



Photo: Meagan Lloyd

## Best Commercial/Showroom (non-CNC)

# Sweet Home Chicago

Birger Juell Ltd. (Chicago)

This may be a new showroom, but Birger Juell Ltd. is hardly new to the wood flooring industry. The legendary company is a fixture in both the wood flooring business and Chicago's Merchandise Mart, where the company has had a showroom for two decades. When the opportunity came to move into this more centrally located space on the Mart's main floor, the company took it.

The new space features the company's custom flooring as well as its architectural millwork (the company's namesake tells the story that one night he had three martinis and dreamed the flooring went up the walls, thus the millwork). Featured is a Versailles parquet with wenge feature strips as well as a popular parquet that Juell designed based on a floor from an 18<sup>th</sup> century chateau in France's Loire Valley, Chateau Montgeoffroy. Between the two parquets is a large starburst pattern in which all eight points of the star are purposely slightly distorted to highlight different areas in the showroom.

The green aspects of the products suit both the Merchandise Mart and Birger Juell Ltd.'s clientele. The Merchandise Mart is the largest LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)-certified building in the country, and Birger Juell Ltd. President

Chuck Crispin estimates customers' interest in green products has tripled in the last year alone, making Birger Juell Ltd.'s wood flooring—much of which is reclaimed or manufactured from Chicago city trees that have died naturally—a perfect fit.—**K.M.W.**

Adhesive: **Bostik Inc.** ~ Buffer: **Clarke American Sanders** ~ Filler: **Timbermate USA** ~ Finish: **Dura Seal** ~ Nailer: Povernail Company ~ Router, Saws: **Festool** ~ Crotch Walnut: Kent MacPherson ~ Fabricators: Sam Garcia and Francisco Valenzia ~ Scraping & Finishing: Lyman Gaines, Eric Wermager, Bill Arnold and Steve Merritt ~ Special Projects Manager: Don Morrison ~ Scheduling/Production Management: David Guido, Quentin Grayst

## Best Commercial/Showroom (CNC)

# Last-Minute Artistry

Maximum Hardwood Floors (Coral Springs, Fla.)

Some masterpieces take years, even a lifetime to perfect. This Wood Floor of the Year winner and luxury showroom, however, took only a week. Brothers and business partners Evandro and Alisson Carvalho of Maximum Hardwood Floors were moving into their new showroom in a hurry. "There was nothing fancy about designing it," says Evandro Carvalho. "We had some leftover material lying around and it was like, this is what we have to work with." So, with scraps remaining from previous jobs, including several high-end CNC-designed borders and medallions, the two installed myriad flooring options for

customers to peruse. Carvalho's favorite area of the showroom features hand-scraped, fumed 5-inch American walnut. Such product displays are usually the deal-closers for Carvalho. "If they're hesitating on making a purchase or closing the contract, once they see the showroom they say, 'OK, we're comfortable with you,'" Carvalho says.

This is the first Wood Floor of the Year Award for Maximum Hardwood Floors, and even though the Carvalhos have always taken pride in their work, they have often felt intimidated by the craftsmanship of the beautiful floors entered into the contest. "You see how some of these people are working for billionaires, and you think maybe we don't have a chance. The whole thing is you have to keep trying," Carvalho says. With this award backing his own craftsmanship, Carvalho now feels motivated to enter at least three of his floors in the contest each year.—**M.D.**



Abrasives: **3M**, Cumi Canada Inc., **Norton Abrasives** ~ Adhesive: **Sika Corporation** ~ Borders/Medallions: Oshkosh Designs ~ Buffer, Edger: **Clarke American Sanders** ~ Distributors: Custom Wholesale Floors, Design Flooring Distributors Inc., **Floor Style Products** ~ Filler: **Woodwise/Design Hardwood Products** ~ Finish: Basic Coatings, McGrevor Coatings ~ Nailer: Porter Cable, Povernail Company, Stanley-Bostitch ~ Sander: **Hummel (Palo Duro)** ~ Saws: Bosch, DeWalt, Fein, **Festool** ~ Wood Flooring: **BR-111 Imports & Exports**, Foreverwood, Mullican Flooring, **Owens Flooring Co.**, Virginia Vintage