

What's in for the New Millennium

Colors for the new millennium will be influenced by many factors. Throughout the 90's we have seen many changes in the economy, the ecology, society and its values, and the global attitude. Each of these factors will again play a major part in the colors we gravitate to in the new millennium. As always, I must qualify these notes and remind you that there is no such thing as an absolute in the world of color. However, I see some trends emerging which I am confident will effect the color palettes of the New Millennium.

The beginning of the 90's saw Americans buying into what was called 'licensed design' well known Designer would put together an entire collection of his/her designs. These lines would feature everything from furniture to wallpaper, fabrics, bedding, rugs, and a plethora of accessories. For the most part, the items in these collections were wonderful. However, I cringed at the thought of clients usurping someone else's look and identity rather than creating and presenting their own individual personality.

As that trend built in popularity, another counter trend began to evolve. It was a need for individuality and authenticity. We originally saw it expressed in the selection of color palettes (hallelujah!!), and gradually it has filtered full scale into the approach to Design.

Gone are the days of 'cookie cutter' design! There is a drastic rise in the need for individuality in both color palettes and looks or style. I see this continuing into the new Millennium, almost as a keystone. I also see this search for personal expression via color and style spanning the age groups.



For as far back as I can remember, clients have been looking for comfort, combined with quality and value. These will be even more desirable in coming years as we spend more and more of our time at home (in many cases due to working at home as well). However, the requests that will become equally as strong are the need for personal expression, uniqueness, and authenticity.

Prior to the 90's, each decade had it's own set of colors (never more than five or six colors). You can easily date many rooms just by the colors which were used. In the 90's there was one major color that was typical, and it entered into most palettes in one tone or another. That color, of course, was purple. In the next decade I see many colors and tones being used, and several groups or categories of influence emerging.

I feel I must add a caution here, that the current political situation in our country could have a drastic effect on the colors and textures we will gravitate to in the next decade. We are at a crossroads, and must soon decide. What will our values be? What will we



tolerate or ignore? Will we make a stand? As we decide for ourselves and feel the influence of those around us who do not agree with our decision, we may find ourselves needing the comfort of our own 'haven' more and more. In times like these, choices of colors, texture, and style can have a definite bearing on how we 'get through

palettes which will be affected, but our whole approach to Interior Design. Some of these comments are what I have been suggesting were on their way for quite some time. Others are less reflective, and inspired by taking the time recently to look forward with a candid, but watchful eye. Perhaps a good way to put it is a phrase I have been using for quite some time - "You want people to **feel** the effects of your colors long before they **see** them".



Influences on Color and Design

I think it all boils down to **nurture**, and although the combinations and applications will be individual and different, the following list are colors and themes which will play a huge part in the "Looks" of the New Millennium.

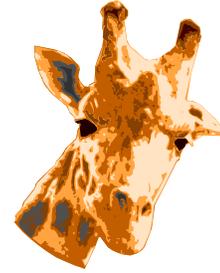
- The environment will remain a very strong influence on our colors, textures and themes, at least through the first decade of the new millennium. To a great extent, this is motivated by our subconscious need to connect with Mother Earth - something which is timeless and nurturing. For many, it is also a connection to our childhood and the freedom, happiness and security we felt at that time.



- We will continue to see leaves and twigs displayed in fabrics, papers, accessories, artwork, lampshades, candles, iron furniture, and even carpet. Along with this trend in Design will come the swing toward the greens and browns typical of leaves and twigs as the foundation of many color palettes.



- There will still be wild animals and creatures represented in patterns and textures, as well as colors. However, they will become more and more subtle integrations, rather than being evident. Many past decades have seen fads such as owls, mice, geese, and even the era of the Scottie dog. Not so for this next decade. Rather, it will be a much more subtle and individual integration of animals - tailored more to the owner's personality and lifestyle. It will range from bears to horses to kittens, etc.

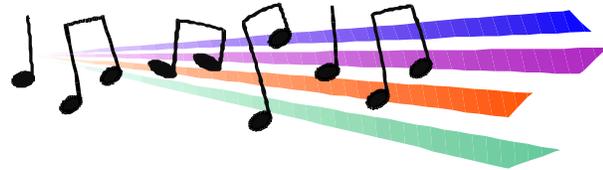


- The use of natural stone products has been growing by leaps and bounds. The gravitation to using granite, marble, and others such as limestone has been nothing short of phenomenal! We used to only see marble in the beiges of travertine, and granite in the salt and pepper fleck. However, in the past few years I have used natural stone products in about every color, tone, tint, and shade imaginable! I have come up with at least a dozen different natural stones which have purple as the dominant color. There is even a slate which is aubergine.



- The gravitation toward motifs such as shells, stones, sand, etc. will only get stronger as we enter this next decade. Again, these elements will influence our color choices as well as the patterns and designs.

- Don't forget to consider the sound factor. As noise pollution increases, I see the American public gravitating more and more to the use of waterfalls and fountains, subtle wind chimes, and the use of soft music piped throughout the home and landscaping.



- I also see the sky itself being a very strong influence in the next decade. We will take inspiration from the colors of the sky ranging from earliest pre-dawn to long after dusk, and the blues and grays of mid-day. We will also use the clouds as inspiration for texture, especially in faux finishes, fabrics and even carpets.

- The florals in the New Millennium will either be very soft and subtle (such as wildflowers or country garden florals) or they will be vivid in detail and color. Gone are the cabbage roses strewn about on two out of every three wallpapers you see.
- Another very strong influence on our colors and design motifs in the next decade will be technology.