

CURRENTS

Q&A

Because There's No Place Like Home for the Holidays

This Sunday, the design and real estate series "OpenHouse" (shown on WNBC in New York) deals with a single mom, Laurie O'Hara, right, and her two teenage children, Brandon and Hailey Lopez, from Parsippany, N.J., whose dog was killed and whose house was largely ruined by a fire nearly a year ago. The Manhattan designer Christopher Hyland, below — who worked with the segment's host, George Oliphant,



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL APPLETON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



whatever creature they want. When they came, they brought the ashes of their pet in a small, beautiful dark wooden box. It was a very tender, tender moment.

Where did they put it?

The last I saw it was on the dining room table. I might add, I have the same table.

Tell me about the reveal.

George had the family go backward up the staircase — he's on one side and I'm on the other — then they turned around and absolutely flipped out. The first thing they did was say, "Oh, my God, this is incredible."

Does it ever seem to you that those words are said more often on reality shows than in houses of worship?

I don't understand.

Isn't it kind of cornball?

So what? The bottom line is helping people. It's a focal part of the American life, what George and I did on this rescue, an old-fashioned American barn raising. Let's face it, we don't live in little agricultural communities anymore; we live on our televisions, our Web sites, our computers, and that makes a new community.

JOYCE WADLER

to finish the family's new home in time for Christmas — called us just after showing it to them.

They lost photos and heirlooms in the fire — how can that stuff ever be replaced?

You can never replace it, but with a bit of good design you make an effort. In each of the two children's rooms I created a memory wall. Brandon Lopez, who is a freshman in college, is captain of the hockey

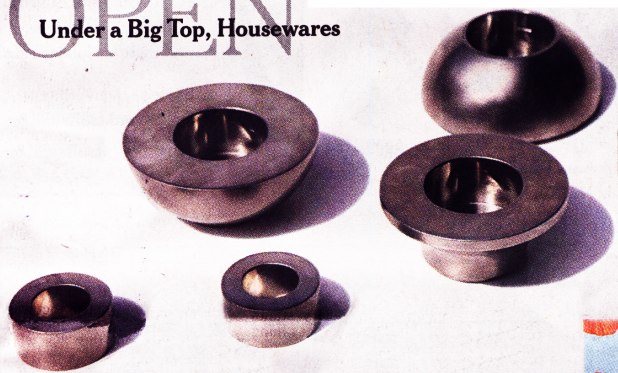
team. In Brandon's room there are floor-to-ceiling corkboard walls, and we have placed on the walls a Rangers clock and a Rangers pennant — these bits and pieces invite Brandon to pin up his own souvenirs.

Did you think about getting them a new dog?

We thought about it, but it was an extremely personal thing. Now that they have a home together, they can have the joy as a family to choose

OPEN

Under a Big Top, Housewares

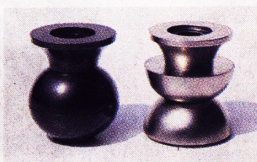


A new store has popped up in Los Angeles in the form of a tent: the Community Shop at the offices of Commune Design. The shop is stocked with housewares and gifts, some designed by Commune, others by artists and artisans chosen by the partners at Commune. There are candle holders by E. R. Butler (starting at \$750, in nickel, above, and in bronze, at left in inset), light fixtures by Robert Lewis and stained-glass lanterns by Steve Halterman. Prices range from

\$24 for a set of six leather coasters to \$1,600 for a black walnut stool by the sculptor Alma Allen.

"It's an experiment," said Roman Alonso, a partner at Commune. "Our only real rule is that everything has to be made by hand."

Open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2 to 6 p.m., at 650 North Robertson Boulevard, Suite 1, Los Angeles, (310) 855-9080, communedesign.com; a second shop will open at the ACE Hotel and Swim Club in Palm Springs in January. RIMA SUQI



DEALS

Work, Sleep and Collect for Less

Evergreen Antiques is taking 50 percent off the price of selected Scandinavian furniture through Dec. 31 (the 19th-century Swedish fall-front secretaire shown below, originally \$8,800, is \$4,400); 1249 Third Avenue (72nd Street), (212) 744-

5664, evergreenantiques.com. Home office furniture is as much as 80 percent off at the Home Decorators online outlet through Jan. 3 (the Tiered Horizon Ladder Desk, originally about \$170, is about \$45); (877) 537-8539 or homedecoratorsoutlet.com.

At Dwell Studio's sample sale on Dec. 18, bedding for babies, children and adults will be 75 to 85 percent off (queen-size duvet sets, originally \$280, will be about \$40); Dwell Studio, 155 Sixth Avenue (Spring Street), seventh floor, (877) 993-9355.

Bedding basics will be 20 percent off and towels 30 percent off at Garnet Hill's annual online winter sale, Dec. 23 to Jan. 12; (800) 870-3513 or garnethill.com.

MARIANNE ROHRLICH



Good deals may be reported to rohrlich@nytimes.com.



DÉCOR

Exotic Woods Out of the Urban Wild

Thomas Bina, the designer in Los Angeles who founded Environment Furniture, is now working with Four Hands, an importing and manufacturing company, on a line of furniture called Bina.

The collection mixes North American black walnut and white oak with reclaimed exotic hardwoods. "My passion is sourcing hard-to-find materials," said Mr. Bina, who traveled to Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay to find woods like louro preto, angelim, jatobá, roxinho, canafistula and imbuia — most of them salvaged from demolished "derelict buildings and telephone poles."

He designed some 85 pieces for the collection — including the Lane Sofa (\$1,900), above — to show off the character of the materials, he explained, imperfections and all.

Available in January; information: (866) 654-9433 or fourhands.com. TIM MCKEOUGH

ONLINE

Wallcoverings Without the Middleman

Not long ago, on a visit to the D&D Building, Cindy Weil discovered how hard it

can be to buy high-end wallpaper from showrooms that sell only to designers. So Ms. Weil, an e-commerce veteran (she was previously a director in the Internet group at Ameritrade), started The Wallpaper Collective, a Web site that sells wallcoverings directly to the consumer. "It's frustrating — and expensive — to buy wallpaper through the trade," she said. "I wanted to take the hassle out of it." The site carries the work of

15 designers, over 100 patterns in all, some of them contemporary versions of traditional toile and trellis designs. (Rose Orange, top left, and Poppy Red, below it, by Camilla Meijer, are \$420 for a 49-square-foot roll.) Ms. Weil offers what she calls "artisanal wallpaper," which originated as hand-painted or blocked patterns by tiny studios and is produced in small print runs. And she makes it a practice to send customers samples, so they can see patterns firsthand. Information: (212) 966-3958 or wallpapercollective.com.

MICHAEL CANNELL