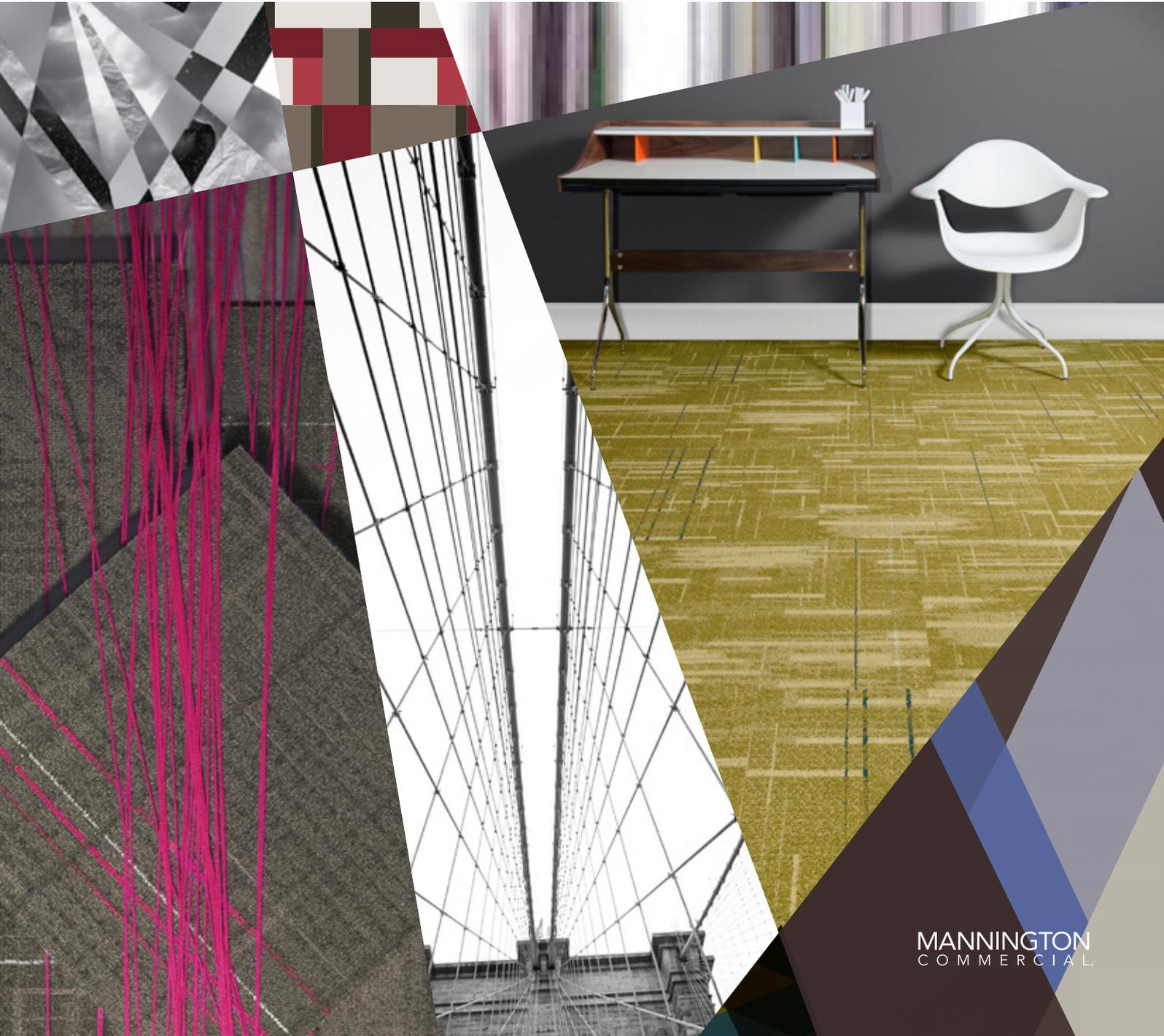


IN LOVE WITH THE HERE AND NOW.

thread



MANNINGTON
COMMERCIAL

EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED

With the launch of its Connected and Intersected collections, Mannington is redefining LVT as an innovative graphic floor tile.

By Robert Nieminen

It's been said that the difference between invention and innovation is coming up with a new idea versus taking an idea and applying it to a different market. And while Mannington is no stranger to either form of development, its new lines of LVT tile, Connected and Intersected, definitely qualify as an innovation.

The two lines have been carefully reengineered to appeal to the corporate market by acting as a forward-thinking design element rather than a byproduct of value engineering.

"Nobody has ever said, 'I'm going to use LVT because of the design flexibility,' or 'because of the limitless patterns that are out there,' or 'because it would add interest to my space,'" explains Lindsay Wilson, principal at Corgan Associates, which collaborated with Mannington on the collections, which will be launched at NeoCon under the Amtico brand. In spite of LVT's tremendous performance characteristics, Wilson says the limited aesthetics and the higher costs of custom applications made it prohibitive as a design option—a fact that Corgan and Mannington set out to change.



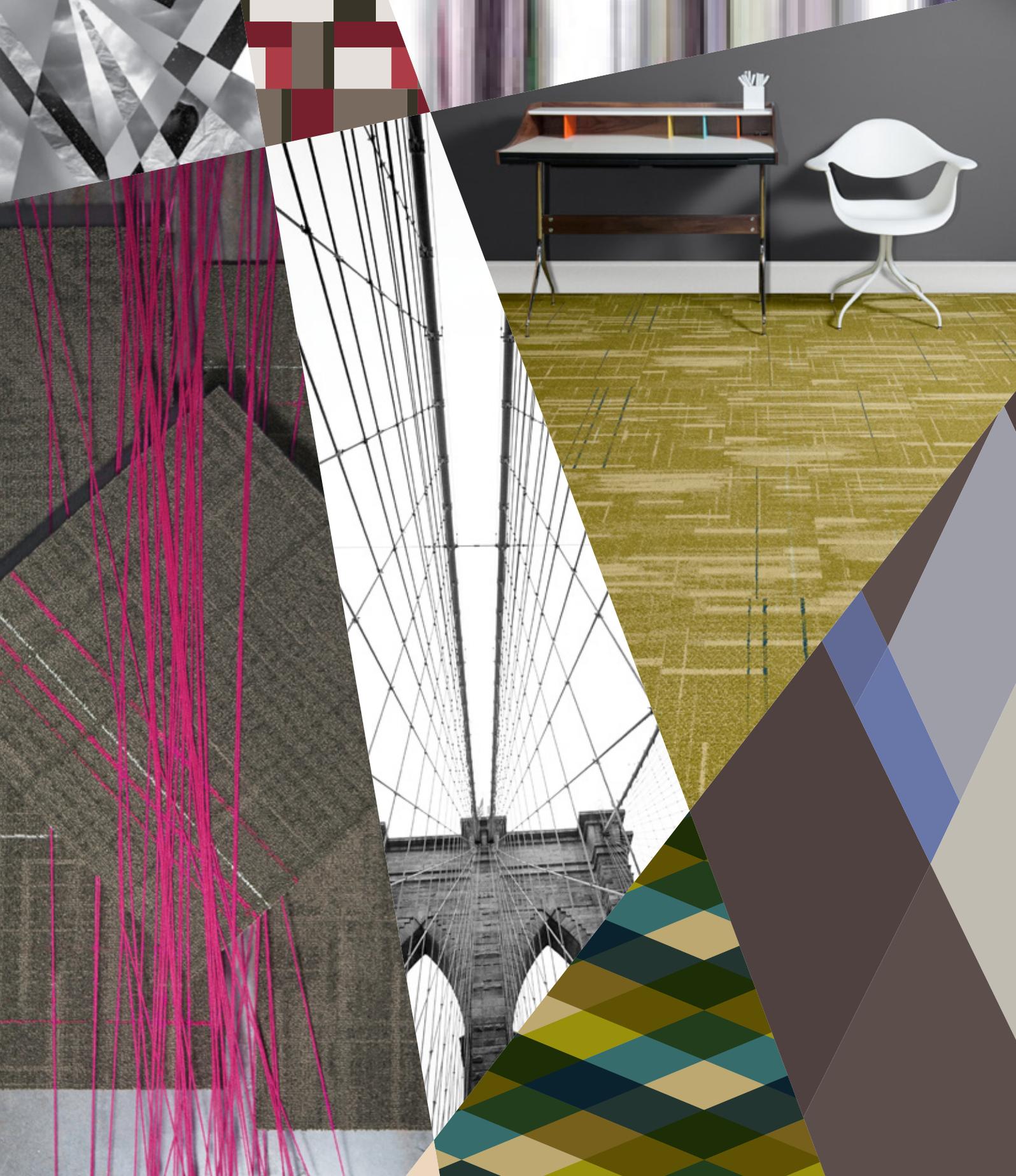
"For LVT to break into the corporate market in a meaningful way, it has to be well designed, and it has to be considered a design element for the sake of design," says Natalie Jones, Mannington's vice president of commercial brand development and creative product. "It's bringing something to the space. It's not just trying to replicate a natural material, but really celebrating what that medium can do."

With Connected, designers can now "break LVT out of the break room," according to Wilson, and begin to utilize what she calls a "graphic floor tile" as a design element on the floor, bringing in geometric shapes and accent colors that have not been available before due to the limitations of the manufacturing process.

Guided by the same ideas that inspired the Connected carpet collection—also developed in a partnership with Corgan—this new LVT collection is characterized by its unique texture, gradation, and ease of installation. Designers and specifiers are now able to create a connection between different flooring product types, resulting in a designer-friendly approach to LVT. For the first time, integrated accents give designers the ability to customize with pops of color and create a random, gradated look that perfectly captures the interconnected nature of today's workplace.

With Connected and Intersected, Wilson says specifiers "are going to get dynamic patterns and interesting design elements without any custom cut, any custom application," which reduces costs. When compared to affordable wood plank or solid texture products so often seen in healthcare facilities, with this new LVT "there would be no price difference, but the aesthetic difference would be dramatic."

"From a design perspective, the possibilities are truly limitless," explains Al Boulogne, senior director of LVT with Mannington. "You take the beauty of design and you couple it with a high performance product platform, and you get what is really a perfect product for the commercial marketplace."



GREEN? PROVE IT.

By Kylie Wroblaski

The desire for transparency in materials isn't new, but it certainly is growing. Manufacturers are now commonly asked by specifiers to detail the environmental attributes of their products, and many producers have turned to the Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) as a standardized means of doing so. But what exactly can and can't EPDs tell us about a product's sustainable nature?

For the uninitiated, an EPD is a report that discloses a product's environmental impacts, documenting the results of a comprehensive Life Cycle Assessment (LCA). A LCA is a compilation of the environmental impacts found in all of the stages that make up a product's "life," from raw material extraction and manufacturing to disposal and recycling, undertaken to help manufacturers develop product and process improvements. An EPD helps to translate the complex information generated by the LCA, along with other information pertaining to the product's environmental profile, into an organized, readable report, which allows specifiers to more fully understand the product's environmental impact.

The fact that EPDs follow a consensus-based, standardized reporting format, and that test data is typically verified by independent third parties, makes EPDs seem like the perfect tool for A&D professionals interested in comparing the eco-attributes of similar products. So why can't they be used that way?

"EPDs are an evolution in manufacturing environmental improvement and transparency, but, like most tools, are not 'the end-all,'" he adds. "EPDs are not about determining if a product is 'green,' but rather about quantifying impacts and seeing how and where improvements can be made."

So if EPDs are best used to quantify specific environmental impacts and help manufacturers make incremental improvements to their products, how can these documents help architects and designers as they try to decide which products to specify for a new space?

"Designers and other customers are interested in the topic of transparency and are seeking solid, reliable information first, with enough detail to know that a robust assessment occurred. And these are detailed and dynamic documents," Kitts explains. "EPDs aren't designed to be the ultimate 'decision-making' documents, but are becoming another piece of the complex puzzle designers wrestle with, such as purchase cost, design aesthetics, product quality, maintenance requirements, delivery timing, and green product attributes."

EPDs have proven to be a natural extension of the LCAs and other process improvements that Mannington has been conducting for more than a decade, with the company's first EPD for rEvolve modular carpet tiles launching in June of last year.

Mannington now also offers EPDs for its Infinity and Infinity RE carpet tiles, as well as five different hard surface EPDs covering sheet vinyl, LVT, VCT, and rubber tile, all developed through an industry collaboration with other hard surface manufacturers.

For more information about Mannington's commitment to EPDs, and for access to the full product EPDs online, visit mannington.com/commercial/EPD.aspx.





TOUCHSCAPE

Mannington is launching a new technology that brings teams and groups together, around a shared table.

At the past two NeoCons, the company has introduced apps (Apt and Color/Spec) that make it easier than ever for individuals to explore pattern and color inspiration on a tablet, integrating camera functionality, sampling, virtual installations, and more.

Touchscape is a touch-based desk, designed to be installed in an A+D firm's product library. Running on a 55 inch screen laid horizontally, Touchscape will showcase Mannington's entire product portfolio – modular and broadloom carpet, LVT, resilient tile and sheet, rubber, porcelain, and wood.

Users will be able to choose any product in Mannington's portfolio, in every color way, and view in multiple room scenes – then watch the floor rendered in a 3D view. Using technologies borrowed from video gaming, users can choose various vantage points within the room to pan, scan, and zoom the scene.

Designers can also draw and write notes on the scene, within the program, then send a PDF of the notes to a collaborator or client's email address, along with attached images and product specs. Once installed, Touchscape will auto-update with every new release of products and software upgrades, so it's always current.

Touchscape is not designed to replace sample books in product libraries – but to enhance the use of them. Because of the breadth and depth of Mannington's portfolio, Touchscape works hand in hand with books on shelves and the company's robust, responsive sampling program – allowing designers to see what they need to see, when they need to see it.



CUSTOM FLOORS MADE EASY

By Elianne Halbersberg

Do you have the perfect vision for how the floor in your new space should look, but have no idea how to turn your concept into reality? Thanks to the Amtico Collection from Mannington, if you can dream it, they can help you do it.

The Amtico Collection now offers three different approaches to custom LVT tile and planks:

1. *Combine running line products into unique and intriguing designs.*
2. *Choose from the company's collection of signature layouts for your space.*
3. *Create your own design from any inspiration—including logos or special design motifs—and Amtico will make it happen.*

The secret lies with Amtico's experienced CAD and production teams, who can take customer concepts and translate them into do-it-yourself flooring kits, complete with directions for seamless installations.

"It goes from easiest to most complex," says Al Boulogne, director of LVT for Mannington, describing the process of creating highly customized options for customers. The production team cuts the pieces and put the layouts together in their Conyers, GA facility to make sure they all fit properly. Photographs are then taken, the pieces labeled individually, and installation instructions generated, allowing customers to create a high-end LVT look in less time and with less frustration.

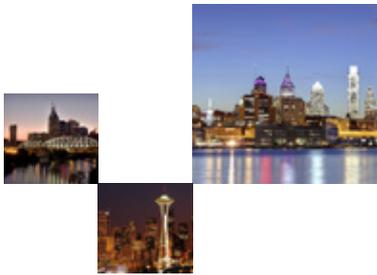
"Amtico's premium construction is the only product that we're able to do that with, because of the way the product is made," Boulogne says. "It gives us the ability to cut very fine lines and angles. There are three main ways we approach customs, but the possibilities are endless when it comes to what you can do and how you can implement them."

Additionally, because Amtico is made with a wearlayer that is 40 mils thick, as opposed to an industry standard of 20, custom cut installations are built to last.

"Products manufactured and imported from overseas do not have these capabilities, and prohibitive lead times make this level of customization impossible," says Boulogne. "Since Mannington makes Amtico LVT in the U.S. from start to finish, the possibilities are endless."



A TALE OF THREE CITIES



“Design is an opportunity to continue telling the story, not just to sum things up.” –Tate Linden, Brand Strategist

By Robert Nieminen

What began two years ago as a design contest—a creative exercise in product development with a clear end point—has neither concluded nor been re-launched, but rather has merged into a broader conversation about inspiration and storytelling.

The plot of this narrative revolves around Mannington Commercial’s Design Local program, a multi-city product development tour that brings together teams of designers to seek and discover inspiration in their own backyards, and tell their tales of inspiration through the medium of carpet. Every city the tour visited has become a story-within-a-story—a smaller but integral component of a larger conversation about how local materials, landmarks, neighborhoods, colors, and textures influence the creative process.

As its author, Mannington understood after its first draft in 2012 that a contest told in short story form was an inadequate method of communicating the inspiring collaborations that emerged from each participating city; it needed a manuscript more akin to a novel to encompass them.

“We found that we had tapped into an amazing platform for bringing designers together and facilitating the creative process,” said Natalie Jones, Mannington’s vice president of commercial brand development and creative product. “We saw designers look at their city in a new way, a detailed way, and craft a physical, textile representation of their locale. So we decided to continue and evolve the program, and launch designs inspired by all of this year’s cities.”

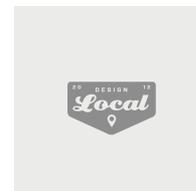
If you’re unfamiliar with how Design Local works, here are the Cliff’s Notes: teams of six designers are set loose on a 3-hour design scramble in their respective cities, each armed with a digital camera and \$200 to capture or purchase items that inspire them. Over the course of 24 hours, each team shares their insights and finds common themes that form the basis for a new collection of carpet.

Last year’s participating cities included Seattle, Nashville, and Philadelphia, and each collection will be showcased at the 2014 edition of NeoCon in Chicago. Motifs that emerged from Philadelphia include weathering architecture; the mixture of manmade and natural materials; and the juxtaposition between historic buildings and the randomness of nature, which are visible in the intriguing interplay of geometric and organic patterns in the carpet tiles. The Philadelphia collection artfully translates the languages of nature and structure into a cohesive design statement that emphasizes seamless changes in pattern and texture.

Harmonies between differing elements were discovered in Nashville, as well: old and new, glitzy and rustic, natural and man-made. Emphasis was placed on subtle textures and design, such as stitching, embossing, and curvilinear shapes reminiscent of musical instruments—all transposed beautifully in the small-scale carpet patterns of the team’s collection.

Marching to the beat of different drummer, Team Seattle’s contribution reflects a more industrial feel in a larger scale that lends credence to its Jet City moniker, but still coordinates well with both collections from Philly and Nashville.

“We start to forget a place once we leave it,” Charles Dickens wrote in the novel that inspired the title above. Design Local expresses a narrative of three cities to ensure we won’t.





FROM AUSTIN TO CHICAGO

By Elianne Halbersberg

Mannington is bringing a new energy to NeoCon this year—for proof, just look to STYLIST, their latest flooring collaboration with renowned designer Mary Bledsoe.

Bledsoe, a principal with the Austin-based interior architecture firm lauckgroup, was also a participant in Mannington's 2013 Design Local competition in the same city—a high-energy event that meshed perfectly with Bledsoe's desire to find what's next.

"We have a long and successful history of working collaboratively with design companies, and we're always looking for partners that have a lot of energy," says Bob Hutchison, chief innovation strategist with Mannington Commercial. "When we worked with Mary on Design Local, it precipitated a conversation about a potential collaboration. lauckgroup is a vibrant company, Austin is one of the most youthful and energetic cities, and Mary is an engaging person. She's very outgoing, very youthful in her approach, but a consummate expert in aesthetics and an ideal partner for us."

Her new collection marries a series of striking patterns and colors, created to work in tandem, and is intended to allow interior designers to create their own stories.

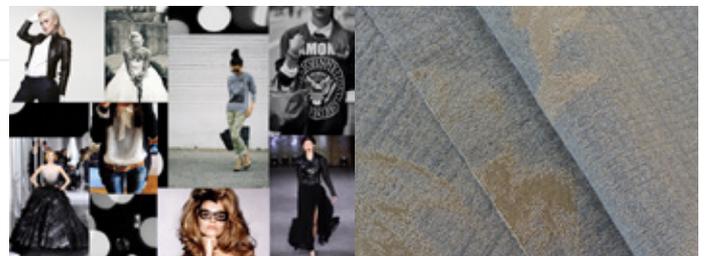
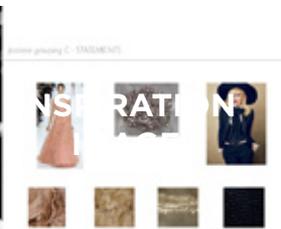
"I think every designer is a stylist at heart," says Bledsoe. "So there are patterns with a large degree of subtlety, and others with a high degree of pattern, and there are opportunities within it for designers to tune that color story to what their vision might be. We have some pretty established coloration throughout, and some opportunities to dial things in as people wish. It's a series of pieces that they can reinvent to suit what they want."

The combination of layered foundational and bold colors, coupled with Mannington's reputation for durability and performance, makes the new collection especially well-suited for the corporate environment.

"Mary is bringing a collection of products that work interchangeably in terms of aesthetics," says Hutchison. "Mannington is making products that are subtly but perceptibly richer than other products that we see in the marketplace, which tend to be very flat and very graphic. Within Mary's color palette is a family of products that work together through graphics, but also feature a lot of luster and texture."

Bledsoe's designs for the new carpet tile are focused on style, statement, and adaptability. STYLIST is built around what she calls "a hierarchy of pattern work to create the flooring landscape." That means using timeless, warm and cool color combinations to complement any space, thus allowing designers to build their paint palettes and wood tones around the flooring.

"As a designer, it was important for me not to get so over-excited by the patterns that we forget that they are a piece of the architectural envelope," she says. "I wanted to create something different that excites designers and gives them a new thought, a new opportunity, and a new tool – so they can, in turn, create something that nobody has thought of yet."





BIRDS & BEES

By Elianne Halbersberg

What began as a side project of a few employees has grown into something of a regional treasure: the purple martins of Mannington.

The project was initiated by plant hobbyists and bird advocates at the company's site in southern New Jersey who wanted to use the 400 acres of leased farm and wetlands surrounding the plant to help the purple martin—a beautiful species of bird that arrives in mid-April to lay its eggs and feed on insects before leaving for South America in August.

Following a centuries-old tradition first begun by Native Americans, employees at the plant hung a few gourds in which the purple martins could nest and lay eggs. By the time Dave Kitts, vice president of sustainability, came onboard in 1989, Mannington was already hosting a wide variety of migratory birds on its property.

However, it wasn't until the start of this decade, when Kitts met a retired official from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, that the scope of the bird's troubles—and Mannington's ability to help—became clear. "At the time, purple martins were not doing well," Kitts recalls. "The birds are totally dependent on housing provided by people, and this gentleman was convinced that if we made some changes with our housing, we could help the birds and increase their population."

Mannington took up the challenge, adding more gourds to bring in larger flocks of birds. The increased "housing" (96 gourds by 2008) resulted in hundreds of eggs and newborn martins; last year, Mannington counted 358 youngsters.

"This is something we stumbled into that has been very cool," says Kitts. "A fair amount of people who work here love it. We bring in local kids and science students to see the birds." Mannington is now also part of the New Jersey Audubon Council and a member of the Purple Martin Conservation Association.

In 2008, the company added a honeybee colony on a different section of its property, thanks to an employee who is an avid beekeeper. "Honeybees are fascinating, and if you read about them, you can get awfully troubled about what's going to happen to food long-term if these pollinating insects don't make it," says Kitts. A colony also thrives at Mannington's Eustis, Fla. wall-base plant.

"Educating employees and our local community about the birds and the bees, and taking part in environmental outreach efforts, has become a rewarding venture for the company, says Kitts. "I'm so delighted that we've been able to have the freedom to do this."



Mannington Commercial brings the widest range of flooring solutions from a single point of contact, so you never have to compromise between styling, performance, and sustainability.
manningtonconnects.com

Move Over, Blue.

What's on trend for this year? In addition to the complex textures, copper metals, and sheens we see everywhere from Maison et Objet to ICFE – we're also seeing a shift in the primary colors. Beet red is both hot and cool, and something that we haven't seen in a while. Greens are still ascendant, but not quite as acidic – softer than in recent years. Blues are either saturated all of the way over to near-violet, or else drifting into greens.

And in the middle of everything? A new Yellow. Not quite as saturated as in years past, but softened almost as if it were mixed with white, into a light, airy gold.

photos by Ann Hurley

