



POINT OF CONTACT

Clean planes and occasional curves mark this modern maker's work.

Furniture maker Daniel Rickey has a purely magical way with wood. Soft, elegant and often surprising lines define the chairs, desks and credenzas of his catalog that are reminiscent of the simple and graceful Danish Modern style that first captured his imagination. "Mid-century furniture was just so beautifully crafted," says Rickey, whose own creations are the product of a seven-year odyssey that began somewhat inauspiciously when he was looking for a job the old-fashioned way—in the newspaper classifieds. Fresh from an epiphany that business school was not for him, Rickey needed work and found an ad for a cabinet maker's helper. He was hooked, and after spending the next several years knocking around Richmond working as an assistant in cabinetry and furniture shops, he took a woodworking class at Virginia Commonwealth University. Armed with basic skills of the craft, he decided to enroll in Rocking-

ham Community College's Fine and Creative Furniture Program, an intensive, two-year program in North Carolina. He emerged grateful for an opportunity to have studied how the beautiful furniture he had admired was made. "I was inspired by [Danish furniture designer] Hans Wegner's chairs and most of the designs in the '50s and '60s," says Rickey. "I wanted to create furniture with interesting details that are nice but don't overwhelm. I never want to throw too many design elements in at once." His furnishings, made of locally sourced walnut, white oak, maple and cherry, adopt the clean planes and occasional curves of the mid-century aesthetic with a surprise. Sometimes it's a small curved intrusion into the desk drawer, or free-standing cabinets that skillfully replace clunky, traditional pulls. "It's a restrained approach to design with a focus on the way a person meets the furniture," he explains, "the point of contact."

DANIEL RICKEY FURNITURE

RICHMOND

CATEGORY WINNER

PRICES RANGE FROM \$280 FOR A SMALL TABLE TO \$5,000 FOR A CREDENZA. CARGOCOLLECTIVE.COM/DANIELRICKEY



GUM TREE FARM

HAND KNIT ORIGAMI BABY SWEATER, HAT AND MOCCASINS, MIDDLEBURG

A gift of three fluffy white lambs for her Middleburg farm became more than a bucolic decoration for Frances Dean "Franny" Kansteiner in 1995. "They were so beautiful, and their wool so luxurious, that I learned to spin and knit," says the Northern Virginia entrepreneur. And while family were the first lucky recipients of Kansteiner's knitted creations, others soon began asking if she had anything for sale. Today her flock includes more than 100 organically raised Merino sheep, and her knitting business that at first only occupied space in the barn and on her dining room table has moved to a studio and show room in Middleburg. Her collections include a line

of adorable and ultra-soft baby clothes—blanket, mittens, hat, moccasins and a sweater. She has created a line of clothes for adults as well, featuring cardigans, dress capes, coats, tunics, vests and even pants. "I knit something every day," says Kansteiner. "And we have a family of knitters and weavers across the country." She says that visits to see the designs of other "wool workers" in Vermont, New York and London inspire her wool creations, which she expands by just a few items every year. "We are so proud of the sheep," Kansteiner says. "It seems important to do something lovely with the ultrafine wool the flock faithfully grows season after season."

BABY ITEMS \$65-150. GUMTREEFARMDESIGNS.COM

EVOLUTION GLASS

ART GLASS SURFACES, CHARLOTTESVILLE

Consider Bill Hess's revolutionary glass countertops like fine jewelry for a room. Rich hues of blue, green, gold and orange glow with an almost otherworldly inner light and transform a functional space into a unique artistic experience. Evolution Glass is the perfect melding of Hess's training as an engineer and his passion for sculptural art in the medium of metal and glass. "While living in Seattle 20 years ago, I became curious about working with glass to bring more color and light to my sculpture," recalls Hess, who studied glass casting at the renowned Pratt Fine Arts Center, a hub for high-quality glass making. Since

moving to Virginia, Hess, inspired by the fact that only around 30 percent of glass is actually recycled, has perfected an innovative process to produce a high-end, art-quality glass surface using only recycled bottles. Two years ago in Charlottesville he began producing jewel-toned countertops comparable to stone in strength and durability. The countertops don't scratch when you cut on them, and they don't stain as the surfaces are permanently sealed through a specialized production process. "Usually clients fall in love with the beauty and story of these countertops," says Hess. "They want to leave a smaller footprint on our earth."

PRICING STARTS AT \$125 PER SQUARE FOOT FOR COUNTERTOPS. DECORATIVE ART OBJECTS \$50-500. EVOLUTIONGLASSGLOBAL.COM

