

Brass is Best

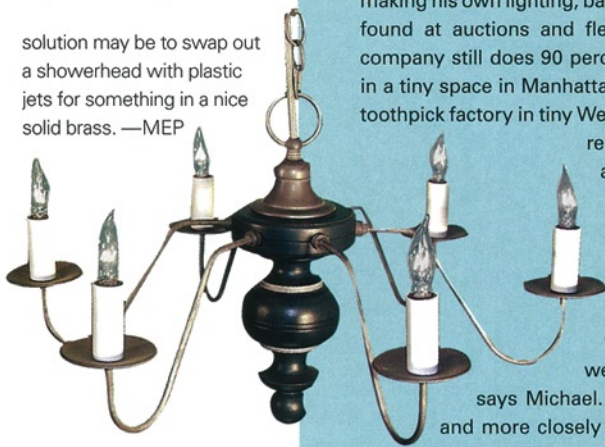
Here's another reason to love sunflower shower heads: scientists have discovered that plastic shower heads appear to harbor pathogenic bacteria at a greater rate than all-metal ones. The study, conducted by researchers at the University of Colorado at Boulder, found that a rise in pulmonary infections in the United States may be linked to pathogens in the water people inadvertently drink while showering. (The bacteria clump together in slimy biofilms that cling to the inside of the showerhead, reports Jenny Leonard on the science web site Fururity.org)

What to do? Besides taking baths more frequently than showers, check your showerhead for evidence of bacteria. If you find it, don't try bleach to clean it: these bugs are chlorine-resistant and will grow back. The best



All-metal showerheads, like this shower rose from Altmans, are hygienic as well as period-friendly.

solution may be to swap out a showerhead with plastic jets for something in a nice solid brass. —MEP



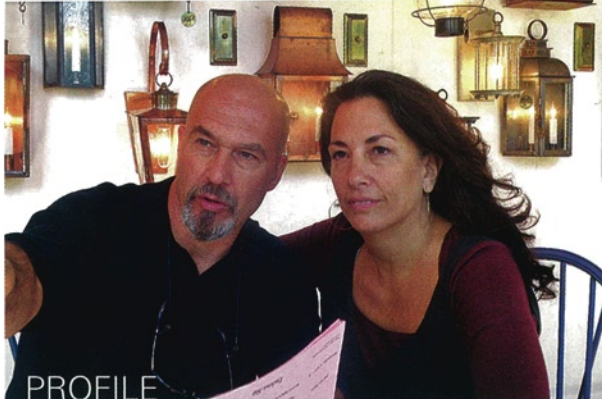
of new materials. Speakers include Pauline C. Metcalf, Donald Albrecht, Jennifer Carlquist, James B. Garrison, Ralph Harvard, and Allan Greenberg, along with Winterthur experts Tom Savage, Jeff Groff, and Maggie Lidz. Registration fee (\$225 to \$275) includes nine lectures, lunch, and dinner. (800) 448-3883, winterthur.org —MEP

Chic at Winterthur

"Chic It Up!"—the annual design conference at Winterthur—focuses on design of the 1940s this year. Experts at the Nov. 13 event will address topics ranging from the influence of World War II on American decorative arts and design, the changing styles of houses and gardens after the war, and the importance

“ There are some things that are hideous that are absolutely valuable. You have to remember that 100 years ago, people also had poor taste. ”

—ADAM WATSON, *PW VINTAGE LIGHTING*, INTERVIEWED ON SEPT. 17, 2009



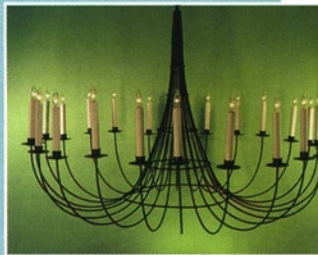
PROFILE

AUTHENTIC DESIGNS is nearly 50 years old, but it wasn't always based in bucolic Vermont. Now managed by Michael Krauss and his wife, Maria Peregrine, Authentic Designs was born when Michael's father, Danny, couldn't find authentic reproductions for the 1816 farmhouse he was restoring in Great Neck, New York. So Danny began making his own lighting, basing the designs on antiques found at auctions and flea markets—something the company still does 90 percent of the time. After years in a tiny space in Manhattan, the company moved to a toothpick factory in tiny West Rupert, Vermont, where it

remains today. • All fixtures are made as authentically as possible from traditional materials like copper, brass, terne (a combination of lead and tin), and wood turned on lathes. "We try to do as much of the work as we can on the old machinery,"

says Michael. "It gives you a better look and more closely approximates the old lighting." • Because

everything is built one at a time, any design can be built to scale. The shop is a small one, and employees share in most tasks, from crafting rod arms to repairing machinery, even chopping firewood and gardening. "We make an effort of cross-train people and make sure they aren't feeling like machines," Michael says. "People genuinely enjoy what they're doing here." Authentic Designs, (800) 844-9416, authenticdesigns.com —MEP



TOP: Michael Krauss and Maria Peregrine in the Vermont showroom. **ABOVE, FROM CENTER:** A custom-painted wire-arm chandelier with a lathe-turned center. A wire-arm chandelier with 24 lights; any fixture can be adapted for candlelight. You can't miss the welcome light at Authentic Designs.