

Interior designer James Huniford worked with New York-based upholsterers to develop his new furniture line. **BELOW:** At Huniford's studio, new designs mix with vintage finds.

Mix Master

JAMES HUNIFORD'S NEW FURNITURE LINE AND STUDIO IS A SHOWCASE FOR THE DESIGNER'S ARTFUL BLENDING OF PERIOD STYLES. BY SUZANNE CHARLÉ

James Huniford sits in his new studio at 210 11th Avenue, looking out over the Hudson River Greenway and Pier 66. The view is an urban still life of new and old, remarkably appropriate for this self-taught designer. Ford, as he is called, is known for stylishly blending antiques and modern pieces, custom-designed furniture with found objects, in an array of projects that

sofa, covered in silk velvet, harks back to Windsor wingback chairs, while a side table takes its shape from a 19th-century artist's stool. Form and texture are in the spotlight here, muted colors provide a minimalist backdrop.

"I'd always wanted to do a furniture line," Ford explains, adding that he



ranges from a financier's loft in Tribeca to the King Cole Bar at the St. Regis.

Now, Ford—whose client list includes the Newhouse family, Vera Wang, Anna Wintour, and Tina Turner—is bringing his distinct sensibility to an even broader market, with a line of furniture available online and in his loftlike studio. Here, dozens of his designs (sofas, chairs, tables, desks, lamps, and lighting that nod to styles ranging from Edwardian to '70s Scandinavian) are casually, yet carefully, mixed with vintage finds. An alabaster lamp sends sparks of light from an Asian-influenced mother-of-pearl table; a looping sculpture of rusted industrial chain links sits close to a chaise lounge, covered in light-blue pony hide. The designer's references to period styles are subtle, but clear: An enveloping

often received "calls from DIYers who had seen my designs in stories about my projects and wanted something similar." After two years working with upholsterers in the New York area ("It's really a craft") and much tweaking, he launched the collection. Response, he says, has been gratifying. "There's a void in the market for upholstery scaled for New York City apartments."

His clients—most in their 30s to 50s—are on the hunt for mid-market items (the low-slung Morgan sofa costs \$7,600; the Manhattan side chair costs \$4,200, plus fabric). "They're not looking for a \$14,000 Holly Hunt sofa, but they're beyond a starter piece," he says. Their style, like his own, is eclectic.

"People today have much more confidence in their taste and sense of style," Ford comments.



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"They will mix things—the interest in midcentury design reawakened interest in other periods." He says the Internet was key to the new consumer sophistication: "Information is right there, be it about Thonet or Louis XV or furniture of the '70s. People can see how the styles blend and mix."

What's next on the near horizon for this energetic designer? "A line of outdoor furniture. Sheet and bedding licensing—oh, and fabric." *210 11th Ave., Ste. 601, 212-717-9177; hunifordcollection.com* **G**

The collection's Natalie chair.



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