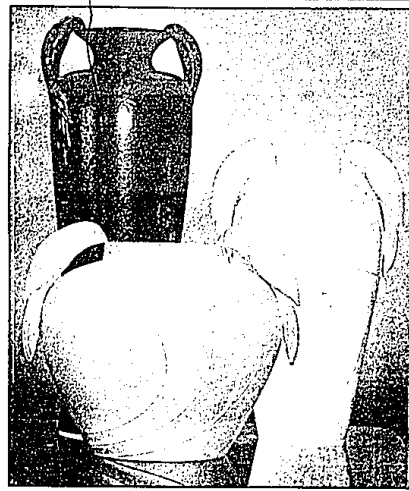


DAN DEAN/staff photographer

A fairly new term in the decorator's dictionary, the eclectic look (above) demonstrates gentle rebellion against the unwritten rule that everything should match.

Eclectic decor: the printed chintz French Empire chair blends with the Japanese-influenced table — black lacquered with red "flames." The urns are really English candleholders. The handmade etched mirror is Venetian. The Mandarin wedding basket, under the table, is over 100 years old, while the horse on one of the mahogany carved Ram's Head pedestals is a reproduction of a Tang Dynasty statue. The contemporary chaise is covered in black faille. The deco-style torchere lamps are powered by the newest home lighting innovation — halogen bulbs.



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

Contemporary or deco — three urns with bird handles. The squat urn is in a matte finish taupe color and sports stylized tulips as does the middle urn, in a glossy, pearlescent glaze. The tallest urn is a mottled black with bronze-glazed birds.

Comfort is design world byword

By Mona Grigg
special writer

YOU WANT to know about this year's trends in home furnishings? You don't know who to ask? Well, you might ask someone like designer Susan Winton-Feinberg, owner of the well-trendy — Walter Herz Interiors in Birmingham, for one.

But be warned that the irrepressible, iconoclastic Winton-Feinberg is apt, on hearing the dreaded word, to rare back and hit you with, "Trend! I hate that word. It should be 'discovery.' Yes, I would definitely throw out that word and use 'discovery' instead."

And to the owner of just a handful of major design showrooms and under-one-roof decorating centers in the country, the discovery, when it comes to trends, is that a little trendiness goes a long, long way.

"A couple of years ago it was all Eurostyle," Winton-Feinberg said, of the style Metropolitan Home magazine calls "a blend of Bauhaus and deco, neoclassic and Memphis." It is characterized by plump, loose-fabric furniture combined with rounded, streamlined tables, lamps and accessories of chrome, painted steel or plastic.

"WHEN EUROSTYLE began to be manufactured in the United States a couple of years ago, it became accessible and it was — all right — trendy. But it's bombing out because, for

the most part, it's hard to mix. It hard to get it right. I think its days are definitely numbered."

Even shorter-lived, Winton-Feinberg predicts, is the style known as "Memphis." Though its origins are Italian, it's a funky, new wave take-off on the '50s — Swedish Modern gone punk — neon colors, asymmetrical shapes applied with devilish whimsy.

"You could never mix bits and pieces of Memphis with contemporary as you can Eurostyle," Winton-Feinberg said. "You'd almost have to do the whole house — and not just any house would work. You even have to have the right building."

Winton-Feinberg says another problem with Memphis and its counterparts is that "they're so outrageous, they're exhausting."

The key word today, she said, is "comfort." "Let's face it, living in the '80s is chaotic — insane sometimes. People need an anchor; they need to come into a real home after a hard day." But that's not to say that everything has to be strictly contemporary or traditional.

The beauty of it is we can mix styles and periods — even throw in a little pop art or high tech — and still be comfortable. Eighteenth-century French classic arm chairs can go beautifully with a bold leather sofa. In fact, the new over-sized rolled-arm sofa goes well with just about everything. A lacquer-look coffee table can look great on an old heirloom rug. Scale and color and texture mean everything."

WINTON-FEINBERG had some other comments:

- Textures are important again. "We've become extremely sensual," Winton-Feinberg said. "We like the feel of things, as well as the look. Silks and linens are big — so are faux finishes, gessos, metals. We're seeing more marble. But, as Americans, we still can't get away from polyesters. We're the 'Polyester People,' the 'drip-dry crowd.' In Europe, the finishes are pure, natural and gorgeous. Here, we still can't convince people that wools and cottons and silks are as easy to care for as the synthetics."

- Whites and cream-tones are in today. "There's good reason for that," Winton-Feinberg said. "They provide a wonderful, neutral background for what should be a few smashing pieces." She said shoppers should overcome the urge to fill a room with too many outstanding, dramatic pieces. "Again, it's too exhausting. Better to use two or three — or ever one major piece in a room to create a focal point, a place for the eye to travel, than to try to make every piece better than the first."

- The Arts Nouveau and Deco are still big. "But it's the European Deco that's hot. What we do here is mediocre in comparison. Still, they can be exciting focal pieces."

- The new Japanese styles mix easily with the contemporary and are slowly moving eastward after a surge of popularity on the west coast, Winton-Feinberg said. "The lines are straighter and cleaner than the

Chinese. Easier to mix. I think we'll see more and more of the good, elegant Oriental influence."

- Lacquers and plastic laminates, Winton-Feinberg predicts, will be around forever. They make an exciting contrast in almost any setting. They wear well. And the colors tend to be pure and jewel-like. Earth-tones and pastels are still popular — especially the whites — but a splash of a jewel color can be really exciting.

STYLE CHANGES tend to be regional, the Birmingham de-

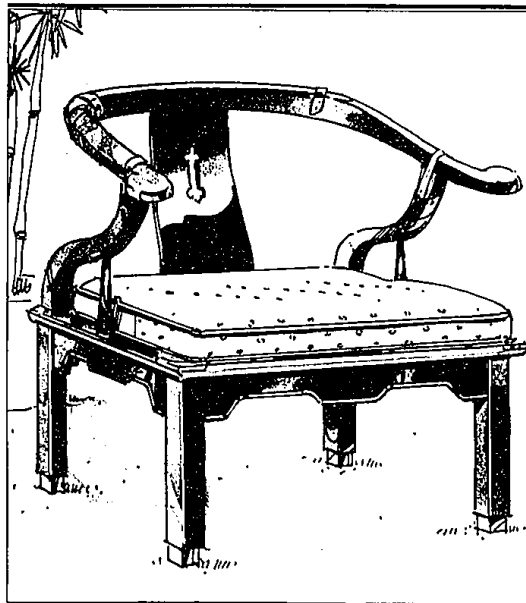
signer said. While the midwest, including Michigan, has gotten very contemporary, the west and the south are, surprisingly, traditional. "Yes, even California. Their woods and fibers are still great, but overall their bias leans toward applying them to the old standbys — the traditionals."

Good advice, all, but what the application? What about the people who can't afford to tackle a room alone? Winton-Feinberg said, "I'd suggest they at least hire a professional decorator, preferably a member of the

American Society of Interior Designers, to help with the layout and to suggest a few starter pieces."

But the graduate of Syracuse University's Lowe Art School and a veteran of 21 constantly changing years in the business warns, "beware of the 'bag ladies,' and 'decorettes'" — the industry's not-so-nice terms for what Winton-Feinberg calls "those women who wake up one morning and decide to become an interior decorator" — usually because some friend has told them they have an eye for color.

FURNITURE GALLERY



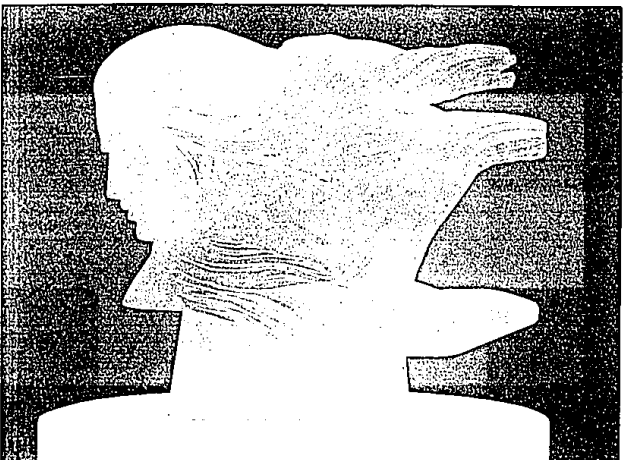
A TOUCH OF
FAR EASTERN
INFLUENCE

Inspired by the serenity of the Orient, this handsome, elegantly designed chair is a welcome accent piece for any area of your home. Ask our design staff to demonstrate for you just how beautifully it blends with many different decors. Richly finished in black lacquer, brass accents. Cushion of two-tone beige damask. 41x35 1/2 x 33" D. By Century. \$295.

Jacobson's

We welcome Jacobson's Charge Card or The American Express® Card.

Shop until 9 p.m. on Thursday and Friday
Until 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

Art nouveau — sand-blased acrylic updates the sculptured head, highlighted on a black-lacquered lighted base.