

Variety from page 9

from roughly four categories of color themes predominant in today's home furnishings. "First, you have the intense harvest tones — oranges,

yellow and jewel tones. Second is the global bazaar — evident not only in interior design but in apparel," Stevens said. "These

Pulling from page 8

line of rugs that moves some of the most daring contemporary painters' artistry from their canvases down to the floor.

McQueen and his energetic staff are knowledgeable about interior design so they can coordinate these machine-made artworks, along with many other styles and other customer furnishings.

At Reimer Floors in the field Hills, 300 local builders share a showroom-of-choice. They use Reimer as a resource for fine, machine-made rugs, broadloom carpeting and hard-surface flooring.

Reimer's large showroom includes a Karastan Gallery showcasing the Original Karastan Collection of 17 Oriental rug patterns. These rugs have become the worldwide standard for power-loomed rugs since they were first introduced in 1928 and have made available patterns and

that typically cost more than handmade versions.

In retailers' and manufacturers' quest to satisfy consumer needs, a wide range of sales, price points and techniques are utilized while retaining quality — backed up, at times, by warranties. Printed carpet represents such a development in that it involves a high level of cooperation between the fiber producer and the mill, technicians, market researchers and stylists.

The Milliken print carpeting at A.R. Kramer Flooring in Livonia represents the best one can find in this category since it offers patterned broadloom coordinated with an area rug and a solid-colored broadloom. This allows for flexibility in interior design, giving consumers options they don't have with most other carpet resources.

International influences include western, Native American, primitive and Oriental looks.

"The sun-moon-stars combination of the celestial category is also everywhere," Stevens said. "Cobalt blue is one of the rich colors and it's showing up in comforters and other room accents for kids, too."

The last category is the world of cartoon characters popularized by Disney and Warner Brothers. Bed Bath & Beyond (Farmington Hills and Troy)

has a huge juvenile linen department devoted to the universally popular motifs of movie and cartoon figures.

"Mickey & Friends At Home," "Minnie and Me," "Aladdin" and "Snow White" comforters, shams and sheet sets by Wamsutta Home Products share shelf space with more rugged designs like "NFL" by Royaltown Linens. That company also produces sets with the currently popular "Thomas the Tank Engine and Friends" for the younger set.

Bellini Juvenile Furniture

(Birmingham and Ann Arbor) does a brisk business not only with its furniture pieces but with whimsical personalized accent pieces.

"The Top Tots handpainted furniture from Haiti is very popular with our customers. Children enjoy the tables, chairs and small chests with exotic animal patterns," said Gert Glazer, store manager.

Also perennially popular at Bellini are the pencil clothes trees and lamps, and beautifully decorated, handpainted pieces from White Wicker Co.

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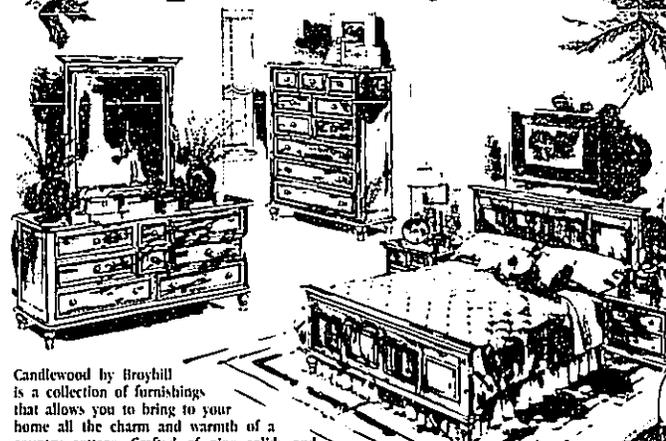
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