

# DÉCOR DEMON

BY BRIAN PATRICK FLYNN

## GREEN AWAKENING

*Our Driven Designer Encounters Eco-Friendly Pieces In His Beloved Color*

**R**emember back in elementary school when there was a Jennifer S., a Jennifer B., a Matthew R. and a Matthew J. all in the same class? How could this same word (or proper noun to be exact) be used equally for two completely different things? But what does this have to do with design, you ask? The modern day use of the word "green" in reference to both the color and the idea of sustainability stresses the hell out of me. My signature color is kelly green, so any mention of green excites me like a six-year-old girl with tickets to Miley Cyrus. **Kelly Wearstler** is my career idol, so when *kelly* and *green* are in the same sentence, it's one enormous shamrock-tinted fantasy for me. But worse, now when I hear "green," I need to decipher if it refers to Kermit's skin tone or conserving the water of his family's ecosystem. Therefore I have decided to refer to environmentally responsible products as eco-friendly, and grassy colors as green. So there.

Speaking of the color, at the moment *City Issue* has a one-of-a-kind 1970s kelly green faux bamboo dining set with which I am obsessed. I'd be oh-so-happy to see someone acquire this



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Clockwise from top: Jacqueline Sanchez's lego block belt buckle is a resourceful way of recycling childhood trinkets; the George II Chandelier from Circa Lighting; a massive Castilian armoire with hand wrought iron front panels, handles, and hinges, made with reclaimed beam available at No Mas! Hacienda.

fine item so I don't end up with *three* dining-room arrangements in my 900-square-foot loft.

For eco-friendly finds, **Verde Home** is quickly becoming a leader. The net stool end tables from **Reed LaPlant** for Verde are graphic, vibrant and made from recycled cement bags. Shopping at Verde Home is more of an experience than

an errand. Partners **Laura Walker Baird**, **Paul Baird**, and **Kent Schneider** have a plethora of information on all things environmentally responsible for the home.

There seems to be a lot of reinvention and juxtaposition of design styles incorporating organic materials these days, for example **Natural Lee's** sofa that merges art-deco and classic-modern characteristics. The sloped arms, contrasting welting and three front legs on mini-casters create an unfussy look that could fit in nearly any space. My eco-conscious grading scale would give this company a report card with straight A's for its use of soy-based cushions, pillows made

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with recycled filling, water-based stains, and a great selection of organic and natural upholstery fabrics. And speaking of reinvention, Atlanta jewelry designer **Jacqueline Sanchez** has re-purposed the iconic Lego block into a clever accessory for both men and women. Her Forever Young line includes necklaces, belts, bracelets and cufflinks with or without inlaid diamonds. I own a pair of emerald-green cufflinks and am not going to deny that the moment I put them on I A) want to finger paint, B) feel as happy as that six year old going to see Miley Cyrus, and C) think I am a badass.

We now return to your previously scheduled eco-friendly design show. I found some amazing tableware at **OwenLawrence**. Amidst their impressive assortment of objets d'art was a clear **Mayte** pitcher made from recycled glass. It's really sleek and makes me want to put down my sweet tea and just drink water with a



**Clockwise from left:** A rooftop garden designed by Flynn with **NewGrass**, creating an authentic look and feeling; the net stool end tables made from recycled cement bags available at **Verde Home**; a recycled glass pitcher by **Mayte** found at **OwenLawrence**.



## I give this company straight A's for its use of soy-based cushions and selection of organic and natural fabrics.

strategically placed lemon wheel on the rim, like you see in design magazine photo spreads. Speaking of clear glass, I have been totally into chandeliers lately and desperately trying to find a spot in one of my client's homes for the **George II Chandelier** from **Circa Lighting**. Its lines are feminine and masculine as well as modern and traditional, which make it the perfect fit for any person or any style of home.

Another place with pieces meant to spark some serious environmentally conscious interest is **No Mas! Hacienda**. The store offers all things hand-made Mexican, many of them eco-friendly such as coffee tables crafted from reclaimed wood doors. The enormous scale of many of the higher-end pieces paired with the store's kaleidoscope of color makes this place a downtown Disneyland.

One amazing product both green in color and in theory is **NewGrass**, which is now available here in Atlanta. This is the perfect material for creating a lush-feeling garden or outdoor room that doesn't require any water or maintenance. I recently installed it to create a rooftop garden in the middle of the city. It looks and feels like fresh cut grass all year long.

Although there are many new products created specifically not to leave an environmental footprint, I

am a huge fan of encouraging people to adopt the original eco-friendly design method—using antiques! A great place for both fine antiques and fixer-uppers is **Highland Row Antiques**. This adorable store offers everything from Victoriana to 1950s atomic to 1970s chrome. During my last weekly trip, I scored a set of 1960s wire garden chairs that helped create a four-story-high rooftop dining room. All that was added with new vinyl found at **Peachtree Fabrics**, which has an amazing stock in just about any color including a dozen shades of green. Another fantastic antique store is **Decatur Estate**, an excellent place to find vintage dining sets. In one visit, I managed to score almost all of the 48 chairs needed for my redesign of nonprofit restaurant **Café 458**. (Café 458 can be called green, I mean eco-friendly, because it recycles 100 percent of its Saturday and Sunday brunch revenue into three programs that help homeless Atlantans achieve self-sufficiency. How's that for recycling?) The dining room has 13 sets of mismatched chairs from all eras which required *zero* new materials, labor or energy.

All this talk about the color green and the environment makes me want to eat edamame and wallpaper my dining room with grasscloth. Where should I start? ☺

