

Choices: growing home furnishings trend

Key players in home furnishings all say, "There are no clear-cut trends any longer. Consumers are buying all kinds of styles and colors." Yet everyone we talked to spoke of certain significant elements influencing merchandising decisions. Here's a quick review of major directions consumers should see in suburban stores or through their favorite decorators.

■ EXPANDING COUNTRY

The already popular country furnishings are moving into new territory after conquering the Southwest and Northeast — the Florida Keys. See the "Little Palm Island" collection by Thomasville. For Scandinavian country, look to

Drexel-Heritage's European themes.

■ GLOBAL BAZAAR

Credit Hudson's for recognizing growing international influence on the home. Joel Kaplan, Home Trend director, says, "A global bazaar of patterns inspired by African, South American, Native American, Mexican and Eastern European cultures will be highlighted in Hudson stores."

The nationally renowned Mike Bell has undoubtedly sparked an interest in Anglo-Indian furniture with his successful Raj Collection and Brighton Group. Pearson and John Widdicomb have contrasting introductions with same themes. Milling Road takes still a different tack with the West Indies Collection. Expect to see a lot more.

■ CONTEMPORARY DESIGN

A new spirit infuses contemporary derived from the 1980s postmodernism in France and Italy. For the 1990s, it brings us a sensuousness in Thayer Coogin's new group, "Light Wave," and dramatic elegance in Carson's "Infinity Collection." Europe is still influential, but contemporary is now a global movement.

Thanks to Zeising Associates in the Michigan Design Center in Troy and Scott Shuptrine, which help showcase student work from the Center for Creative Studies in Detroit, talent such as Paul Martin is recognized. His first-place submission is being considered for Swaim's production.

■ PURPLE POWER

A local company, Mercury

Paint, is finding upsurge in use of purple as well as brighter colors for interiors. Gold is making a comeback and so is a brown red-orange we used to call rust. Marilyn White of PPG Industries calls it russet.

Two types of greens prevail: the khaki type that Gary Van notes in casual furnishings and variations on hunter noted by Joel Kaplan, who sees greens as the color of the '90s. But he's also watching for a "strong return to blues and reds that are more brown-cast."

Lots of pink is in the latest mansion that Mark Morgan-roth of Sherwood Studios in West Bloomfield has done for a local luminary.

■ NEW ATTITUDES

Watch for furniture styles that go well beyond the requirements of comfort or casualness. It involves unpressed slipcovers, unmatched colors, patterns and uncoordinated styles. All of this coexists with ultra-refined opulence, also sought out by certain consumers.

■ ELECTRONIC WIZARDRY

Aside from home theater, larger TV and better sound

systems, more home offices with personal computers and fax machines will proliferate.

■ MATERIALS THE MESSAGE

At no time have so many materials been brought into use: wicker, endless variety of wood finishes, glass in molten and hard-edged styles, metals of all kinds, mirror, ceramic, textiles of every description, including JAB (Strohman and Romann in the Michigan Design Center) silver-printed silks, which stand in stark contrast to denim as a cover, whether painted or not.

Michael McCoy of Cranbrook Educational Community in Bloomfield Hills says it's part of an overall trend toward softening technology and the industrial object.

■ EXPECT UNEXPECTED

First-place winner of Ghiorde Knot Annual Student Design Competition, Sarah Murdoch, drapes an Oriental rug from the ceiling as if it were a textile. It looks terrific. Expect to see more celebrity designers vying for the number-one position Ralph Lauren holds in the U.S. with his billion-dollar sales.

—Helen Diane Vincent

SAVE 30% ON ALL HARDEN AND PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE
BUY A COMPLETE DINING ROOM OR BEDROOM
AND SAVE AN EXTRA 10%!



For a limited time only, you will save 30% off the entire furniture collections from Harden & Pennsylvania House.

And if you buy a complete dining room (table, chairs and china) or a complete bedroom (dresser, mirror, chest and bed) we'll take another 10% off the sale price. That's right. You save twice for a complete group. It's the perfect time to buy quality furniture at a price you can afford.

ORDER SOON, THIS SALE ENDS OCTOBER 2ND

Offer not valid in conjunction with any other promotional discount. All previous and pending sales excluded.

Stewart-Glass
of Bloomfield Hills

332-8348

Open Mon., Thurs., Fri. 'til 9 p.m.
Tues., Wed., Sat. 'til 5:30 p.m.

2600 N. Woodward Ave.
Just South of Square Lake Rd.
Fine Furniture Since 1917

CREATIVE CHOICES

More than ever, consumers are influencing home furnishings trends, no longer just reacting to what's on the showroom floor. Furniture makers, interior designers and store owners alike are poised for this change.

The suburban angle to this furnishings revolution provides the backdrop for Creative Choices, a special supplement to the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. The supplement, together with today's Creative Living section of the newspaper, spotlights folks on the leading edge of designer styles, including designers, retailers and homeowners. Our stories are as eclectic as the themes they explore. New attitudes indeed are prevailing on the home furnishings front.

—Bob Sklar

ABOUT THE COVER: O&E staff photographer Stephen Cantrell photographed our cover in Birmingham. The interior design for this living room has evolved using heirlooms from the homeowner and furnishings from Gorman's Drexel-Heritage Galleries in Troy with the help of Becky Spler, ASID, one of Gorman's nine designers. The sofas and slipper chairs are Drexel-Heritage; the coffee table is Henredon; the lamps are by Remington; the draperies are by Designs Limited; the blue and rose handblown vases on the mantle are from Carlton-James, Michigan Design Center; and the painting is by area artist Eileen Aboulafia.

CREDITS: Bob Sklar, O&E assistant managing editor for special sections, supervised "Creative Choices." Helen Diane Vincent was the home furnishings writer and consultant. O&E Graphics Editor Randy Borst designed the cover. O&E sales representatives Michele Lyon and Joan Hines coordinated advertising. Direct queries to Bob Sklar: 953-2113.