



**FEATURED PRODUCT**  
Wrapmaster Home  
**SEE PAGE 20**



**FEATURED PRODUCT**  
Igloo  
**SEE PAGE 20**



**FEATURED PRODUCT**  
Franmara  
**SEE PAGE 21**

# Kitchenware News

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## & Housewares Review

### Fixtures in Phases: Bridging Rustic, Contemporary Styles

**BY A.J. FLICK**  
Take an ancient alloy, time-honored casting process, a hardware company named after a ruggedly beautiful mountain range and design studio named after luxuriously texturous leather, Bronze. Hand sculpting forms to make sand and wax casts. Rocky Mountain Hardware. Suede Studio.

*Cont. on page 18*



Advertiser Index .....22



**Earthy Boldness**  
Kitchen Design Trends for 2024  
**SEE PAGE 5**



**Design Goes Dark**  
Homes Painted in Moody Hues  
**SEE PAGE 7**



**Danish Design**  
Rosendahl Unveils Collections  
**SEE PAGE 12**





## from the editor

Happy New Year, everyone!

The winter shows are happening this month, bringing lots of trending ideas and inspiration throughout homes.

Revenue in the U.S. kitchenware market rose to \$6 billion in 2023 and is expected to grow by a compound annual growth rate of 2.68 percent through 2028, according to Statista. The housewares industry, which was valued at \$321.40 billion in 2022, is expected to reach \$442.51 by 2030 with a compound annual growth rate of 4.1 percent, according to The Insight Partners.

We're looking forward to seeing all the great new products at shows this year.

Our cover story this month looks at an exciting new collection of kitchen and bath fixtures. I've said it before and I'll say it now, one of the reasons I love my job is I get to talk to people who manufacture and design things I usually don't think about.

Jennifer Hoey, who designed Rocky Mountain Hardware's Phases collection, has been designing for 20 years. Recently, she rebranded

her eponymously named interior design studio as Suede Studio. Just as the industry has evolved over two decades, Hoey decided her brand needed to, as well.

"It's not about me all the time," she said. "And it leaves an exit strategy for me later. Like everyone, I hope to retire eventually."

The new name came after much thought.

"It came to me in a way that it's a material made in reference to the west," said Hoey, who is based in Idaho. "It's strong and durable, but it's also soft and you love to touch it. It connects very much with what we do with each project, every time."

Changes also is a recurring theme and was the inspiration for the Phases collection.

Until next time, take care and stay safe! **KN**

— AJ Flick  
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## FIXTURES IN PHASES

*Continued from page 1*

Then consider today's trends and consumer demands.

The result is Phases, a rustic yet contemporary collection of kitchen and bathroom accessories from Rocky Mountain Hardware, the leading manufacturer of handcrafted solid-bronze architectural hardware, and designed by the award-winning design firm, Suede Studio.

Rocky Mountain Hardware describes Phases as being "a versatile collection that is both functional and beautiful. The scale and lines of each piece relate nicely to each other, which enables mixing and matching knobs, pulls and grips."

Hoey's designs are "designed to have a broad appeal, either individually or as a whole."

The collection consists of pulls and knobs, grips with exposed hardware, towel holders, hooks and toilet paper holders with a shelf.

Each piece in the collection, which was launched late last year, can be customized by Rocky Mountain Hardware's expert artisans as far as base design, size variations, finish options and more.

"More than anything, the general design trend is more of a traditional rustic appearance with a more contemporary feel over the last decade," said Christian Nickum, owner and president of Rocky Mountain Hardware.

"So Rocky Mountain Hardware has gone from having more rustic products to those with clean, contemporary lines. Our Old World techniques always show the appearance of texture, a uniqueness so they develop their own personality."

"I wanted to build upon the concepts that

inspired our new name, Suede Studio," said Hoey, principal interior designer. "In developing the collection, I was drawn to the idea of 'Phases'—both as it corresponds with this new phase for our firm set forth by our re-brand, and also how it ties to phases of life."

"There are elements of design that can last longer than others, but the reality is that we are all inspired by the phases of life that we are in now. I also wanted to show Rocky Mountain's unique handmade nature with these designs."

With both companies based in Idaho, Rocky Mountain Hardware and Suede Studio (formerly known as Jennifer Hoey Interior Design) had collaborated before on other projects. Rocky Mountain Hardware, based in Sun Valley, is a family-run company that specializes in bronze architectural hardware. Ketchum-based Suede Studio specializes in start-to-finish new construction and high-end residential designs.

"I understand her design aesthetic," Nickum said, who saw Hoey's ideas as being able to bridge architectural gaps through fixtures.

Each collection can take between six months to beyond a year to get off the ground, from design to molds to the casting.

"We are among the few manufacturers with our own foundry," Nickum said. "More and more foundries in the United States are

shutting down. A lot of the work shifted overseas.

"But we're still vertically integrated in Idaho. Most importantly, we're a large family, so to speak. Each person takes pride in what they produce. We have very skilled artisans on each team. Each step of the way, it's a pleasure to work with them."

Hoey describes Suede Studio as a "feminine team."

"We are nine women, so there is a feminine aspect to it all," she said. "This collection is a definite connection to how we've evolved as a brand."

Hoey worked closely with Rocky Mountain Hardware engineers to understand the capabilities of the bronze material and balanced stability with the

graceful vibe she was looking for in the design. In exploring the possibilities of curves and angles, Hoey was able to express a more delicate scale with regard to the thickness of the bronze and showcase the versatility in lengths.

"The chunkier nature of bronze, the very nature of the material is one challenge," Hoey said. "We felt what was missing was a little more delicate, a more feminine vibe. Take the chunky vibe but do that in a more refined way."

Hoey said the idea of creating timeless designs inspired the Phases collection for her.

"What is timeless? Is it real? Is it tangible or attainable even?" she said. "Timeless to me is that certain things stand the test of time."

"Ultimately, nothing is really timeless. You're not going to like anything forever. You go through phases of life. And with that, I think it's an interesting concept."

"It's less about timeless but more of what you respond to in the phases of your life. I wanted it to be a little fun. Naming the hardware pieces is fun, tying all that together into an inspiring moment," she said.

The five-hour drive between Ketchum and her office in Bozeman, Mont., gave Hoey time to think.

"It's a creative time for me," she said with a laugh. "I use my phone to take a lot of voice notes."

Hoey said Phases has a "younger, fresher feeling" compared to the Rocky Mountain Hardware portfolio.

"I had full freedom with that," she said. "I very much enjoyed working with them and I hope I get to work with them more in the future."

With early feedback on the Phases collection already gathering compliments, it seems most likely she will.

"We're constantly coming out with new products," Nickum said. "We'll have a full suite once every two or three years."

"We're always looking forward to the next thing."

The Phases collection is available in all of Rocky Mountain Hardware's 400-plus showrooms, dealers and online. **KN**

