

# Architectural Digest Home Design Show Grows in Popularity

By KATY MANTYK  
Epoch Times Staff

NEW YORK—The final day of the four-day Architectural Digest Home Design Show, which ran March 17–20, was teeming with people meandering their way through booths that offered a wide array of hand-made art, home furnishing, and interior-design products.

New vendors were cautiously optimistic while veteran vendors were encouraged to see the swelling number of visitors to the show at Pier 94 compared to previous years. They also noted a shift in mood, from penny-pinching to ready-to-buy.

This was the 10th annual show, featuring hundreds of manufacturers, galleries, artists, and designers with offerings for the luxury-design market. The MADE section offered handmade, one-of-a-kind or limited-edition luxury art and furnishing pieces. Attendees could also take in seminars with design-world luminaries and cooking sessions with noted chefs.

This year for the first time, organizers held a “Dream Room” design challenge, pairing consumers with renowned interior decorators, and a digital scavenger hunt with an iPhone prize for the winner.

Vendors’ optimism about foot traffic this year was not unwarranted—the show saw over 41,000 people walk through the doors, a healthy 33 percent increase over 2010. They included home-design enthusiasts,

affluent homeowners, trade professionals, showroom owners, retailers, and members of the media.

“The show was our most successful to date with record participation and attendance. Exhibitors and attendees all commented, without fail, that the show has never been better,” Troy Hanson, director of sales for the show, and Megan Reilly, marketing director for the show, said in an e-mail.

Brenda Houston, a luxury-art, lighting, and jewelry dealer and designer said this is the only show she does and believes the show’s success is mostly due to the Architectural Digest’s philosophies and open-business practices.

“They really go out of their way to get fresh, new, talented artists in. This really keeps the industry moving and alive,” Houston said at the end of four days on her feet at her booth. “My business is only two years old, and they’ve been very generous with their market information.”

The show has been one of the best guides so far for the direction of her business. “It’s a great show to hear, not only from designers and design firms about what they are working on, but also from the public and what they are looking for,” Houston explained in an e-mail after the show. “I walked away from this show with a focus on furniture and couture lighting pieces,” she said.

Houston had about 10 couture lamps featuring large, one-of-a-kind geode rock bases in rich colors, each



SILK TRADING: Wolf Home by Silk Trading exhibited its selected merchandise at the Architectural Digest Home Design Show in March. The unabashed and skillful use of color was a welcome treat for the eyes. Founder Warren Kay personally designs all of the textiles and has them produced in India. KATY MANTYK/THE EPOCH TIMES

going for thousands of dollars at her booth. She didn’t think they would sell many, but expressed in astonishment she could’ve sold many more if she’d had them on hand.

Houston wasn’t the only one experiencing brisk sales. “The consumers coming through are really buying,” said interior decorator and visionary Harry Daniel, who has been doing the show for four years.

After a couple of years of economic recession, luxury industries like home decorating, design, and art, have really gone through a low point and period of self-reflection. With the sluggish market, many have had to re-evaluate their products.

This year’s show has lifted spirits. The unveiling of new pieces and artists has breathed inspiration into the design community, while people are bringing money back to the market, encouraging designers.

“Based on the attendance figures and exhibitor feedback, it’s clear that our audience is spending again and moving forward with design projects that may have been stalled or put [on]

hold given economic challenges,” said Hanson and Reilly, the show’s sales and marketing directors.

And it’s a good thing too, with prices for a booth ranging between \$2,550 and \$9,000. Add onto that accommodation, travel, and shipping expenses, and it’s a big investment. For first-time exhibitors, whether the contacts they made will blossom into solid business is yet to be seen.

But for returning vendors like Ligne Roset, the long-established French home-furnishing design company, doing the show each year is an essential part of their business growth. “It has been the single event that we can trace back the largest quantity of sales to, and that has the longest ‘legs’—the Show travels for months,” Laurie Messman of Ligne Roset is quoted as saying on the show’s website.

“I opened a swing shop inside Barneys New York this year after the Chelsea Passage Buyers found me at last year’s show,” Houston said. “Architectural Digest understands they need to encourage new businesses and support new designers in order to grow the design field and keep it fresh.”

Although the shows have been an escalating success in New York, they may still be a little way off in making a name as reputable for themselves as the ultra chic Maison et Objets home shows in Paris, according to one vendor’s publicist who wasn’t that impressed with the layout.

There were also two other shows associated with the Architectural Digest Home Design Show this year. Situated on the other end of the huge warehouse that is Pier 94 was a spectacle of dining environments at DIFFA’s Dining by Design Show, showcasing 45 dining table installations.

Next door at Pier 92 was The Artist Project New York, a new event that presented a “rare opportunity for collectors, dealers, and the public to purchase contemporary fine art created by a selection of unrepresented international artists in New York City,” according to the DIFFA website.



DESIGNER LAMPS: Brenda Houston presented a couture lighting collection made from rare geodes and minerals at the Architectural Digest Home Design Show in March. These blue lamps are made from Chinese fluorite. Houston obtained 10 large slices from the geode before the Chinese mine flooded and was permanently shut down. The pair of lamps sold for \$6,500. COURTESY OF BRENDA HOUSTON



TRANSITIONING: The beauty of nature quiets the soul. Julianne Bresciani, a New Yorker with a huge garden in Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts, presented a new series of large-scale, museum-quality flower photographs at the show. COURTESY OF JULIANNE D. BRESCIANI



PRODUCTIVE PAIR: The dbO Home boasts Dana’s ceramics and lamps and Daniel’s handmade wooden furniture, for which he chooses slabs of sustainably forested woods. The Connecticut-based pair, formerly from New York City, featured this desk at the Architectural Digest Home Design Show in March. KATY MANTYK/THE EPOCH TIMES

**Planning A Bus Trip?**  
Convenient Departures from Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx or Queens

<p><b>Penn Dutch Amish Tour</b> Washington, DC Cherry Blossom Charleston &amp; Savannah Boston, Cape Cod</p>	<p><b>Victorian Cape May</b> Niagara Falls &amp; Toronto Lobster Feast &amp; Casino Vermont, Maine or New Hampshire</p>
--	---

Over 250 Escorted Bus Tours to Choose From. Call For Free Brochure

**L & M TOURS**  
**718-238-2284**

7712 13th Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11228 [www.lmtours.net](http://www.lmtours.net)

**Seven's**  
MEDITERRANEAN  
TURKISH GRILL

**Delight Your Taste Buds**

- Authentic Mediterranean Turkish cuisine
- Delicious Specialty Kebabs & Pides
- Zucchini Pancakes
- Decadent Homemade Specialties and Deserts
- Catering Available

Come join us for an incredible meal.

15% OFF

With this Ad

158 West 72nd St. NY, NY 10023  
Tel: (212) 724-4700 • (212) 724-4703  
Fax: (212) 724-4701  
[www.seventurkishgrillnyc.com](http://www.seventurkishgrillnyc.com)