

NeoCon Eastward Bound

Contract furnishings manufacturers return to the Baltimore Convention Center for the 11th installment of NeoCon East.

ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT was shut down at the time, more than 7,000 visitors descended upon Baltimore for NeoCon East in October to see what was trending in contract interiors. The GSA-focused sister show to Chicago's much larger summer fair showcased many new and expanded product lines—ranging from flexible furniture collections and flooring to lighting solutions—for the hospitality, health-care, retail, and commercial markets.

With health care being big business, textile company C.F. Stinson debuted several new products, such as a Michael Graves collection and antimicrobial fabrics with new formulations that are more bacteria-resistant. The Graves collection, Vistas—which marks the designer's third collaboration with C.F. Stinson—consists of six upholstery and privacy-curtain fabrics with patterns based on abstracted landscapes like misty mountains and fields of flowers. C.F. Stinson was also the sponsor of NeoCon East's keynote, which was delivered by Graves and focused on designing for health-care spaces.

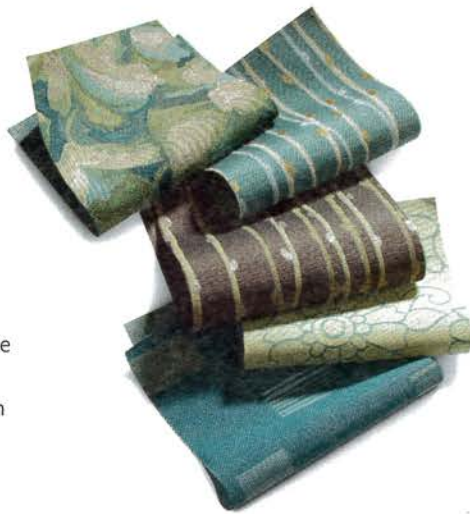
Another textile introduction takes acoustical fabrics to new heights. Wolf-Gordon's new drapery textiles are sheer and light-admitting, unlike the heavy, opaque fabrics typically associated with acoustical performance. This innovation was achieved by Wolf-Gordon partner Vescom, which used a patented yarn technology and a combination of Trevira CS and FR polyester. The resulting fabric has an acoustical rating five times that of conventional sheers, and is durable and fire-safe. Three subtle patterns—Carmen, Formoza, and Marmara—are offered.

In the flooring division, Capri Cork rolled out a new cork floating-floor line. Called Eco-Clicks, the floor is a glueless tongue-and-groove system that is easy to install and suitable for residential or light commercial environments. All styles from the company's popular Mediterra Studio collection of intricate, handcrafted designs are available in the Eco-Clicks format in 12-by-36-inch planks.

Meanwhile, Bentley presented its Western Edge collection of carpet tiles—in an edgy exhibitor booth, to boot. Four patterns draw on the theme of exploration of Southwestern

landscapes, such as the sun-washed plants of the Mojave Desert. Imagery and atmosphere are rendered in Antron Lumena solution-dyed nylon and in 18-by-36-inch or 24-inch-square tiles backed with Bentley's NexStep cushion backing or Afrima Hardback Tile. Its booth, which prominently displayed this line amid faux steer skulls, charred wood, and Edison bulbs, won the show's Booth Design Award in the large booth category.

Wisconsin-based KI made some tweaks to its popular glass wall system, Lightline. Among the enhancements are new rigid connections that render the product code-compliant for use in entryways and seismic areas, a new slow-close mechanism that allows doors to close automatically, and pivot- and sliding-door options that help free up more usable space. —Sharon McHugh



SHOW HIGHLIGHTS
(clockwise from far left) Vistas, a health-care upholstery and privacy-curtain fabric line by Michael Graves, was debuted by C.F. Stinson; Graves was also the keynote speaker for this year's show. Wolf-Gordon showcased its sheer acoustical drapery by Vescom. Bentley presented its Western Edge collection and took the award for best large booth design. KI announced enhancements to its Lightline glass wall system. Capri Cork's Mediterra Studio collection of cork tiles is available in its new Eco-Clicks floating-floor format.

