



# THE NOVELTY OF NEOCON

**Yetta Starr** reports on the latest developments in the workplace unveiled at NeoCon 2001

If NeoCon brought you to Chicago in June, you would have encountered one of the many exotic, witty, glittering and sometimes melodic decorated fibreglass street furnishings adorning the parks and plazas throughout the city. A summer-long exhibition, Suite Home Chicago, was a public art exhibition featuring nearly 400 full-size decorated furniture ensembles.

With furniture as its theme, the public art exhibition attracted

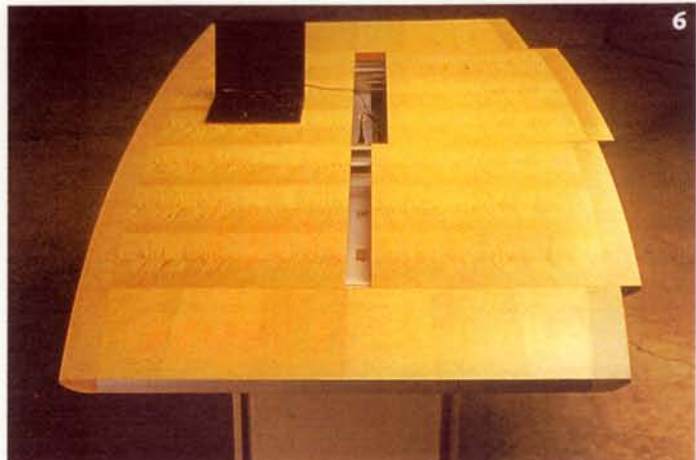
professionals from the contract furnishings industry gearing up for NeoCon. Office furniture giant Haworth commissioned several local design firms to decorate a fibreglass living room suite complete with sofa, television, chair & ottoman (4).

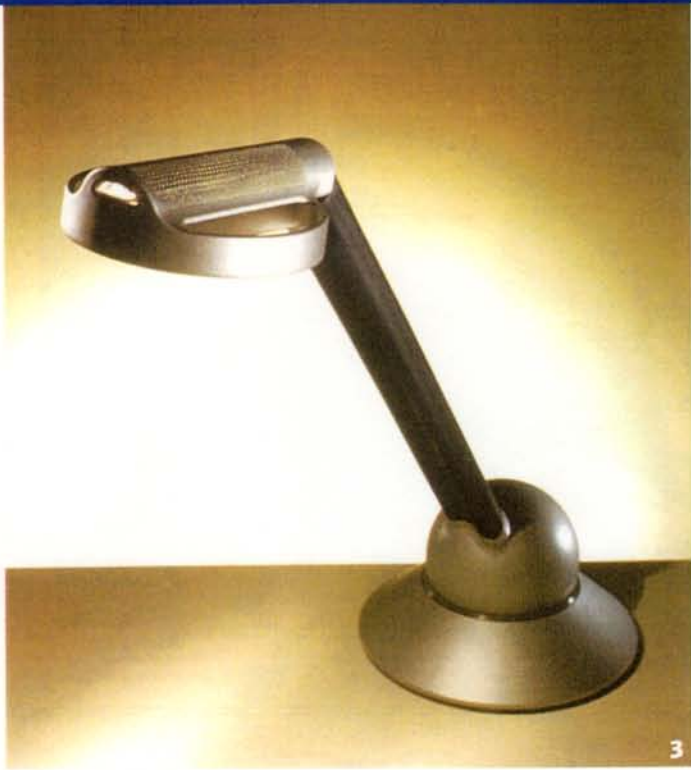
Meanwhile, down the river at Chicago's Merchandise Mart, home of NeoCon, collaborative creativity seemed to follow suit with relationships forged by manufacturers and a multitude of

problem solvers. Among the successful launches, Lees Carpets introduced a hybrid carpet and hard surface flooring product called Metafloor (1) through a partnership with several designers from international firms Gensler, TVS Interiors and SOM. For enhancements to the award-winning Resolve system designed by Ayse Birsel, Herman Miller introduced Design On Textile, allowing end-users to create digitally printed

designs for use in their Resolve environment (7). Tecknion unveiled xm, an office furniture collection aimed to 'contain rather than highlight' evolving workplace technology with a service trunk delivering power and data to the workstation (2). All three products snagged gold awards from NeoCon's Best of Competition.

Inspired by the notion of breaking bread together and informal conversation, Metro





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unveiled Bix, a work-booth with semi-private enclosures (5). Smart design was also evident in the new modernist-XO conference tables by DatesWeiser (6).

Another functionally elegant product came from Riviera, a manufacturer based in Mexico currently forming an alliance with a Spanish firm to serve the European markets. Riviera Wall, a relocatable wall system, features perforated framing to allow for electrical feeds

on the top and sides. Other highlights include a laminated speciality glass, Perforated Glass by Cesar Color, that looks like perforated metal (8) and Armstrong's innovative I-Ceiling.

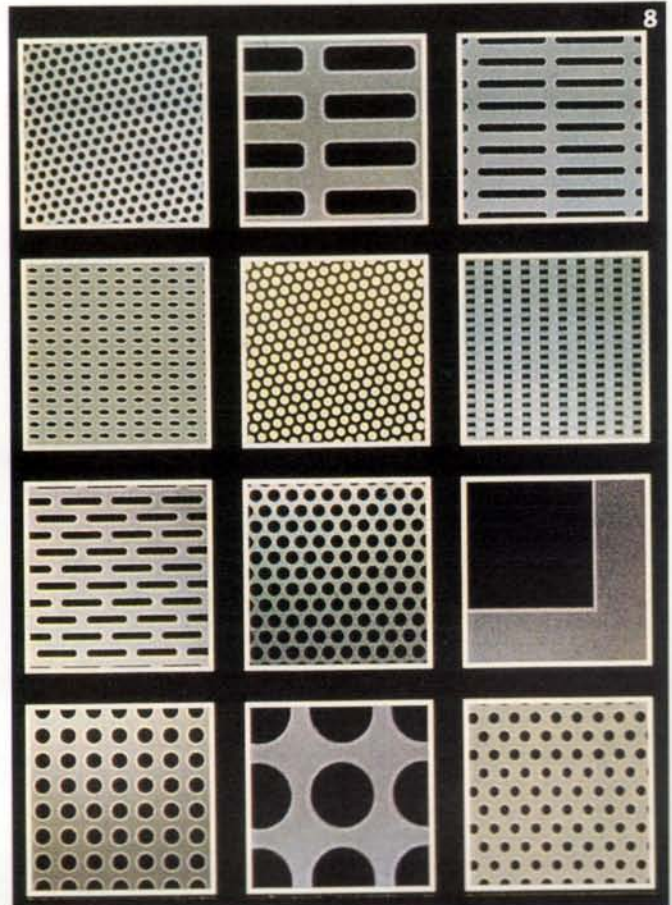
It was inviting to fidget with the new compact multiposition desk lamp, Mindsweeper, which is part of Haworth's Jump Stuff collection of workplace accessories (3). Not that there was any time for fidgeting.



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