

**SHOPPING WITH**  
JOELLE HOVERSON

# Comfy's Comeback

Outfitting rooms for the chilly months ahead.



DAVID GOLDMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES, ABOVE AND OWL

**NEEDLE-READY** Joelle Hoverson, an avid knitter, at Purl, her shop in SoHo.

**W**ITH cool fall days upon us, many knitters are picking up their needles once again. Joelle Hoverson, an owner of the SoHo knitting supply store Purl, said that her shop's busiest period is Labor Day through December. "Kids are going back to school, or people are thinking about Thanksgiving," she said, "and everyone's just like, 'I've got to knit!'"

Ms. Hoverson, a longtime knitter and a former senior style editor at Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, opened Purl in 2002. "I was constantly looking for a really good knitting store that was like the Murray's Cheese Shop of yarn," she said, until realizing that she could open such a place herself. Business took off, and she soon partnered with her sister Jennifer; they now also sell online, at [purlsoho.com](http://purlsoho.com).

Ms. Hoverson knows firsthand about one problem afflicting many knitters: lack of time. Although she wrote the popular time-saving book "Last-Minute Knitted Gifts" (Harry N. Abrams, 2004) and has a follow-up, "More Last-Minute Knitted Gifts," in the works, her busy schedule doesn't allow her to make all the things she would like. "I see things and think, I love this, but I can make it myself," she said. "But will I make it myself? Usually, the answer is that I don't have the time."

That goes not only for conventional items like blankets and throws, but for more unusual pieces, like ottomans, rugs and room parti-

tions, all part of a burgeoning trend in home design: knitted furnishings and accessories.

On a recent tour of New York shops and Web sites offering such items, Ms. Hoverson was drawn to a number of decorative and functional pieces, including a large rug made of thick-core yarn, at [roomandboard.com](http://roomandboard.com). Such an object, she suggested, would be a headache to make by hand because of its size, stiffness and weight. "That's one of those things that I'm really glad someone else made," she said.

At Suite New York in Midtown, she was drawn to a diaphanous room partition made of paper yarn. "It's a material thing again," she said. "It's not a totally involved design or anything, but it has a beautiful texture."

To bring a chunky knit into the living room, she liked the Flocks Pouf, an ottoman that was handmade in the Netherlands, at DWR: Tools for Living, in SoHo.

One item that particularly appealed to Ms. Hoverson was a simple throw at Calypso Home, in SoHo. Made of knitted cashmere, it was so soft that she couldn't help but run her fingers over it, her test of quality. "This is the real deal," she said.

Then there were the pieces that were too original to pass up, even if it wasn't entirely clear what to do with them. She finally decided that the crocheted necklaces and flowers at Makie, in SoHo, which she found irresistible, were multifunctional: "You can wear them," she said, "or you can put them up in your house."

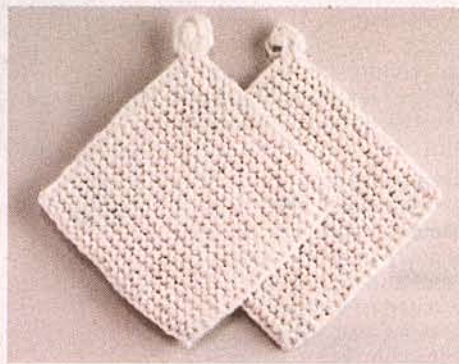
TIM MCKEOUGH



At Acorn in Boerum Hill, four cotton cupcakes by Yellow Label Kids are \$35; (718) 522-3760, [acorntoyshop.com](http://acorntoyshop.com).



Makie sells knitted things, yes, but its felt owl is hard to resist; \$85, (212) 625-3930, [makieclothier.com](http://makieclothier.com).



Lenda potholders, of hand-knitted cotton, provide heat insulation in style; \$4.99 for two, Ikea, (800) 434-4532, [ikea.com](http://ikea.com).

The diaphanous Veil, made of paper yarn, can be used as a room partition; \$25.37 a square foot, Suite New York, (212) 421-3300, [suiteny.com](http://suiteny.com).



The Bessie tea cozy, from the British knitware company Ruth Cross, in alpaca wool; \$48, 011-44-1772-328-518, [ruthcross.com](http://ruthcross.com).



The Cable rug in thick-core yarn; from \$999, Room & Board, (800) 301-9720, [roomandboard.com](http://roomandboard.com).



The Flocks Pouf makes a chunky ottoman; \$800 and \$1,600, at DWR: Tools for Living, (800) 944-2233, [dwr.com](http://dwr.com).