



LOCAL INTERIOR DESIGNERS LET US IN ON THE HOT DESIGN TRENDS OF THE MOMENT AND WHAT'S OLD NEWS. BY JANE E. LASKY

IN & OUT

FROM CHENILLE AND VELVET TO SATIN AND SILK, FABULOUS FABRICS ARE ALWAYS "IN" SAYS INTERIOR DESIGNER JACKIE MAZUR.

A wall in my house is wood paneled. I'm not sure what kind of wood it is, and I don't care. I just want to get rid of it. This sort of enhancement to a plaster surface may have been a popular way to update a sagging interior about 50 years ago, but not anymore. Not for me.

But that's what design trends are all about. What's in today may be out tomorrow—or maybe not. As with classic cars like the '57 Thunderbird and classic haircuts like the bob, certain interior designs do endure through the ages, while others are just a flash in the pan.

So, although there is no guarantee that what is chic in 1998 will still be chic in 2008, style savvy can be learned in a variety of ways. You can leaf through dozens of house and garden magazines, you can browse the glitzy design showrooms in and around The Blue Whale (the Pacific Design Center) over the hill in West Hollywood or you can consult with a good interior designer.

As to the latter, Jackie Mazur has earned her stripes. For the past two decades, this design-meister has been keeping an eye out for styles with staying power. True, the Tarzana-based decorator and owner of Jacelyn Mazur Designs may not be a soothsayer, but she seems to have no problem making decorating decisions that last.

"My job is to come up with a look for my clients that will not become dated as we move into the new millennium," says Mazur, nodding toward disasters that have come before. "The chrome and gray flannel of the 1980s looks like the 1980s. It is like iridescent blue eye shadow and too much rouge. It looks dated. I want to avoid creating interiors that are that limited."

Instead, this interior decorator focuses on everything in the home, from the largest pieces of furniture to the tiny details. She is even particular about the choice of finishes. "Every aspect makes or breaks an up-to-date look," she insists, recalling a recent job she did for a client in Bel-Air. "The home was new and exciting at the end of the 1980s, but some changes needed to be made."

One such alteration was a focal point of the living room: a huge mirror hung above the fireplace. Before Mazur made her magic, its iron frame was done in green patina, a treatment that not so long ago was original but has since become overexposed and, to some, passé. To update, the decorator stripped the finish, then had the mirror dipped in silver leaf. Gold speckling was added for a dramatic effect.

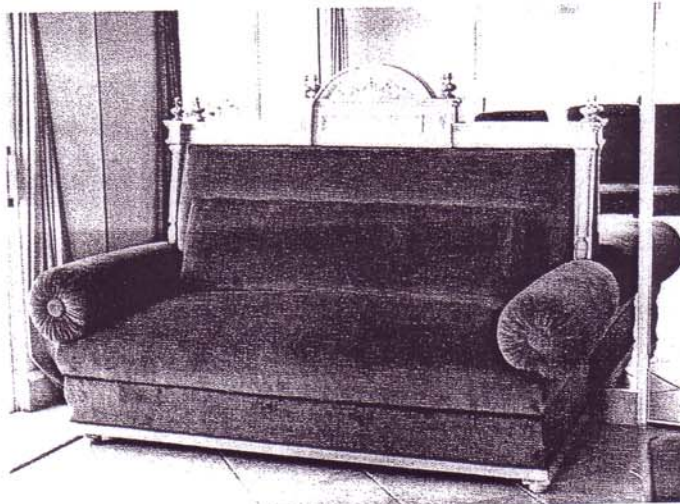
"Gold and silver are the finishes of the future," says Mazur. "They go with everything, and they create a feeling of luxury."

But a plush look isn't reserved just for interior

finishes. Silver Lake-based interior designer Pat Emery of Ambience Design likes to use bedcoverings made of chenille, burnt velvet and corduroy to make a bedroom look—and stay—current. "These fabrics will wear well for years," she says.

Mazur agrees with Emery when it comes to fine fabrics, especially when used on upholstery. She says prewashed, wrinkled Damask is out ("it's messy and there's nothing pretty about it"), and instead opts for fabrics like velvet, satin and silk. She also likes chenille "which is hearty yet warm. It's versatile as well since it comes in many finishes. There's a flat version for a dressy look and a nubby version if you want to go more casual."

Emery even uses materials of various textures and colors to freshen up living room coffee tables that haven't stood the test of time. That way, this heir to the Martha Stewart throne brings a lively touch that is lasting without having to make a huge financial commitment. She'll drape layers upon layers of different fabrics collected from world travels. "I just let little bits and pieces show here and there, and that way if I don't like it I can easily change everything around," she asserts. Her



Mazur's antique sleeper sofa will always be "in" because of its authenticity and meaning.

home is strewn with bits and pieces she picked up in Thailand, Kenya, Paris and Hawaii.

Emery encourages her clients to do the same. "It all about putting your own imprint on your home," she asserts. "That way, the way it looks will never go out of style."

Laura Hull, Los Angeles editor for "Metro-politan Home" magazine, sees a definite trend toward personalizing space. She tells me that many interior designers are using things their clients were given in their childhoods so they become items of memory as well as decor. "Using an element that is familiar and personal is just the right touch," says Hull, describing this technique to transition designs from the 1990s to the next millennium.

One decorating detail vivid in Jackie Mazur's memory that has helped define her ability to determine good—and lasting—interior design dates

back to her New York City roots: home murals. She has been keen on them since she was a child.

"I distinctly recall the walls of my best friend's dining room. Two huge banana trees were painted there," she says. "Murals are definitely a great way to personalize a home." She points out that her childhood buddy's dad was in the import-export business. His commodity? Bananas, of course.

But, finding a style that'll take you into the next millennium—or simply changing a few elements to freshen up a stale look—doesn't have to be as permanent as a painting on the wall. Adding one very special piece of furniture can often do the trick.

Mazur frequently applies this principle to her own home decor. One time when her father was visiting she took him along on a shopping expedition. They came across a beautiful antique sleeper sofa from Belgium.

"It's was fabulous," says Mazur, who recalls telling her father that she wished there was a client whose decor could use such a great piece. "He said, 'Why can't you use it for yourself? You have your own checkbook.'" Mazur listened to her

dad and bought the fine antique. She uses the old couch for seating on one side of the family dining table in her home. It is only one of two pieces that survived Mazur's home after the Northridge quake. "I kept it because it has authenticity, and it has meaning," she says. "I've had the bottom redone three times, but it's still one of the best investments I ever made."

Laura Hull says original artwork, unique objects d'art or flea market treasures will continue to achieve recognition as "in" decorations. "That way people are encouraged to go out and pick up things they really love," she says. "I find there is a trend toward buying original art directly from the artist—especially photography—partly

because it is more affordable than other media."

Another major design element that's out, according to Jackie Mazur, is white-washing floors and cabinetry. "Now we are going into more natural woods like maple, mahogany, birch and cherry," she explains. "White-washing is a thing of the past."

So are laminates, plastics and pre-fabricated furniture materials. "But iron and stone are in," asserts Mazur, who explains that she recently replaced an old wooden table at the entry of a client's home that was "very dated and very pedestrian," with a gorgeous entry table that combined stone bases with a sandblasted glass top. "The rough edges on the glass top have a newer look than just clear glass," she points out.

Another design trend that looks like it will be around for a while is that intangible factor called

warmth that can be achieved in a variety of ways. Pat Emery likes to create "comfort zones," especially in the bedroom.

She says you should look at the bed as a destination. "I think that the bed should be a central station from which to work, play, love and dream. After all, this is the location where you ultimately go to recharge," Emery says, adding that you can't have enough feathers to achieve the desired effect. She uses down comforters, neck rolls and various pillows of different shapes. She also insists on high thread count sheets, adding to that so-called "comfort zone."

A natural, comfortable ambience is on the minds of most savvy interior designers, while the more daring like to create an eclectic look as well. Laura Hull prefers the mix of modern and antique and sees more and more of this being done in California's homes. But home turf isn't where this style prognosticator first saw the unusual combination. Hull observed the practice in good use during a visit to Europe in the 1970s when she went to the home of some Danish artists. Indeed, the artistic couple lived in a schoolhouse built in the 1800s which had a thatched room and double panes on the windows.

"So, the couple had taken old Danish furniture and mixed in their incredible contemporary art collection of paintings, prints and drawings. The two are weavers and do large tapestries which are very minimal, so their work showed up well on the walls of their home," Hull remembers.

Her memory sparks some of my own. Even though it was 25 years ago, I clearly recall visiting Washington, D.C., to check out my best friend's first apartment. Her charming, one-room DuPont Circle flat (she referred to as "An Efficiency") was filled with new Danish modern furniture purchased at a place called Scandia.

I was jealous.

My humble Manhattan abode, half the size of hers (we called it "The Shoe Box") didn't boast of much beyond a double bed my boyfriend's boss had given me because he bought a new one. Whoever came to see me (no more than three at a time) sat on my green shag rug facing dingy white walls. So they weren't completely blank, I hung an expandable wooden-pegged clothes hanger graced with lots of beads, funky necklaces and a giant shamrock on a key ring someone brought me back from Ireland. I also put up the best of my black-and-white photographs shot during college days. They hung at eye level—certainly unconventional, but a conversation starter, not to mention a good way to get my work noticed!

Today, my friend in D.C. doesn't have any of the Danish modern pieces she bought back in the '70s—now in vogue once more—but I still have those pictures I took in college, which are always in vogue as far as I'm concerned. ♡