

Room for Design

by Gloria Cohen



Decorating success hinges on basics

Color and pattern, like cakes and ale, beer and skittles, must go hand in glove for true success in decoration.

Therefore an understanding of each is important before you tackle a project. In a sense, color is the cornerstone of good decorating. The first rule is to reassess your beliefs about it.

Many women are afraid of color in the home. Others have mental blocks about certain colors. Still others have instinctive preference for colors that are becoming to them, but don't carry over this same color palette to their rooms.

Knowing what color can do helps dispel fear. It can give you a dramatic, vibrant, bold background or a serene one.

COLOR CAN MAKE A HOUSE OR APARTMENT bright and airy or rich and heavy, casual or formal, traditional or contemporary in feeling. Remember that earth colors—browns and beiges—have a soothing effect on people, while red and orange are apt to arouse and stimulate.

Yellow strikes a gay note. Green is relaxing for many high-strung people. Purple, shocking pink, burnt orange and some of the vivid hues are best used as accents, if at all, in most rooms.

White and black, the non-colors, have amazing properties—white has an uncanny ability to give an open, pervasive look, while black, when properly used, is the most dramatic of all accents.

The second step in the color process is a color scheme. Here we are talking about a family of three or four basic hues, with one or two invited guests as accents. It is quite possible to use many colors in a scheme or monochromatics, but these solutions are not easy to bring off and are best left to the professional designer.

For the basic family of colors, those which are thought of as compatible,

make the best selection. For example: blue, green and white; orange, beige, and red; or green, yellow and gray. Usually it is best to use the most neutral of the group, perhaps in a lighter shade, for the largest expanses—walls and ceiling and carpets.

ACCENTS, LIKE GOOD GUESTS, should be chosen for their sparkle, for the contrast they provide to the basic family. Scatter them about the room in accessories, pictures, lamp shades, throw rugs, ashtrays, and even books and flowers.

Frequently a favorite painting, fabric or rug will suggest your color scheme. Usually it is a combination which has been seen and admired. Other sources can be a bouquet of flowers or a bowl of fruit, the plumage of a bird or the brilliance of a single bloom. The important thing is to avoid a scheme that recommends itself to you only because it happens to be in. Faddish color schemes, especially the more bizarre ones, are difficult and tiresome to live with. As you choose your colors be mindful of the light in the room or rooms under consideration. There is no color without light, artificial or natural, and it is important to know how rooms face and what kind of night lighting they will have.

Be sure you choose light bulbs and fluorescents that will not change the colors of your fabrics and other decorative components at night—unless you want them to. Pink bulbs, for example, can be flattering to people but can play havoc with subtle color relationships in upholstery.

THE ROLE OF PATTERN all too often, if thought of at all, is regarded as something that just happens if other elements of the design process are properly handled. Yet, pattern is a distinct element which demands its own attention. In fact there are few facets

in interior design which can exert as powerful an effect, for good or evil, on a room.

Pattern is a form of the perennial question—what goes with what—and soon reveals itself as a highly controversial subject. In fact, few persons are in complete accord as to how, when and where to use it.

If you will stay with me until next week, I will continue the subject of color and pattern. There's much more to be said.

Ice cream, strawberries top the arts

An old fashioned ice cream and strawberry social will introduce the New Southfield Arts Co-operative to the community, June 15.

Sponsored by the Southfield Arts Council, the social will feature performances by the Metropolitan Ballet of Michigan and music and songs by Joel and Jan Ebersol, a sing-a-long and will introduce the works of art and the artists of the co-op.

Ice cream, toppings and fresh strawberries will be served. Refreshments at the social will be \$1 for adults and 50 cents for children. Admission to the event is free.

Set to open at 7:30 p.m., the event will be at Southfield's Historical Borough Site, Berg Road at Civic Center Drive.

For information on the social or the co-operative, call Ralph Valatka, cultural arts coordinator at 354-9603.



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