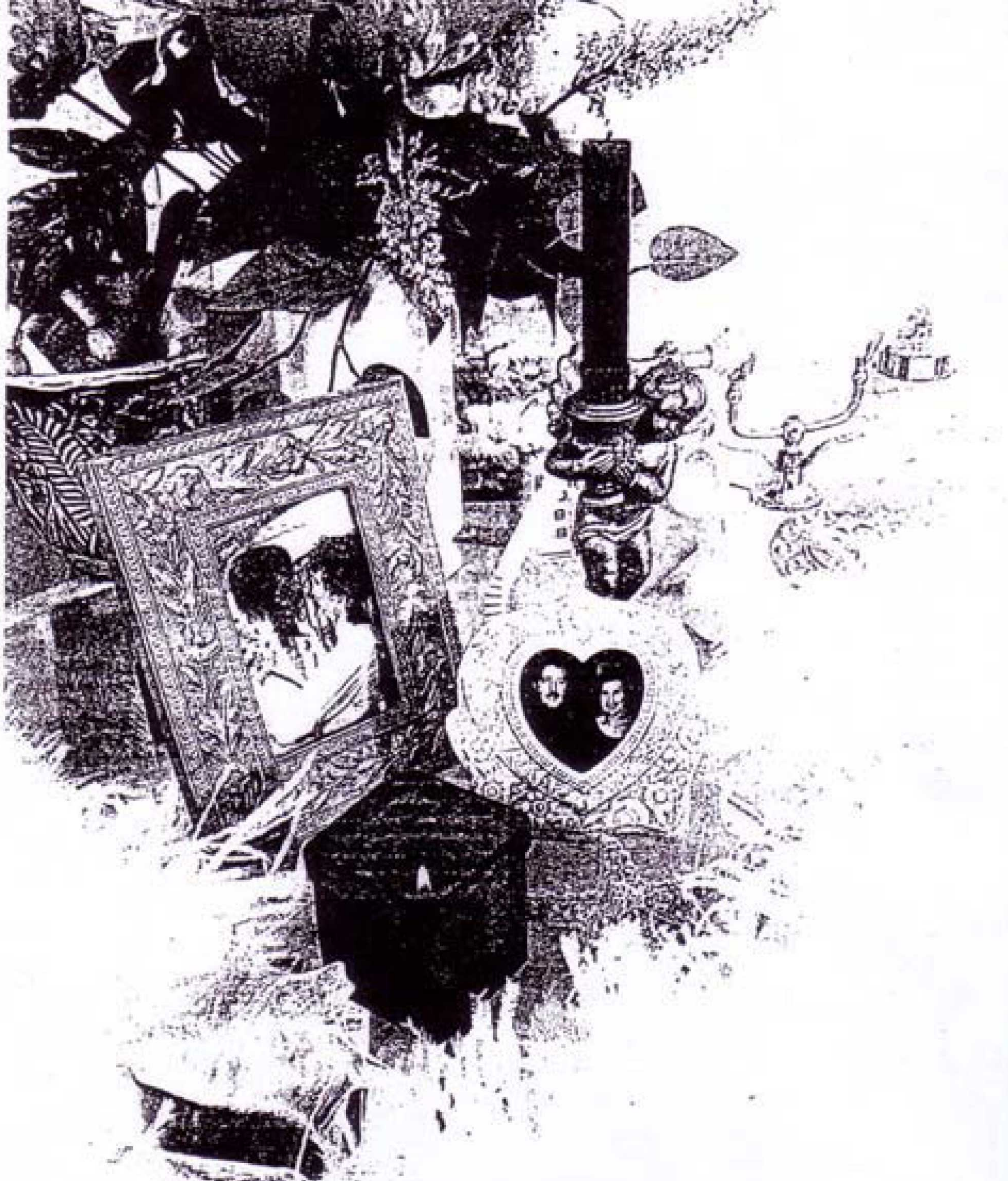


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DAILY NEWS
• SATURDAY •

MAKE ROOM FOR
Romance

How to liven up your love nest

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Keeping romantic home fires burning

Bedroom makeover may be just the key to more intimacy

By Carol Bidwell
Daily News Staff Writer

Romance sidelined by the 11 o'clock news? Need a little more oomph in the cuddle department?

Try a bedroom makeover, suggests Encino interior designer-to-the-stars Jacelyn Mazur.

"I think people should shoot to keep the home fires burning," said Mazur, who has decorated homes for stars ranging from Ernest Borgnine and Barbara Eden to singers Brandy and Boyz II Men's Wanya Morris and Shawn Stockman.

"When you close the door to your bedroom, whether you have the Exercise in the corner and the laundry basket and a 3-year-old running around, it should become your private little oasis," she said.

And making your bedroom the stuff of which romantic dreams are made isn't hard.

Think soft (puffy pillows, gauzy draperies, sink-in-and-disappear comforters and featherbeds). Add some sexy fabrics and trims (forget chintz; go for silk, satin, maribou).

Use some pastel colors (yes, men love them, too, if they'd only admit it), some nice smells (perfume, potpourri), flattering light (think candles), and photos in unusual frames to bring back memories of happy times.

Yes, you faintly remember those days, back when intimacy didn't play second fiddle to changing the oil in the minivan and buying a season-end gift for the kids' soccer coach.

Mazur says every bedroom should reflect a couple's own style, but how do you know what your style is?

"Go to the newsstand and buy as many decorating magazines as you can afford," she counsels. "Tear out pages with pictures of things you really, really like — maybe pillows with tassels, colors, little details of a room."

Spread them out and take a good, long look. Can you make that Laura Ashley flowery bedroom treatment work in your spartan digs? Can you get crafty enough to add jeweled nailheads to discount store candles? Can you sew enough to add some pizzazz to those pillows stuffed away in the closet? Can you add some trim to those ho-hum picture and mirror frames?

If so, you're in business.

And, Mazur assures, sprucing up your own private love nest doesn't have to rival the cost of a ticket to Paris on the Concorde or a case of Dom Perignon.

"See if you can't duplicate the look you like with some less expensive fabric," she suggests. "With a little flair, it can be done."

In a pinch, king-size sheets — available at many Southland discount outlets — in pastels and patterns can be used to make curtains, covers for chairs, tablecloths, and comforter and duvet covers.

If your budget is really tiny and you're not



Styled by Barbara De Wit / Photo by Evan Yee

For a bedroom makeover, think soft (puffy pillows, gauzy draperies, sink-in-and-disappear comforters and featherbeds). Add some sexy fabrics and trims, pastel colors, some nice smells, flattering light and photos in unusual frames.

the crafty sort, Mazur says you can perk up your bedroom — and your love life — by concentrating on your night stand. Instead of just the usual box of Kleenex and alarm clock, clear space for a few personal photos, a bowl of potpourri, a small vase of flowers.

"Sometimes people don't need more than just a bedside table with their favorite things on them to evoke romantic feelings," she said.

That's not to say that if you win the lottery, there's a limit to the cash you can pour into having a sexy, comfy bedroom.

"I have one client who, when she has an extra few hundred dollars, she buys something sexy for her bed," Mazur said. "Satin sheets, comforters, whatever."

Mazur herself is a "bedroom person."

"I find that the bedroom has always been my inner sanctum, kind of my own peaceful place, my own place of relaxation and solitude."

It may be romantic for some couples to decide on new bedroom decor and do the work together, Mazur said. But it also can be fun to get things ready and fly into action once your honey steps out the door, surprising him or her with a fait accompli on



Harrison Park

Jacelyn Mazur: "When you close the door to your bedroom ... it should become your private little oasis."

returning home.

"I think that's a wonderful surprise for a man," Mazur said. "It's almost like surprising him with some wonderful lingerie. But you have to know your man."

Playing at love by the numbers

So you think Valentine's Day is all about romance and passion? Sunsets and walks on the beach? Picnic baskets and diamond rings?

Well, so did we.

But, just when you think it's safe to break out the Godiva chocolates, the roses and the champagne, the U.S. Census Bureau wrings all the amorosness out of a perfectly sappy — er, make that happy — holiday with a barrage of facts and figures.

Here's how the feds (remember, they play on the same team as that fun-loving bunch, the IRS) look at the most romantic holiday of the year:

Happy couples — and others: A total of 2.3 million couples got married and 1.2 million couples divorced in 1995, the most recent year for which nationwide figures were available. That averages out at 6,400 marriages and 3,200 divorces on a typical day.

The thrill is gone: Between 1990 and 1995, the annual number of marriages dropped by 107,000, while the annual number of divorces fell 13,000.

Vegas, here we come: Nevada was the nation's marriage and divorce capital, racking up both the highest marriage rate — 65.1 marriages per 1,000 population — and divorce rate — 8.1 divorces per 1,000 population — of any U.S. state. Hawaii was a distant runner-up in the marriage rate (15.8), with Oklahoma, Wyoming and New Mexico (each at 6.7) tied for third place in the divorce sweepstakes.

Everybody's doing it: Among 18- to 24-year-olds, 24 percent of women and 14 percent of men were married as of 1995. Those figures rose to 64 percent for women and 55 percent for men in the 25 to 34 age bracket, and 74 percent each for 35- to 42-year-olds. For people 55 and over, the percentage of married people falls to 53 percent for women — but increases to 79 percent for men.

How old is old enough?: The estimated median age at the time of a first marriage in 1995 was 24.5 years for women and 26.9 years for men.

Playing the odds: If you're a woman, catch your man while you're young, when there are lots of fish in the sea: There were 119 unmarried men (never married, widowed or divorced) age 18 to 34 for every 100 unmarried women of the same ages in 1995.

When you get older, the men have either swum upstream or floated down ahead of you: Among 35- to 54-year-olds, the ratio reversed in 1995, with 105 unmarried women for every 100 unmarried men.

On the other hand, aging means better pickings for men: Among Americans 55 and older, there were 291 unmarried women for every 100 unmarried men.

The single life: In 1995, 13.6 million people age 25 to 34 had never been married, representing 33 percent of folks in that age group. The totals dropped to 5.9 million and 14 percent among 35- to 44-year-olds.

— Carol Bidwell