such, I felt it my duty to work in a 20th century idiom — new materials and new lifestyles."

"I have spent a lifetime preaching modern," which he said was a Zen experience. "In an industry driven by the decorative, where traditional is the key buzzword, where transitional means stepping out and where contemporary is thought to be the cutting edge of modern, it was difficult to stay in the groove as a purist."

He did stay in the groove, and his renewed success and popularity today are testament to his vision and creativity. At this past April market, Preview Furniture Co. introduced an updated version of his Tangent sofa collection from 1958. This living room group consists of a loose cushioned boomerang shaped sofa, a chaise and a generous lounge chair and ottoman. Preview's Bingham said it was the most popular new introduction at the market for his company.

Another recent client of Kagan's, American Leather, has had success with several of his designs: Rock Star, a snug rocker in three sizes; Dot.com a three-level seating concept layered in colorful leather cushions and Pegasus, the first reclining chair designed with the woman of the house in mind. Color is the strong fashion statement for the season. In view of this, American Leather is bringing out the Kagan classics as well as last market's successful Gigi sofa and chair grouping. On the drawing boards for October is a collection of exciting new sofa and chair concepts.

Kagan's renewed acceptance knows no boundaries. This past January in Cologne, he launched his immensely successful Kagan New York Collection, produced by Club House Italia. Club House Italia has opened Kagan Galleries in Tokyo, Seoul, Warsaw, Moscow, Athens, Tel Aviv and will soon debut in London and Munich. Also in April, Kagan introduced more than 35 designs at the Salone Internazionale del Mobile in Milan.

"Throughout my 50-year career," said Kagan, "I have always tried to give modern the warmth and eloquence that is so much the attraction and charm of an 18th century home. It is still the missing ingredient in much of modern today. I have never shied from looking backward to find the future."

"My home is filled with antiques," he continued. "I appreciate creativity and beauty from all ages. As a modernist, I respect the past; I do not deny it. It revitalizes my imagination and is reincarnated in a joyous presentation of modern design."



Vladimir Kagan and Michael Chazin, Assoc. Publisher UDM & ASFD Board Member

## CONTENTS

New Members .....	2
Consumer Spending on Furniture and Bedding .....	3
Web Site Boosts Designer Sales .....	4
ASFD Spring Market Dinner Memories .....	5
Designing Furniture: The Creative Process .....	6
Q&A .....	7-9

# Welcome New ASFD Members!

Professional: **Carla Ballard**, Artist-Furniture Illustrator, Norman Hekler Design, Inc.  
501 Ferndale Blvd., High Point, N.C. 27262  
Tel. (336) 884-1233, Fax (336) 884-0077

**Joseph Gilbert**, Designer, Catina Unlimited Design  
518 N. Spring Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27401  
Tel. (336) 275-4443, Fax (336) 275-4469  
Email: catinahumi@aol.com

**Eric Ziemelis**, Partner, Boissevain Ziemelis Design  
238 W. California Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94086  
Tel. (650) 947-4031, Fax (650) 947-4032  
Email: eric@bzstudios.com; Website www.bzstudios.com

Professional Retired: **Donald Taylor**  
51280 Holiday Road, Deer River, MN 56636  
Tel. (218) 246-2303

Affiliate: **Charles B. Sutton**, President, Sutton House Furniture  
2822 Lazy Lane, Winston-Salem, NC 27106  
Tel. (336) 723-8205; Fax (336) 723-5226  
Email: suttonhse@aol.com

**Howard C. Greenstein**, Creative Director, Ax Design  
17745 Alta Vista Place, Southfield, MI 48075  
Tel. (248) 569-0800, Fax (248) 569-6991  
Email: modernist@netscape.net.

Students: **David Barresi**, Student  
Rockingham Community College  
Tel. (336) 342-2829

---

## ASFD Corporate Members...Advertisements

The International Color and Design Center of **Lilly Industries Inc.** works directly with designers and manufacturers worldwide to develop innovative and trend setting finishes. Each member of the staff has his/her own unique styling abilities with ART background and COLOR THEORY skills, representing over 300 years of experience. **Contact Lilly Industries, Inc., at 1823 English Road, High Point, NC 27261, Tel. (336) 889-2157 and Fax (336) 802-4750.**

Decorative furniture hardware made in the U.S.A. by the employees of **Keeler Brass Company** in Grand Rapids, MI who are proud to carry on the tradition of producing quality custom designed furniture trim. The traditions of the past are skillfully combined with the manufacturing technology of today to create that special accent for your furniture products. **For information, call 800-874-6522 or visit their web site www.keelerbrass.com.**

**Nevamar** announces the introduction of its new Year 2000 high pressure laminate offerings. The 2000 collection of 33 items includes a wide variety of unique new solids, patterns and woodgrains. Catalog and information is yours by calling 1-800-638-4380. **Visit the website at www.nevamar.com; or write to the Decorative Products Division of International Paper, 8339 Telegraph Road, Odenton, MD 21113-1397.**

**Southern Pine Council**, a joint promotional body made up of members of the Southern Forest Products Assn. and the Southeastern Lumber Mfrs. Assn. has revised and updated their "Southern Pine Use Guide", a comprehensive technical reference for specifying and using southern pine lumber. The 24-page booklet includes grade descriptions, design values and commonly used span tables, as well as information on proper lumber storage, sound transmission and flame spread. **Call the Southern Pine Council at Tel. (504) 443-4464, or fax (504) 443-6612.**

**The October Company** offers Table Leaf Bags and wraps that prevent scratching and marring of tables leaves when they are not in use. The bags are made from soft fabric of various types and colors. A manufacturer's logo can be applied to the bags or wraps, to keep the brand name in front of the customer. **For more information about this or on a broad range of products for the furniture industry, call 1-800-628-9346; write to 51 Ferry Street, Box 71, Easthampton, MA 01027; or send a fax to (413) 527-0091.**

# Aktrin's Monitor for American Consumer Spending on Furniture and Bedding

U.S. wages and salaries grew by a healthy 6.9% in 1999 and after tax-income advanced by 5.5%. This positive effect was further magnified by better job opportunities. Also, household wealth has been boosted by the buoyant stock market in 1999. The growth rate for wages and salaries is expected to accelerate this year to 7.4% and to 6.1% for after-tax income.

Rising income, low interest rates, and a robust job market bode well for buoyant consumer spending. During the 1st quarter of this year, has showed only minor signs of easing. The increase for January to March of 2000 was 5.7% at annual rates, a hair under the 5.9% pace at the end of last year.

The future is not entirely without concerns. In view of high consumer confidence, households are saving less and borrowing more to satisfy their wants. Purchases have outstripped income for the first time in five decades. This places some risk on interest sensitive big-ticket consumer goods, such as furniture. Any increase in interest rates would surely deflate the demand for durable consumer goods.

More upward pressure on the price front will entice the Fed to step up its monetary restraint and introduce more interest rate increases. In addition to rising borrowing costs for consumers, this will slow home sales and deprive the furniture business from one of its most powerful driving forces. After 1.66 million new units built in 1999, we will likely see 1.56 million units built in each of 2000 and 2001.

Another risk concerns the "wealth-effect" of the stock market. Higher interest rates may trigger a decline of stock prices and erode households' wealth and consumer confidence. As the number of people who participate in the stock market has grown significantly, the risk that a market decline could affect the wider economy has become more acute.

Under the likely scenario of only moderate interest rate increases, the U.S. economy will not suffer a significant retardation. Housing starts will remain strong and the upward trend in wages will continue.

While slower job creation may restrain consumer's income, consumption will remain strong. It is expected to advance by 3.6% in 2000, slightly higher than the 3.1% in 1999. The rate for 2001 is predicted to be around 3.4%. However, rising borrowing costs will moderate interest-sensitive spending on furniture and other big-ticket items. Furthermore, pent-up demand is no longer a driving force and will not provide a stimulus for furniture purchases.

Furniture consumption will advance from \$ 60.7 billion in 1999 to \$ 63.7 billion this year. This represents a growth rate of 5.1%, down from 6.4% in the previous year. With inflation being low, most of the advance represents a "real" increase, predominantly in the form of more "deluxed" products and less in the form of higher unit sales.

*Source: AKTRIN Furniture Information Center, Tel: 905-845-3474.*

*A report writing and International consulting firm fully dedicated to the furniture industry.*



Frank Bingham, Mitch Watson,  
Darrell Lowman



Karl Felperin, Jack Schmitt, Bob Stannard



Frank Bingham (standing), Preview Co.,  
Vladimir Kagan



ASFD  
Board of  
Directors  
Meeting

Reprinted with permission of  
UDM Magazine, October 1999

Michael Chazin,  
Assoc. Publisher & Editor

## Web Site Boosts Designer Sales

A Minneapolis-based furniture designer has tripled his client base and increased design sales with an Internet presence. Although the effectiveness and purpose of web sites for small businesses are cause for debate, there is no questioning the impact an Internet home page has had for Dan Cramer of Cramer Studio Inc., Minneapolis. Cramer, a contract furniture designer with more than 20 years of industry experience, has used a web site to promote his business for the past two years. In that time he has seen projected sales of his chair designs increase sevenfold.

In 1996, before the introduction of the Cramer Studio web site, annual projected sales of Cramer Studio-designed chairs stood at \$2 million. Since the introduction of <http://www.cramerstudio.com>, however, Cramer has tripled his client base while his chair designs are expected to generate annual sales of \$14 million.

### Contacts made easy

As the owner of a one-person firm, Cramer says the ability to efficiently and effectively market himself is an important advantage of the web site. It allows him to make more contacts with potential clients in less time. "It gets my work in front of executives making marketing decisions at major companies," says Cramer. Recent clients include Gunlocke, AGI, and Paoli.

Previously, Cramer marketed his firm and earned new contracts through letter writing, portfolio showings, telephone calls, and traveling. Now, with the introduction of his Internet web site, a process that had often taken hours, days, or even weeks can sometimes be accomplished in minutes.

"Recently, as I talked on the phone with a prospective client, he was able to discern who I was by pulling up my web site," says Cramer. "By the time we hung up the phone he had a good understanding of my strengths and portfolio and we were able to set up a meeting to begin working on a project."

Cramer marvels at the power of the web. "My work has been published in international magazines, I have won numerous design awards, but the impact of that exposure pales by comparison to the impact my web site has had on my business. The amount of credibility it affords me is astounding."

Because Cramer's clients are often marketing executives, the web site has helped him earn credibility as a business-oriented designer. "I think there's a need for designers who show a strong business sense and can design products that are marketable. Making my portfolio more accessible to prospective clients shows that I understand their needs. I speak to them in a language that they understand."

### Site reflects experience

Minneapolis-based communications design firm Franke + Fiorella that developed the web site for Cramer cautions small business owners who expect instant success from a web site. "How a web site is designed, used, and promoted is the largest contributing factor to its success," says Deb Fiorella, director of marketing for Franke + Fiorella.

In developing the Cramer Studio web site, Franke + Fiorella worked with Cramer to define a brand strategy and personality for his firm. "The web site is designed to instantly reinforce Dan's position as a designer of contract furniture for a broad spectrum of client needs. We designed it based on the needs of Dan's target audience, which requires that information be communicated visually, rather than through extensive copy content."

Perhaps the most important factor in the development of a successful web site and the one according to Fiorella that many business owners forget is promoting the site. "People make a common mistake of assuming that because it's on the web, their target audience will automatically find it."

When he first launched his Internet site, Cramer says the power of the Internet was mind boggling. But as more and more companies have gone online, that force has declined. Now, the site itself isn't enough to drive business, and Cramer has developed promotional items to help draw attention.

Cramer worked with Franke + Fiorella to produce postcards that emulate web site screen captures. He uses the postcards to promote the site to prospective clients. He hand writes a message on the card and puts it in a vellum envelope. That way when it reaches its destination it's almost always recognized as important. Typically, he follows up any mailing with a telephone call.

The Internet site isn't an end in itself for Cramer; it's a promotional tool that works as part of a broader marketing effort. "I wanted to be able to call somebody and put my face in front of their face as quick as possible." The web site allows him to do that.



David Williams, David (P.G.) Williams



Ed Fink, Steve Bernstein  
Wood Technology

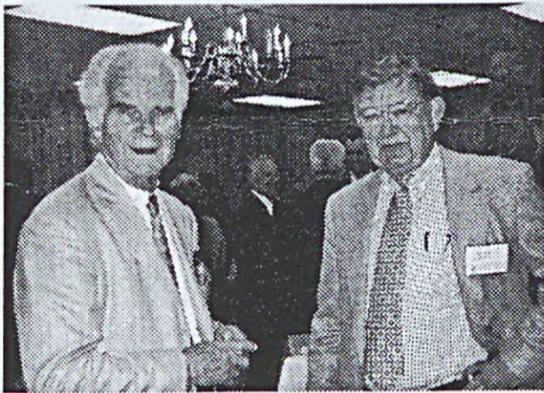


Häfele Reps and Products

# ASFD Spring Market Dinner Memories



KCAD Students



O.B. Solie, Marty Pratt



Larry Tabbia (left)  
Tom Phillips, Interior Products



Christine Evans at Nest Magazine display



Yum, Let's Eat! Rick Lee (front)



Liza Nicholson, Dianne Sharpe, Scott Rhyder, Ruth  
Hastings, Lee Ann Boles



John Patrick, Leggett & Platt (left) with  
Brian Baile, designer from Ireland (right).



Michael Chazin (left) with Vladimir Kagan family



Vladimir Kagan, Jim Dispersia, Osvaldo Pencaro



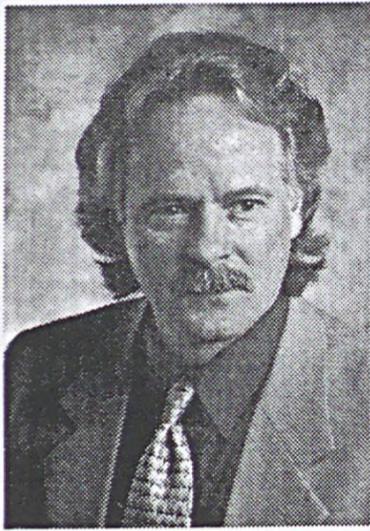
Roger Scheneeman, Susan Von Cannon,  
O.B. Solie

---

# Designing Furniture: The Creative Process

“Home Furnishings Executive”, April 2000

published by National Home Furnishings Association, Tel. (336) 801-6100



Jim Dipersia

When turning to a designer to create new product, manufacturers either have an idea in mind or they depend on a designer to create his or her own look.

“A manufacturer may say it wants to do a neoclassic collection for the next market, for example,” says Jim Dipersia, a freelance furniture designer and board member of the American Society of Furniture Designers. The manufacturer will tell the designer at which price point this particular collection should be.

The manufacturer could also approach the designer and say it is becoming stale and needs something new—an injection of life.

The designer then needs to evaluate the market. Where is it going? What are the trends? The designer has to be alert to trends and colors, materials, and woods. Designers such as Dipersia keeps close watch on Europe for trends and ideas that may show up in the United States a few years later.

The designer should also know the different niches in the market and which one to target. He or she should visit the manufacturer’s factories and know their capabilities. What type finishings does the manufacturer use? Does it work in Formica or in woods and polyesters? “You have to channel your creativity through (those limitations),” Dipersia says.

After considering the market and the manufacturer, the designer makes concept drawings and presents them to the manufacturer. The product must be cost effective and aesthetically pleasing to the consumer. “It’s not just a matter of drawing pretty pictures,” Dipersia says. “You have to come up with something that is marketable—that is the designer’s job.”

---

## **Congratulations Steve Hodges Associates!**

At the annual Trillium Awards banquet held in January during the Toronto International Home Furnishings Market, solid-wood bedroom specialist Durham Furniture won the prestigious Grand Trillium award for the second straight year and for the fourth time in the past five years, this time for its 990 Glengarry County collection which also won in the traditional bedroom category. The Grand Trillium is awarded to the entry that receives the highest overall score, regardless of the category. Organized by the Ontario Furniture Manufacturers Assn., the Trillium program recognizes excellence in the marketability of Canadian-made residential furniture. 990 Glengarry County was designed by Steve Hodges Associates, based in Lexington, N.C. The collection also won ASFD’s coveted Pinnacle Award in the bedroom category in 1999. All of the design team members are professional members of ASFD.

## **Congratulations Christopher Sandomenico!**

Winner of the first ASFD David Kline Memorial Scholarship Award in March 2000, Chris is a student in Kendall College of Art & Design’s Furniture Design Program in Grand Rapids and a member of ASFD. The design project which he entered was entitled “British Colonial/Trade Winds” which was described by the award judges as a “very competent and admirable design effort”. He was awarded \$500 and a certificate of achievement from the ASFD.

## **Congratulations Mark Tucker!**

A student in Kendall College of Art & Design’s Furniture Design program and a member of ASFD, Mark was awarded a \$1500 Grand Rapids Furniture Designers Association Scholarship this winter. This award is offered annually to recognize and support students demonstrating outstanding talent and financial need.

**Q Dear ASFD:**

**I am a struggling woodworker looking for design software that will enable me to project a professional drawing to show my clients. I would like my design plans to be of the same quality as my woodwork. I've searched the net but I haven't found anything that will let me do furniture and cabinetry. If you can help or know of a good reliable source that is also cost effective please e-mail me. Thank you for your time.**

**Alan**

**A**

Response by Carl "Buddy" Grohs, ASFD Board Member and freelance designer:

Alan,

The CAD part is sorta' easy. The standard for CAD programs is AutoCAD and its .dwg drawing format. Since there is no need for sharing files with other CAD users, then it doesn't make too much difference which drawing program you use. Most CAD programs claim some sort of compatibility with AutoCAD and the .dwg. The CAD program is the basis for the 2D plans and possibly the source for 3D representations of the finished product. AutoCAD (now version 15 and called AutoCAD 2000-how original!) is big bucks, \$3700+ street price. 2D and 3D with some rendering. There are a host of add-on 3rd party programs to do most anything. Most cost pretty good dollars. There are several other Autodesk (the parent company) products that provide sketch to drawing, engineering and rendering capability. No need to talk about any of those because they are big bucks also and neither you nor I need to be spending that kind of money to do simple 2D drafting. (I, too, am a one man operation.) There is also AutcoCAD LT 2000, 2D only and about \$400 street price. If you need to print (plot) full-size patterns you will need to get a plotter (drafting printer) and those are expensive.

I use AutoCAD LT. You can't beat their products for ease of use, I like the way they draw. I use an old version of AutoCAD 13 to do 3D and a plug-in rendering program.

There are all kinds of drafting software out there including freeware and shareware but I recommend a commercial program, better features and documentation. Autodesk offers Autosketch for about a 100 bucks or so and it's not a bad program for 2D-3D "effects" not true 3D, no rendering.

There's TurboCAD in three versions, the standard and professional have 2D, 3D and rendering. Pricing is probably \$100+ to \$200- depending on the version. The basic version is less than \$100 I think, 2D only. TurboCAD might be worth trying-lower price and fairly good features. I tried it some years ago and it wasn't too good but I understand the newer versions are much better.

DesignCAD LT and Pro 2000 offer 2D, 3D and rendering-the 3D and rendering are limited in the LT version. LT is about \$200 and Pro is about \$600. I don't like the way you draw in DC but since you have nothing to compare it to it may be okay for you. It also might be the most bang for the buck

From there you can go to DataCAD, \$900+; it is slighted towards architecture but will work. At one time you could get it for \$700.

IntelliCAD claims to be the poorman's AutoCAD, \$800 and at one time they were running a deal for \$350. This may be my choice if I had to choose. Very powerful. And there are a few others.

There are programs like CorelDRAW that do technical illustrations that can be quite good, but I don't think you want to get into that kind of a program. Probably in the \$700 range and no CAD. And there are one or two programs aimed at industrial product design but I don't think they are worth fooling with. FormZ is good but it is pricey.

There are several companies who specialize in cabinet making software and they all do 2D, 3D, rendering, cutlists, pricing, you name it. Cabinetware, Cabinet Vision, KCDw Software, Intergrated Cabinet Systems and others. These are modular units and you buy only what you need generally. They start at about \$1000- and can go as high as 20 grand! None of them do furniture very well, some not at all. A couple of them are working on a furniture version but nothing good yet. Solidworks and Solid Edge are two more programs but they are more mechanical drafting oriented and are fairly expensive.

To do renderings you do a 3D drawing using surfaces and/or solids, apply materials to the model, set lights, aim the "camera" and the computer makes a pretty good representation that can be printed on a color ink jet. You will need fairly high resolution in the rendering and the printed output (large file sizes) and will have to use special (somewhat expensive) paper to get good results. You have to make a separate 3D drawing and it is is time consuming. There are a couple of programs to go from 2D to 3D but none are really all that good-yet.

The trick to any renderings is the materials, e.g., the woods, finishes, etc. The programs give you a few and the rest are really hard to come by. An image of say, medium oak can be manipulated in an image editing program to change the lightness and darkness and even the color cast, but the material images themselves are not readily available. Digital cameras may offer a solution by taking a picture of wood and getting it into the computer. But you have to deal with making the image "tileable" so that when you place it on the furniture you do not see the seem lines.

One trick I use is to print an outline drawing of one view of the furniture, scan it into an image editing program (Photoshop, but there are cheaper ones) and fill it with a wood grain image. I use the image editor to draw in shadows and highlights. It's not 3D nor photorealistic but it is a way to go.

What does all this mean? There ain't no easy way. You just have to try to make something work. Furniture has not been addressed by any of the CAD programs. It is a mechanical/architechural drafting tool and not for designing.

Then there are the inherent problems with colors consistency between scanners, monitors and printers. But that is another story, and it will drive you crazy trying to make the print look like what you have on the screen or a scanned image. They're working on that too but are not there yet.

"IBM" systems were designed to do office work-type letters and keep records, not work with images. Macs do better graphics work but they are more expensive, software is limited and more expensive and there are no programs dealing with furniture either. Both systems have software to do product design and that can be furniture but neither really deals with our specific requirements. In reality, the furniture design business is too small to draw an interest from program developers.

The easiest way to go is to draw a free-hand color drawing of the furniture. That's what most of us do. If you don't have that talent, maybe you know someone who does. Have color copies made from the original. It'll cost you some money but it is the most simple way to go. I play around with the computer 3D but it is almost not worth the time and effort. I'm just a computer junkie and one of these days someone is going to put it all together and make it easy for us. Until then....

Hope this helps out and answers some of your questions.

# Q&A

**Q** Dear ASFD:

I'm interested in pursuing a career as a furniture designer but I'm more interested in designing that is artistic as well as functional, e.g., Charles and Ray Eames.

How lucrative is this kind of niche for the average designer? What kind of income could one expect to make in this industry?

Thanks, Leonard

**A** A very involved question.... Being a designer for more than 40 years, and now teaching design in college, I am aware of the work of the Eames and with the history and philosophies of design. Charles Eames' most famous work was for the Herman Miller furniture company. Much of his design was not so much driven by "art" as by utilizing, in innovative ways, new technologies developed during the Second World War. His motivation was to create a new paradigm of manufacturing while continuing in the philosophy of the Bauhaus school of design. Herman Miller was never very successful in home furnishings and eventually became an institutional furnishings manufacturer. The Eames furniture was highly "honored" by the design oriented professions but only momentarily and moderately accepted in home furnishings. It is elitist design in the eyes of most "non design" educated people. I would say your best path to do this kind of design is as an "in house designer" with an office furniture, institutional, Manufacturers like Steelcase, Hayworth or Herman Miller.

As to pay, working for these companies will give both an attractive and relatively secure income. I really don't know their pay scales but from my knowledge of industry in general, I guess starting pay for a person just out of school would be between 30K and 45K. Compensation would increase with experience and responsibility. A principal designer might get 60K to at the high end, 100K. Working for these companies require a great deal of technical knowledge as well as "artistic."



There are some designers who work as "consultants" to these companies. I am sure that their financial success varies. They inevitably begin as corporate designers with one of these companies, gain experience and a reputation within the industry, before becoming a consultant.

**L. Roger Schneeman**  
ASFD VP/President-Elect  
and freelance designer

**Q** Dear ASFD:

Could you recommend a good, affordable, furniture-design related periodical that would be of interest to a furniture designer?

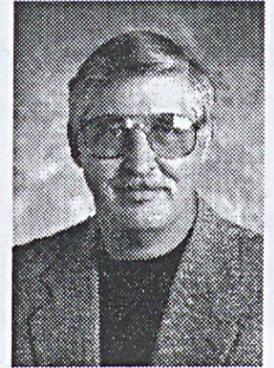
Thanks, Tripti

**A** I can't think of any periodicals that deal exclusively with furniture design. There are many that deal with with cabinetry, component parts, raw materials and machinery. FDM, Wood Digest, Modern Woodworking, CabinetMaker, Wood & Wood Products. FDM is probably the best of these [www.fdmmag.com](http://www.fdmmag.com). These are generally free.

There is FurnitureToday which deals with the furniture industry in general ([www.furnituretoday.com](http://www.furnituretoday.com), their website has a lot of good links) and does a reasonable job of covering what has been designed and introduced but mostly features general industry news.

There is also FurnitureStyle [www.vancepublishing.com](http://www.vancepublishing.com) This magazine shows a lot of photos of new stuff and not much copy or other information, a few articles though. FurnitureToday is around \$140.00 per year and FurnitureStyle is "free to qualified U.S. retailers" and about \$50 otherwise.

Carl Grohs, Jr.



**A** There are so many. There are many that specialize in manufacturing and technology and others on design and business factors. These are some of the ones I get or occasionally see.

For design and marketing:

Furniture Today, 1-800395-2329

Furniture Style, 847-634-2600

Casual Living, 651-645-6311

Fine Furniture International,

E-Mail, [bcarlson@dacmail.net](mailto:bcarlson@dacmail.net), 651-2931544

For Design and manufacturing:

FDM (Furniture Design & Manufacturing),  
[www.fdmonline.com](http://www.fdmonline.com)

CWB (Custom Woodworking Business),  
[www.iswonline.com](http://www.iswonline.com)

Upholstery Design Manufacturing  
([www.udm.com](http://www.udm.com))

Interior Design, 800-542-8138

Design in general with much furniture featured

ABITARE, 800-238-8462

(published in Italian & English)

L. Roger Schneeman

**Q** Dear ASFD,

My name is Rowanne Lambert and I am currently undertaking Year twelve at St. Joseph's School in Port Lincoln Australia.. As part of my Year twelve Art course, I am required to do a special study on an aspect of art or design. I have chosen furniture and the importance of its function and appearance when creating a piece. I have prepared the following survey on the topic and it would be greatly appreciated if you could fill it out. I thank you for your time and help.

**A** **Survey Response**

by Roger Schneeman, ASFD VP/President Elect

**Survey Questions**

**1) What does the design process involve?**

The design process involves a mixture of art, technology, consideration of function, marketing and sales knowledge. Basically, design is a special branch of sociology. In addition to education in art, business and technology, a designer must have a special empathy for how people respond to things in the environment, especially human made things. I'm enclosing a magazine article which I wrote explaining my feelings.

**2) Is the aesthetics of a piece a priority?**

Absolutely, For people who claim that it is not as important as function or price, it is the deciding factor when there are several choices which meet the practical criteria.

**3) What sort of things inspire furniture pieces?**

The desire to produce something that sells better than competitors. This means that the product must be attractive in appearance, function and price. It is a very difficult task in a competitive market.

**4) What sells a piece of furniture—the way it looks or its function?**

Both are important. One factor may be more important for some purchasers, the other for other purchasers. But, both play a part in the purchase decision for most purchasers.

**5) Is the design process always used when creating a piece of furniture?**

This is a "loaded" question. In a sense, everything that is made is designed. Some things designed are very bad. In the furniture industry there is much copying (Knock-offs). There is always those who can make a copy cheaper and worse.

**6) Do you have to be an artist to create furniture?**

The designer is most often an artist, but not good enough to be "hung in museums"; also an engineer, but without a college degree; a business professional, perhaps without professional credentials. The designer is a jack of all trades, but most of all a person with a feeling for how people will respond to the things which do not yet exist.

**8) Do you have to be a Designer to create furniture?**

Anyone who creates furniture is a designer. The question... is he or she a good designer.

**9) What comes first when designing a piece of furniture. The way it looks or its functional value?**

Both are important. A good designer can create an attractive look and engineer it to fall into any intended price bracket.

**10) Is function more important than the way it looks?**

Sometimes yes, sometimes no... Low cost furniture is usually purchased by people needing to fulfill a practical need. Very expensive furniture is sometimes purchased as purely a piece of art to be on display in their affluent home.

**11) Can furniture be good or bad artistically speaking or is it always good because it is functional?**

Furniture can be good or bad artistically. It can also be good or bad functionally.

**12) Antique furniture—is it art or just a reflection of the time it was produced?**

Like contemporary furniture, it can be artistically beautiful, or ugly. Furniture, perhaps more than any other useful artifact, does reflect the life values of the maker or patron. The ostentation and bombastic character of French Court furniture of the Louie's reflects the degraded character of their lives and the society.

**13) Are different furniture styles just different styles or are they art movements in themselves e.g. art deco?**

All art, including furniture, is indigenous to the societies in which it is produced. Art reflects social conditions, technological developments, religious and philosophical trends and economical conditions. It reflects the character of the people. Modern did not exist before 1850. It's development was prompted by the industrial revolution and the many technological developments in manufacturing.

**14) What type of people buy the furniture you make?**

I design TV and home entertainment cabinets. I also design other products such as telephones, audio receivers and satellite received. I do some case goods, bedroom, dining room furniture, etc.

**15) What type of reaction do you get from the people when they see less than practical furniture?**

It depends. One must define "practical". What may not be practical for one person may exactly fulfill a need for another.



P.O. Box 2688  
High Point, NC 27261



Plan now to submit your product designs and look for your 2000 entry forms in the mail around mid-June. Your entries collectively acknowledge the importance of the furniture design process and help furniture designers gain a stronger and more visible voice in our industry. Deadline for mailing entries will be September 1, 2000.

We proudly announce that the 2000 Pinnacle sponsors are Appalachian Hardwood, Casual Living, FurnitureStyle, Hafele America, Home Lighting & Accessories, Laminating Materials Association, Leggett & Platt, Lilly Industries, nest magazine, The October Company and Wilsonart International.

The stellar panel of judges will include Dr. Richard Bennington, High Point University; Judith Cushman, J.Z. Cushman & Company; Tom Edmonds, Furniture/Today; Robert L. Ficks, Jr., Home Furnishings Council; Ellen Gefen, Gefen productions; Jackie Hirschhaut, AFMA; Mike McCune, Dillard's; Allen Norwood, Charlotte Observer; Max Shangle, Kendall College of Art & Design; Cindy Sheaffer, Home Accents Today; Cheminne Taylor-Smith, Casual Living; and Tony Wilkerson, Havertys.

## American Society of Furniture Designers

Christine Evans, Executive Director  
144 Woodland Drive  
New London, NC 28127  
Phone: (910) 576-1273  
Fax: (910) 576-1573

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 2688  
High Point, NC 27261  
email: [asfd@ac.net](mailto:asfd@ac.net)  
web: [www.asfd.com](http://www.asfd.com)