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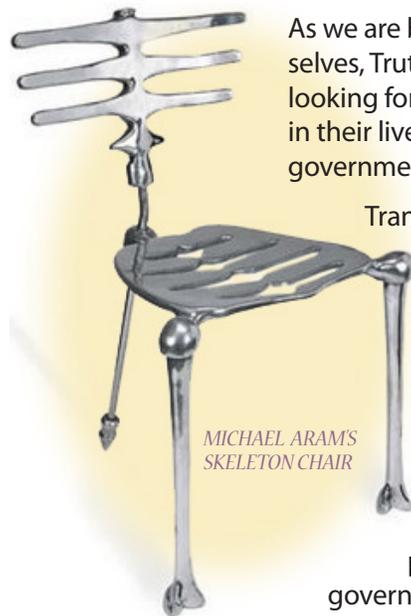
The Trend Forecaster



JILL SANDS, CMG

Old is New ... again, again, and again!

In the beginning...the economy led us to tag-sales, consignment shops, closets, attics and basements out of necessity. Pardon the cliché, but isn't necessity the mother of invention? So, what did we discover in these "new shopping venues?" They are a new form of entertainment! Historically Men have been the hunters. They go out with a focus, a purpose and come home with that thing. Nothing more, nothing less. Women, however, have always been the gatherers. Going out with the hope of finding something; berries, seeds, whatever. It's that gathering instinct in our DNA which has re-surfaced saying, "Hey, this is fun!" What great "finds" will we come home with today? As early women compiled their finds into a soup or stew, today's women are compiling their finds into fashion ensembles and home décor. This is allowing our creativity to be exposed. No one is forcing a style or trend upon us. It is we who are creating our own personal **YOU-nique** style. It can be fun, funky, whatever. The design-police are gone!



MICHAEL ARAM'S
SKELETON CHAIR

As we are being truer to ourselves and truer about ourselves, Truth is becoming the New Black. Consumers are looking for Authenticity and Truth. They want Stability in their lives. They want to be able to Trust. To Trust the government, banks, the media, and brands.

Transparency will be a key word...clear, clean, simple, intelligent. A Transparency of Self... since most everyone is hurting, consumers have become more honest about their own vulnerabilities. By necessity they have simplified their lives. Their homes have become more transparent showing the bones of a room. And they like it that way versus covering it up by over-decorating. Colors are becoming more transparent. We've given social-media permission to expose us to the world. Even the government has agreed to be more transparent.

We're moving from Conspicuous consumption to Conscious consumption. Cautious Consumers are seeking **Foreverism** for they can no longer afford to change their fashion or home décor style on impulse. They will be looking for Value. How do you define Value? Quality + Price = Value. To quote Warren Buffett, "Price is what you pay, Value is what you get." We are experiencing a values shift, not a price shift. We are seeing manufacturers emphasize Quality, Durability and Value. These will be the "IT" words of 2010 and beyond.