

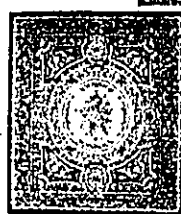
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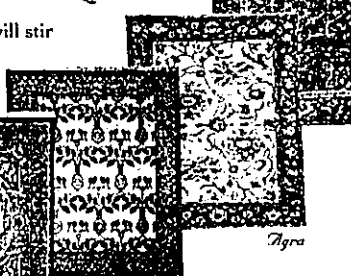
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interior motives

Pillow talk: elegant, colorful



NAOMI STONE
LEVY

Pillows can be diverse and eclectic, esthetic and elegant, calming or electric, significant or unimportant. I could think of many other adjectives, but in essence pillows will add or detract from any room. I love 'em!

Pillows can be seasonal. Vary them from summer to winter and even holiday to holiday. Lightweight cotton fabric, perhaps whimsical in character, would give way to American quilt patterns. Other options are very elegant silks and velvets as the requirement dictates. They can be needlepoint or embroidered — how about lace?

There are a myriad of ways to trim pillows. There exists tassels with charisma, very costly, that I have often used at the four corners. An inexpensive counterpart might be large buttons, self-covered or contrasting colors in the same way as well cord.

But welting is also available in costly varieties; twisted cord in multicolors is merely one of several potentials, often coordinated with tassels or floret buttons.

How to organize pillows on a sofa should challenge your talents. If they vary in size the largest ones should be behind smaller ones. I much prefer all squares, rectangles or bolsters, rather than rounds and triangles. On occasion I have the square corners pinch-pleated.

How does one discuss color? It is a fascinating subject that isn't easily articulated. We are all cognizant of the primary colors on the wheel: red, yellow and blue. Next are the secondary (in-between) colors: orange, green and purple. And then there are the dozens, even hundreds of variations of the six, too subtle to describe.

In selecting a combination you might start with a lush, dark-green velvet. Add to that an awesome, wide gold braid, not necessarily around the square. Try three rows, off-centered, and separated by a narrow band of the background green. On this pillow I wouldn't use any well-cord. Don't confine yourself to green — any rich color that sends you is right.

A second and third pillow for this

group could be a printed heavy silk, either traditional or contemporary in design. Next I'd love to see the fourth and fifth in heavy silk, but in only one glorious color.

If you research the fabric houses you will have to acknowledge that no fabric accepts colors with more subtlety than velvets and silks.

To these single-colored delights why not add the short tassels I spoke of earlier? Said fabric houses often have marked-down remnants of exquisite and very costly fabrics. Elegant?

You don't aspire to this elegance? Let's evaluate a more simple array. Nothing wrong with a wide-whale corduroy for the background. The rich pile will resonate an unobvious subtlety.

Add to this the second and third pillow in a printed chintz, again either geometric, modern or traditional. The fourth and fifth pillow again should be a rich looking, single-colored cotton/linen, with a fabulous fringe trim in varying colors, inserted in lieu of welt.

Try sewing some very attractive buttons close together and all over the surface of a pillow. Using all buttons of one flamboyant design should be knockout; but that doesn't preclude a profusion of buttons you may have reclaimed from former uses. I have a button box filled with odds and ends!

Beads, in a multitude of colors, are yet another venue. Bead shops abound in incredible selections. There are so many ways to apply them on suitable backgrounds, printed or plain. A trip to a bead store will open your eyes to unending and eclectic thoughts.

The pillow forms should be ultra-soft to provide real comfort. Whether used as a headrest or propped behind your back for support depends on your need. The covers should be zipper-closed to ease the comfort involved in changing them.

I could go on and on with pillow talk, but I urge you to concoct your own schemes. You'll love the creativity.

Naomi Stone Levy, a Franklin resident, is an interior designer and a former secretary of the American Society of Interior Designers. You can leave her a message by dialing (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then her mailbox number, 1897. Her fax number is (810) 644-1314.