



From top: swimsuit from Manuel Canovas; 'Penny' chairs from George Smith; Aura wallpaper; a wooden floor from Dinesen;

network



Sophia Salaman chooses the best merchandise and events worldwide

■ George Smith has long been associated with upholstering its furniture in antique Turkish kilims. However, one of the creative forces behind the company, its director of showrooms, Michelle Thomas, was inspired to start using Welsh blankets, or carthens, on the furniture after a trip home to her family in Wales. Clients who are keen to cover their furniture in the same way will be able to pick from the company's new collection. George Smith, 587-589 King's Rd, London SW6 (020 7384 1004; georgesmith.co.uk).

■ Manuel Canovas's spring/summer 2009 cruise-wear embodies the spirit and warmth of nature and the sun. Classic swimwear, cover-ups and beach accessories are available in seven exclusive new print designs in a variety of vibrant colours for which Manuel Canovas is renowned. Cotton satin and pure silk chiffon give a stylish and sophisticated look that's perfect for both beach and bar. Dresses, trousers, sarongs and shirts in numerous styles and colours are also available, plus an infinite choice of handbags, beach bags, hats and make-up bags. Ring 020 7669 0182, or visit manuelcanovas.fr.

■ Spanish designer/artist Jaime Hayón has collaborated with crystal house Baccarat to create 'The Crystal Candy Set'. The collection comprises nine stunning decorative pieces, all limited-edition, and will be on sale exclusively at Harrods. Hayón's joie de vivre and sense of humour are reflected in the coloured crystal and engraved gold of the collection. Harrods, 87-135 Brompton Rd, London SW1 (020 7823 7876; baccarat.com).

■ Will Fisher, the founder and creator of Jamb, began Hawker – his antique collection – 15 years ago. The company specialises in formal furniture, objects, curiosities, sculpture and natural history – all of which have the look and feel of things found in a traditional English country home but which can be placed to great effect in any setting. Hawker Antiques has been supplying many of the leading international decorators, designers, dealers and collectors for a good number of years. Hawker Antiques, 3 Dove Walk, London SW1 (020 7730 2122; hawkerantiques.com).

■ Element 7 has launched an exclusive range of English handmade full-grain leather floors. Available in neutral tones of ivory, tan and light brown, as well as black, they are wholly versatile and blend luxuriously into any environment, contemporary or traditional. Made with the finest leather, the floors are elegant, long-lasting and durable and can be maintained using beeswax in the same way as a traditional wooden floor. Ring 020 7736 2366, or visit element7.co.uk.

■ Established in London 20 years ago Forbes & Lomax has cornered the attractive end of the lighting-control market and has now launched the 'Invisible Lightswitch' in the USA and Canada. Inspired by elegant switches of the 1930s but with all the advantages of modern technology, a transparent acrylic plate allows the wallpaper beneath to show through, with a stylish metal toggle switch in the centre. The company also offers unlacquered-brass, nickel-silver, brushed-stainless-steel and antique-bronze switches. Forbes & Lomax, 205a St John's Hill, London SW11 (020 7738 0202; forbesandlomax.com).

■ Considering the need to care for our fragile environment, as an important part of their 2009 collections Aura has decided to produce fabrics using natural fibres such as linen and hemp. Growing these plants has no impact on the environment as they require no irrigation or fertilisation. One of Aura's fabrics, 'Gea', has been produced using organic methods strictly controlled and certified by the Global Organic Textile Standard. Ring 00 39 039 480 359, or visit aurafabrics.com.

■ The Danish family business Dinesen has supplied flooring since 1898 for a number of churches, manor houses and castles in Denmark and abroad. Out of respect for the architectural period during which the buildings were constructed, Dinesen produced tapered floorboards for many of these projects to maintain the original interior. Today, although the company is aided by machinery, the same level of craftsmanship and attention goes into each floorboard, with every single knot in the wood checked. Ring 00 45 74 552140, or visit dinesen.com ■



Clear, amethyst and olive-green crystal candy jar from Baccarat; sepia photograph of a fox terrier, Hawker Antiques' logo; light switch from Forbes & Lomax

