

Design In 2011

Rethinking Our Homes

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TEXT BY TAMMY ADAMSON-MCMULLEN

Some interior design trends leave an indelible mark on history. Examples? The 1950s and the American diner look (black and white linoleum and metal kitchen tables). The 1970s and the flower-power movement (shag

carpet, flocked wallpaper and lava lamps). And the new millennium, with all of its environmental consciousness ("green" products and nature motifs).

As we start a new decade, 2011 already is putting its stamp on interior design and in ways many couldn't have imagined.

As we do every spring, WestSound Home & Garden asked area designers to describe what's "hot" in home fashion. Some were reluctant to use the word "trend" or to call out just one single, popular look. However, all acknowledged one thing is clear: Homeowners are downsizing and simplifying their spaces.

As the recession wears on and baby boomers approach their golden years, designers noted that homes are becoming smaller and less fussy. Gone is the trend to "buy up" to a larger, ostentatious home. Instead, homeowners are rethinking the spaces they already have as well as reorganizing, repurposing, refinishing and recycling.

However, just because homes are smaller in scale doesn't mean they're less exciting. On the contrary, designers reported many intriguing home-fashion looks are looming on the horizon. Here's a peek at some of them.



PHOTO COURTESY PETER C. MANNING, AIA

Design Advice from the Experts



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Cate Adams has a degree in art and design from the University of London and has worked in London, Paris and Spain. Adams eventually settled in the Pacific Northwest and approximately 25 years ago founded The Decorating Source, a design service in Kitsap County offering consultations as well as products. She also has worked at Hood Canal Interiors in Belfair. Adams currently serves as an interior designer with Arnold's Home Furnishings. She lives with her husband, Jack, in Silverdale.

Small and Suitable

Home fashion in the last decade was marked by expanse. "We saw large-scale furniture when the housing market was 'hot' and people were building huge homes," Cate Adams said. "But baby boomers are aging and downsizing, and so furnishings are becoming smaller and



PHOTO COURTESY ARNOLD'S HOME FURNISHINGS

more suited to their needs. We're not seeing the huge, overstuffed pieces that we did a few years ago."

Within smaller spaces, one of the trends is for furniture that can perform double duty. For example, "instead of a coffee table, we'll see a storage ottoman," Adams explained. "Or we'll see a chest of drawers with a shelf that slides out to accommodate a laptop."

Also popular are furnishings that are sturdy and more supportive. Rather than big, soft pieces they can sink into, "consumers are purchasing chairs and

sofas that are easier to get out of," Adams said, adding, "All of this has to do with the aging process."

Baby boomers can be directly tied to the popularity of club chairs, which have supportive, wrap-around backs and a compact size; recliners, currently available in a variety of styles; and Tempur-Pedic and memory-foam mattresses. To some degree, they also are responsible for the sales growth of area rugs. Although area rugs traditionally have sold well in the Pacific Northwest because of the abundance of hardwood floors, Adams noted they also are being used to add interest to small spaces and to define open floor plans.

Regardless of their age, consumers over the last couple of years have been cautious in their large furniture purchases, Adams reported. As the recession has worn on, many have opted for solid- and neutral-colored fabrics that have staying power. To add some pizzazz, Adams advises clients to choose pillows, drapery panels and other accessories that have more color and pattern. And, increasingly, consumers are heeding that advice, especially because there are many gray days in this part of the world, as Adams said, "and we need it!"



PHOTO COURTESY ARNOLD'S HOME FURNISHINGS



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Laurajeane Welch opened Harrison Street Design in 1996 and has helped hundreds of clients find the right in-home decorating solutions that suit their color and style preferences, existing furnishings, budgets and lifestyles. Prior to starting her own business, Welch worked at a design firm in Bellevue. She also has lent her expertise to two Street of Dreams homes and has managed a design store. Welch currently lives with her husband, Alan, in Old Town Poulsbo and works out of her on-premises design studio.

Fun and Funky

Laurajeane Welch agreed that downsizing is a big trend. "Money concerns are driving fashion," she said. But, at the same time, Welch noted that interiors are becoming "fun and funky, and bright and cheery," as consumers find creative ways to update old spaces.

As an example, she pointed to the popularity of bolder patterns emerging at the window and as accents. "We're seeing more geometric patterns in pillows and side panels, which give rooms interest and pop!" she said.



PHOTOS COURTESY HARRISON STREET DESIGN



Welch described the geometrics as large-scale and a little retro in appearance, much like those currently found in women's fashions. She said to look for wide stripes, plaids and vibrant florals that call to mind the 1960s but in surprising color combinations.

It's not unusual, for instance, to find plaids in earthy brown, cream and midtone blue, or stripes that pair cosmetic pinks with botanical greens. Charcoal, slate and metallics often play into emerging color schemes and have become the new neutrals, Welch reported. She suggested to watch for metallics in particular, which will appear in small doses (as a running thread in fabrics, for instance) to larger doses (such as in kitchen and bathroom sinks).

Thin-weight fabrics are taking a back seat to midweight materials that are organic and heavily textural, such as grass-weave wallpapers and bamboo shades. Natural materials go hand in hand with consumers' ever-growing eco-consciousness. But also, "people tend to feel more comfortable around substantial materials that they feel will last," Welch said.

Luxurious fabrics, such as midweight damasks, likewise are popular not only because they feel durable but also because they add elegance to pared-down rooms. When used in draperies, the fabrics often are embellished with tassels or beading, although the treatments

themselves tend to be straightforward, with clean lines. "They're sassy, not stuffy," Welch said.

Meanwhile, custom roller shades and Roman shades have become "hot" sellers. Roman shades are especially popular "because they offer the clean lines of a shade with the warmth of fabric," Welch said.

A surprising trend, especially in the current economic climate, is the popularity of motorized treatments.



PHOTOS COURTESY HARRISON STREET DESIGN



Although “spendy,” motorized draperies, shades, blinds and other treatments are on the rise, said Welch, who has had clients rewire their entire homes for this purpose. “I’ve done 10 to 15 motorized jobs in the last two years,” she said.

Regardless of the trends, Welch sees her clients creating environments that make them happy. And for that reason, “I’m excited about what’s coming this year,” she said.



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Judith Rammel has been creating comfortable and welcoming residential environments for clients for more than 20 years. An associate member of the Interior Design Society, she has worked and resided on the Kitsap Peninsula since 1995. Peninsula Design offers an array of home décor and interior design services, including selection of furniture, fabrics, window coverings and accessories and color consulting. The firm also offers extensive home staging and residential resale consulting services.

Livable

Sweeping changes in technology and the housing market are affecting how people live in their homes, Judith Rammel said, noting that key words in home fashion are “optimistic,” “functional” and “personal.”

“There is a new approach to living in a home that focuses more on how a house works and feels for each family versus how it works for the family next door,” she said.

One room affected by new technology



PHOTO COURTESY PENINSULA DESIGN

is the family room, which no longer is the sole center of entertainment.

“With the advent of Wi-Fi, every room has the opportunity to become a computer, game or TV room,” Rammel explained. Additionally, the popularity of downloadable movies and music has made the need for CD and DVD storage a

thing of the past “although concealing components and controllers is still a desire of homeowners and renters alike,” she added. “Look for more boxes, baskets and the like to replace storage cabinets and towers.”

Given the emphasis on functionality, unused rooms have become passé.



PHOTOS COURTESY PENINSULA DESIGN

"Guest rooms will still house guests when necessary, but they may also house Mom's retreat or home office. An effort to use available square footage to the maximum extent possible is definitely in vogue," Rammel said. "People will enjoy their spaces more as they utilize them for personal interests, such as reading or music, and for treasures, like arts and books."

Rammel added that rearranging, repositioning, reusing and redoing spaces with existing items will remain popular as consumers watch their decorating dollars. "Recycled-content products will be found in many accessories, like bowls and boxes and on countertops in the kitchen and bath," she said. As part of this trend, "green" products will remain "hot."

Consumers also can expect a more neutral color palette with color schemes that are simpler and more natural in feeling. "Darker cabinets and hardwood flooring are losing style and will lighten up, as will the spaces they are in,"

Rammel said. She said to look for lighter-toned woods ranging from cream and white-washed to grayed-out finishes that take on a rustic elegance.

"This year will be the year of simplifying

our lives and following our hearts," Rammel said. "Whatever inspires you, takes you back to your roots or makes you feel good will lead where design goes in 2011."





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Stephanie Harris started working in design in 1977 as an intern with Juris Zommers at his original company, Daina Design. She joined the firm as an associate designer, becoming a partner in 1980, at which time the firm became Harris/Zommers Interiors. Harris works in all phases of residential design. One of her special interests is working with color, from choosing one knockout color for a powder room to developing schemes that flow throughout the house.

Value-Oriented

Stephanie Harris is reticent to use the word "trend."

"I believe most designers have shifted their emphasis away from creating a current look, while encouraging clients to educate themselves about value and function along with appearance," Harris explained.

"With the decline of the economy, even those who still have resources are much more interested in purchases that will give

pleasure and function over the long haul," she said. "The days of tossing everything out and redoing a room from scratch are, for most people, no longer an option."

This doesn't mean consumers should never buy anything new. Instead, "it means casting a critical eye over existing furnishings to see how items can be used in new ways," she said, noting that it's not unusual for homeowners to hire professional organizers to help them reduce clutter and simplify their lives.

"The watchwords for today are 'refreshing, reorganizing, reupholstering, refinishing and repurposing.' "

That being said, Harris noted there are some general trends that began a few years ago and continue to gain steam. The obvious one is "green" products and design. "Clients are increasingly interested in low-VOC (volatile organic compound) finishes, natural fibers and products manufactured with low-environmental-impact processes and



PHOTO COURTESY HARRIS/ZOMMERS INTERIORS

Brockman chairs have clean lines, designed on a smaller scale, making them easy to incorporate with many different styles.

materials," she said. "Environmentally respectful products have become easier to find and more appealing than ever."

Wallcoverings also are popular and are in the middle of a resurgence. Harris noted there are "some fabulous natural papers" currently available on the market, such as the "Meditations" line by Maya Romanoff. She said the appealing "Mantra Meditation" pattern in the line is made of handmade, Nepalese lokta paper with flecks of mica. (Lokta is an indigenous plant of Nepal.)

In line with the return to simplicity, furnishings that reflect modern or mid-century modern sensibility are having a major impact in the marketplace. The pieces are characterized by a smaller scale; straight lines; organic, curved shapes; and a lack of fussy decorative touches.

"The clean lines of these pieces make them easy to incorporate in many different interior styles," Harris said.



PHOTO OF BROCKMAN CHAIR COURTESY HARRIS/ZOMMERS INTERIORS

"I believe most designers have shifted their emphasis away from creating a current look, while encouraging clients to educate themselves about value and function along with appearance."



Janet Weber

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Janet Weber owns and operates her own interior design business with the goal of creating atmospheres that are unique and well suited to each client's values, lifestyle and personality. She assists clients in realizing the vision for their homes and commercial spaces by guiding them through each phase of the design process, from the initial space planning to the final selection and placement of accessories. Weber received her bachelor of arts degree from Washington State University and has been working in the industry since 1986. Her professional involvements include Design on Broadway in Everett, Markie Nelson Interior Design in Seattle and Fine Home on Bainbridge Island.



Updated Nostalgia

In researching home-fashion trends for 2011, Janet Weber began to long for the

1970s and her childhood home.

Many of the design elements from that era, like brass, parquet flooring, oak

wood, herringbone patterns and the color pink are popular again and definitely evoke nostalgic feelings, Weber said. However, "these items have been updated and no longer really resemble their original cousins," she added.

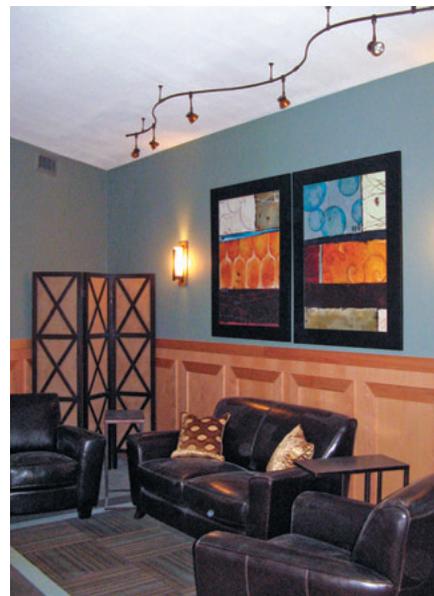
For instance, Weber noted that brass fixtures today not only are polished but also antiqued, aged and blackened and come in both ornate and modern styles. Parquet flooring isn't made from just a single wood but from a variety of woods mixed together in a chevron, or herringbone, pattern. This pattern also might be carried throughout the rest of the house in wallcovering, tile, fabrics and accessories.

Along with herringbone, Weber noted that plaid is making a comeback and has been seen in personal fashion for a while. The pattern currently is cropping up in a variety of home fabrics and accessories. Pink likewise has returned, although in a warm permutation. Some home-fashion experts put the color at the top of the 2011 home-fashion palette.

"Pantone's color of the year is called 'Honeysuckle.' It is a warm shade of pinkish red that is supposed to be a dominant color this year," Weber reported. "I have my doubts about this one in the Pacific Northwest (since) we tend to stay a bit earthier with our colors around here. But, hey! What's earthier than honeysuckle?"



PHOTOS ON THIS PAGE COURTESY JANET WEBER



Collected and culturally layered looks also are in vogue, as are earthy textures found in Navajo-inspired fabrics, rugs and pillows. Also "in" are American heritage brands, such as Pendleton blankets, Filson canvas bags and Red Wing ceramics.

In general, "vintage" will be "the cat's meow" in 2011.

"The '50s, '60s and '70s are all up for grabs. Found objects, repurposed to go with today's interiors, will be a 'hot' trend, which also lends itself to the ongoing need to be environmentally friendly," Weber predicted.

Weber added she's excited about most of the emerging trends but she tries to keep them in perspective. "Your home must reflect who you are as a person," she said. "But if the trend fits, wear it!"



Stefanie Brooks

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An experienced interior designer from Gig Harbor, Stefanie Brooks exemplifies passion and vision for the design community and aims to provide excellent customer service to clients and business professionals locally and outside our demographic region. SB Interior Design launched six years ago after Brooks turned her dream of becoming a designer into a reality. Projects include custom homes; kitchen, bath and whole-house remodels; and providing custom furnishings and adornments. She is highly involved with the Master Builders Association, Remodelers Council and Design Professionals Council of Pierce County.

Treasured

While Stefanie Brooks has been involved with an average of one custom home per year, she said the trend is for homeowners to stay put and revive their existing spaces.

As part of that trend, many of Brooks' clients are hanging on to heirlooms or treasures they've picked up from their travels. It's not unusual, for instance, for clients to ask Brooks to design around their Grandma's china or a light fixture they've picked up in Italy.

In general, blending old and new items is a favorite way to design a space. "Whether it's old, reclaimed beams for a large remodel or a pair of mid-century modern side chairs, mixing the two worlds of old and new creates a space with conversation pieces," Brooks said. "Adding a fun knob or pull to furniture makes for a fabulous old piece with a new look."

Brooks added that a local favorite for old treasures is Dana Lee's Furniture in Port Orchard. "Dana is great at



PHOTOS COURTESY STEPHANIE BROOKS

scavenging up old ugly pieces from Craigslist and local thrift stores, giving them a facelift with a fresh coat of paint," she said.

When they do buy new, homeowners tend to gravitate toward low-maintenance products that are easy to clean and have long-lasting quality. Brooks said new homeowners like to spend the larger portion of their budget on hard and fixed finishes, such as cabinetry, countertops and tile, and less on furniture and accessories once the home is complete.

And what about color? Brooks noted that while tone-on-tone and monochromatic schemes are perennial favorites in the Pacific Northwest, there





PHOTOS COURTESY STEPHANIE BROOKS

are no hard and fast rules about staying within this palette. "Depending upon the style of home, the use the home will receive and the client's feelings on color, there are always opportunities to use a palette beyond what the norm is here in our region," Brooks said, suggesting that pops! of mimosa yellow, chartreuse or honeysuckle can brighten up neutral schemes.

To get the most from their interiors, Brooks added it's important for homeowners to identify the period, character and architectural details of their



Bright and colorful beach cottage/vacation home

home. "Recognizing these things will help shape and clarify the home's natural characteristics," she said, "which will then lead to an overall impeccable design."

"Clients are reviving existing spaces and designing around heirlooms or treasures. Blending old with new creates more interest."



Bubble light made from glass balls