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The Trend Forecaster



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Demolish the Rules but Keep the Tradition

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To quote Alexander McQueen, "I'm here to demolish the rules, but to keep the tradition." (McQueen died in 2010 at the age of 40.) The Metropolitan Museum of Art's 2011 McQueen exhibit was sensory overload of his intense creativity. The exhibit examined his evolution from fledgling label, to his years as creative director at Givenchy in Paris, to the collections of his own world-renowned London house.

McQueen felt his designs were self-confident and fearless, generating from a constant flow of new ideas drawn from heritage. He believed that clothes and jewelry should be startling and individual. He said, "Mixing luxury and mass-market fashion is very modern. Wearing head-to-toe designer had become passe'. It's a new era in fashion – there are no rules. It's all about the individual and personal style; wearing high-end, low-end, classic labels, and up-and-coming designers all together."



Alexander McQueen

Alexander McQueen was one of the most influential, imaginative, and provocative designers of his generation. His clothing expressed ideas about culture, politics, heritage, and identity. McQueen felt that Nature was the primary vehicle for romance and inspiration. Nature was always a central theme or the theme for his designs. He was particularly fascinated by the colors and graphics of feathers in addition to the engineering of flight. Other materials in his oeuvre included leather, lace, flowers, florals, pleats, capiz shells, gold, and textures in general. McQueen's influence, especially since the Met's exhibit, has directly inspired the direction of both fashion and home décor.

It's a new era in fashion – there are no rules. It's all about the individual and personal style. These are warm words for consumers who are ready to break-out of their poverty-mentality and are geared-up to brighten their lives with a quick pick-me-up; something that brings a smile to their face when they enter their homes, be it wall décor, a rug, decorative pillows, throws, paint, etc. Something bright and cheery.

Like Alexander McQueen, begin with tradition, then break-out creating your own style. Decorating a home is a process . . . a combination of the planned

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Trends

Looking to the Past

To know the future we must look to the past; it holds traces and clues of styles and interests that will shape our tomorrows. In the desire to balance our current dependence on technology and the everyday complexities of life with simplification, we are creating a desire for the straightforward ease of things past, when life was uncomplicated . . . or so we imagine!

Looking to the past to shape our future is a theme running through each of the incoming trends. Remember when everything was Made in America? It really wasn't all that long ago. Some can still remember Mid-Century Modern when it was just called "Modern" and was quite radical for its time. Global Heritage re-energizes international historical heritage. These design legacies will be recreated both singularly in their fundamental form and as multi-cultural.

"Made in America" has come back home. Remember when Wal-Mart touted "Made in America" with banners throughout their stores? Recently, the only things in Wal-Mart that are made in America are those banners which are hidden away in storage somewhere. Today you can go into stores throughout the world and find the exact same products . . . all made in China. Not only are we all tiring of this sameness, but there's an awakening desire to tell an authentic story which additionally supports American businesses and workers. It's a sense of feeling of community and common good; that helping the economy in turn helps us all.



*iPad case handcrafted in USA
by The Good Flock*

There's an emotional connection to products Made-in-America, especially handcrafted by local artisans. Consumers find comfort in products that are handmade, or just appear to be handmade, for there's an assumed connection to a human. Along with cherishing authentic products there's a revival of vintage with looks of being patched, quilted, or frayed; to irregular textures and handloomed appearances. Plus, you'll find re-energized Native American designs. Look for handwork influences including crochet, knitting, embroidery, patchwork, beading, as well as from nature, look for feather, leaf, floral, bird, and animal elements.

Mid-Century Modern, both home décor and fashion, have received a huge boost from "Mad Men." What's Mid-Century Modern? It's a post-WWII style of furniture and architecture that continued into the late 1960's when more formal Mediterranean influences began to take hold. Mid-Century Modern was influenced by post-World War I architects and designers, most notably Charles and Ray Eames, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Le Corbusier who called for an end to Victorian influences. They desired less formal and more organic elements; a clean, simple, functional integration with nature. This period offered new materials and technology which were developed just prior to the war, e.g., plastics, nylon, acrylic, polyester and synthetic rubber. After 1945, factories transferred their inflated manufacturing capacities to consumer products. It was perfect timing for the post-war housing boom and the demand for quick and simple construction. Unadorned, straight, small-scale lines were a perfect complement to meet this requirement.

Today's renaissance of Mid-Century Modern, in addition to "Mad Men," is attributed to many Gen X's and Y's moving into neighborhoods of 1950's homes whose clean, straight lines call for similar furnishings while concurrently, vintage resale shops are acquiring large inventories of these furnishings.

Look for a revival of Mid-Century artists to include Alexander Calder, Jackson Pollack, and especially Andy Warhol who created simplicity with their focus on color and graphics.



*Christopher Polaski
Designs*



*AbbyPhoto 2011
www.abbyphoto.com*

Trends

Looking to the Past

As the desire, through necessity, is causing consumers to pare down their lives, the attention focuses on organic shapes and an integration with nature; bringing the outdoors in and open floor plans. Design is integrated with color, texture, geometric patterns, and color-blocking.

Global Heritage—Global influences are forever with us as travelling and technology makes us more aware of other cultures. Globally influenced designs, modified, adapt to our changing lifestyles giving consumers an exciting, yet grounded experience. Global Heritage conjures images of handmade; a face and hands associated with each creation. Patterns and designs inspired by earlier civilizations offer us a direct link to nature; shapes inspired by animate and inanimate objects and original dyes sourced from roots, nuts, flowers, and berries.

Global Heritage links us to our heritage . . . or to the heritage of others around the world. Modern tribal designs inspired by ancient cultures have withstood the test of times past and will with-stand the test of future times. Ethnic geometric motifs, comfortable and familiar, are at ease in every décor, linked by color and scale. As these motifs were created by acts of self-expression in a previous heritage, their applications in today's décor are similarly acts of self-expression. The history of cultural and tribal designs tells a story of another era while that ageless link tells a story about us today.

Ikats, familiar to us all, have ebbed and flowed for decades in our décor with each rebirth offering slightly different versions . . . re-colored, re-sized, and more stylized. Suzanis also are morphing and are nearly unrecognizable from their initial introduction to the US from Uzbekistan as an upholstered chair. Suzani is a Persian word for needle, for originally the designs were embroidered. In newer iterations we'll see more graphic displays and unimagined combinations of colors. Toile de Jouy, originating in 18th century France, is still with us today. In the intervening centuries it's been re-colored and the pastoral subject matter has morphed to represent the contemporary activity of the day. A further toile departure, Richard Saja of Historically Inaccurate embroiders humorous characters onto vintage toiles. Globally influenced Damask, has remained a constant for over 2000 years. Still recognizable from its early origins, look for newer block-printed iterations with an ethnic twist that makes it casual, relaxed, and approachable in any decor.



Graham & Green



Historically Inaccurate - Richard Saja

Native American influences are escalating in 2012, specifically Navajo patterns. And, as we approach the Rio de Janeiro Olympics in 2016, be alert for designs of Brazilian and other South American indigenous peoples.

Demographics

The Lost Generation

There are myriad opinions about the status of today's Middle Class. Following are a few: The middle-class is in worse shape than in the 1990's. The median household income has not risen since 1996. There's a growing gap between the top and bottom on the income ladder and joblessness is the main culprit. The recession has continued to push 25-34 year olds to move in with family to save money creating KIPPERS – Kids In Parent's Pockets Eroding Retirement Savings. Suburban poverty is at the highest rate since 1967.

Whether it is as gloomy as these statistics indicate, the past five years have had a forceful impact on the mind-set of Gen Y (born 1981-94 - age 18-31). Today's Gen Y (Echo Boomers) are coming of age in a harsh economic climate with uncertain expectations and poor job prospects. It's a far cry from when

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Brighter and More Optimistic

Colors will be brighter and more optimistic in 2012 and beyond. An explosion of color gives a sense of freedom and happiness. Consumers want to feel good when they walk through their door and nothing makes them feel better than bright cheery colors. In 2012 we'll see more exciting colors that add a splash of unexpected fun, freedom, and happiness. Neutrals will have more personality, inviting pattern and color pops. New techniques for layering and texturing are being made possible thanks to technological advances.

Political unrest both at home and in Europe will continue in 2012 due to the languid economy and an election year in the US. "Established bright liberal blues and fiery conservative reds will continue to do battle. Many people in the middle are tired of the conflict and tired of retreating to the neutral gray position," Jack Bredenfoerder, CMG and color strategist.

Reds The Red family is warming with a marriage of red and coral; a very livable hue for interior spaces. This coral red has an orange undertone. A Global heritage influenced red will resonate with many cultures. Latin American influences will continue to grow through Rio de Janeiro's 2016 Olympics with more fiery reds. Pink, a grown-up hue, works in both menswear and home interiors.



Pantone 169

METRO-SEXUAL PINK



Pantone Warm Red

BERMUDA CORAL



Pantone 7418

GLOBAL HERITAGE



Pantone 485

LATIN RED

Orange will be found as a high energy hue that bridges red and orange as a free-spirited accent color. Burnt tangerine, another iteration of orange, is subdued enough to be considered a neutral.



Pantone 158

BURNT TANGERINE



Pantone 7410

DREAMIN'



Pantone 1485

Olé

Yellow will trend toward a lighter chameleon color with a green cast; a more subdued accent. A playful, mood lightening yellow is rising evoking warmth and happiness, like a bright sunny day. And, a richly antiqued old gold is a glimpse from the past.



Pantone 600

SUMMER BEAN



Pantone 127

SUNNY DAZE



Pantone 1245

OLD GOLD

Green will be going in two directions. One is nature's neutral, a deep forest herbaceous green. Look too, for a brighter 1970's retro-green. And a bright, healing, clean green oriented toward natural landscapes.



Pantone 3305

DEEP FOREST



Pantone 362

HIPPIE GREEN



Pantone 576

VEGGIE GREEN

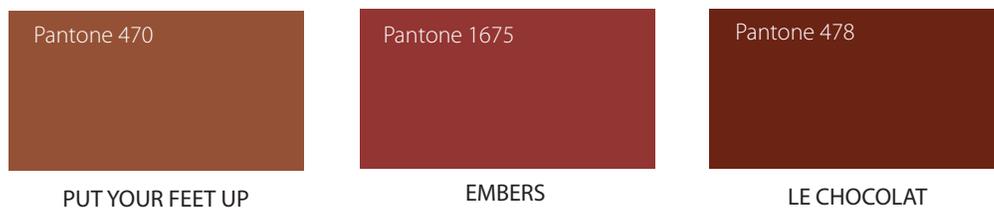
Blue We'll see several blues, all possessing depth of character. A globally appealing spiritual blue is solid and grounding. It is easily paired with other hues in home décor. Jewel-toned greened blue will remind us of the power of water. And a patriotic Made-in-America blue will be compelling in this election year, especially as an accent.



Purple Boyz-n-Berry is Color Marketing Group's (CMG) color-of-the-year. This hue possesses both masculine and feminine appeal and bridges the markets from youth to luxury goods. Paired with other colors it creates a glamorous combination. Another purple will note the influence of umber making it a comfortable and relaxed neutral. This hue is the kissing cousin of many global legacies.



Brown Look for a weathered, golden, put-your-feet-up brown that's reminiscent of worn saddles and boots. A darker, more sophisticated brown with red undertones is more mysterious, yet classic and comforting, blending with many cultures.



Gray is splitting into two directions. A soft, complex neutral gray with a translucent quality and a slight blue undertone; inspired by stone. It pairs well with a deep, mineral industrial gray which possesses both wisdom and personality.



Marketing



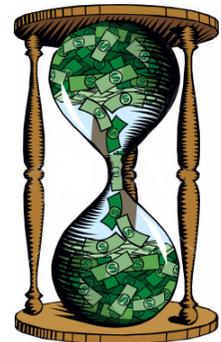
Just Relax and Enjoy

Just relax . . . then buy!" Retailers have long known that relaxed shoppers are likely to browse longer and be more receptive to higher prices. A recent study in the Journal of Marketing Research confirmed that stress-free shoppers are willing to pay up to 15% more for goods. "After a few minutes of soothing music and a few sips of free cappuccino, your brain gets the message that there's no reason to be on alert," says Tuan Pham, professor of marketing at Columbia. More stores and malls are offering soothing amenities and services . . . trays of complimentary cocktails and finger food, private events

before and after regular store hours, and free Wi-Fi. Using Emotional Marketing tactics is a way that retailers are attempting to wean shoppers from big discounts.

Consumer Hour-Glass Theory

As the middle-class shrinks the markets are beginning to look more like an hour glass with the upper-class fanning out on top and the lower-class fanning out on the bottom, and the shrinking middle-class squeezed in the middle. As the middle-market contracts P&G, who always aimed for the middle, is now aiming new brands to the high-end and low-end. Former middle-market shoppers are trading down to more affordable lower priced goods; ever widening the divide between the have and have-not shoppers at the expense of the middle. "It's required us to think differently about our product portfolio and how to please the high-end and lower-end markets," said Melanie Healey, group president of P&G North America.



The Gini Index measures the degree of inequality of income within a country. At the top with the lowest income inequality is Sweden, Slovenia and Denmark who rank 134-132. The US ranks 44 between Cameroon and Uruguay. At the bottom with the highest income inequality is Namibia and South Africa, ranking 1 and 2.

Wait While I Try It On!

China's high-end buyers are the world's fastest growing luxury market and are becoming accustomed to being pampered each time they open their wallets. China's luxury lovers are now among the world's more sophisticated and have grown more demanding. China is poised to become the world's largest luxury market by 2020 and will account for 20% of the world's luxury purchases. To be sure they remain loyal customers, the luxury internet company, Yoox Group, and FedEx custom designed a service. FedEx delivery men will wait on the doorsteps of Chinese consumers while they inspect their purchases, try them on, and decide if the products are worthy of keeping or sending back.

Social Media



Time spent online may be helping people learn to be more empathetic and make more friends in real life, according to social scientists. Studies have found that digital communication can lead to more and better friendships both online and off; greater honesty, faster bonding, and an increased sense of belonging.

For those who are shy, anxious, or with low self-esteem in social settings, online communication helps them feel more comfortable, better accepted and more extroverted. Socially anxious participants were more likely to become decision makers and leaders when online.

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International

Out: Made in China

In: Made for China

There's an increasing number of western brands who are launching new products and new brands dedicated to consumers in emerging markets, specifically BRIC countries. Emerging markets are where the money is and western brands are preferred over local brands for their perceived quality and exclusivity.

Chinese consumers especially, appreciate products that are tailored to their needs for practical reasons (shape, size, features) or for recognition (cultural pride, heritage, lifestyle.)

Who is Making for China:

- ◆ Levi's jeans are targeting Chinese consumers with slimmer fits.
- ◆ BMW has introduced a limited edition orange metallic M3 Tiger.
- ◆ Apple's Shanghai store employees are wearing red T-shirts with "Designed in California, Made for China" written in Mandarin.
- ◆ GM, Honda, and Nissan are all introducing cheaper brands in China, as many people in emerging markets still have less to spend than counterparts in mature consumer markets.



BMW M3 Tiger

Economic and Consumption Power is shifting towards emerging markets for that is where the middle classes are growing; whereas, in the US specifically, the middle class is shrinking. We hear so much about the affluent in China, but relatively little about the middle class, except that they are growing at a rapid rate. Iconoculture's China Focus program, through in-depth interviews learned that the Chinese middle class want to provide opportunity for their children, create a comfortable home, and live a healthy lifestyle to ward off astronomical healthcare costs. Sound familiar?

3rd and 4th Tier Chinese Cities are Booming but, technologically, today they are where the US was in the 1950's . . . when most regions had three TV channels and everyone was exposed to the same ads, hence brands were confident they were reaching everyone with a TV. The difference today in these 3rd and 4th tier Chinese cities is that instead of TV's they are gathering a world of information via computers, hence, creating a huge challenge for brand recognition and brand loyalty.

Other Chinese Tid-bits:

- ◆ China's retail sales rose 18.7% in 2010.
- ◆ China's retail sales are on-track to overtake the US's by 2016.
- ◆ Beijing airport will overtake Atlanta as the world's busiest passenger airport this year.
- ◆ Hong Kong airport will overtake Memphis as the world's busiest freight airport this year.

Social Media *Continued from page 6*

In general, more empathy, understanding and support was extended in written communications. The more time spent on Facebook, the more empathy was expressed both online and in real life. (Information gathered from *The Wall Street Journal*)

Tid-Bit – In 50 years will anyone born and raised in Indiana be able to write cursive? Maybe not, but everyone will be able to type. Indiana officials announced that schools will no longer be required to teach longhand writing, so that students can focus on typing. We truly are entering a new era. Being left-handed will no longer make a difference. Since handwriting is unique will Indianans lose their sense of personal identity?

Demolish the Rules *Continued from page 1*



*Mattia Bonetti Table—
Paul Kasmin Gallery*

and the spontaneous. One's home is never complete for one just keeps adding. Sometimes subtracting; then adding again. Homes are a life-time of assembly; like a collage, bringing together different pieces of life, creating a narrative with those experiences so that no home or room is fixed in one point of time. And, no two homes are alike. It's a totally unique, collected look that can't be duplicated.

Look for:

- ◆ Layering of fabrics
- ◆ Layering of light (chandeliers, recessed, table lamps, floor lamps) adding depth of personality to a room.
- ◆ Hand-embellished fabrics with sequins, jewels, pleating, cut-outs, ruffles, and ribbons.
- ◆ Lace is incoming to tabletop, bed and bath, and home décor accessories. Lace has a hand-crafted look, texture, light-play, and visual interest.
- ◆ Graphics – Squiggles, Swirls, Twirling, Dots, and Loops. These “Doodles” all have a feeling of movement, of animation. They feel personal and ask questions: What was the person doing? What was he thinking about? Who was the person?
- ◆ Geometrics will lead the pattern parade with lots of stripes plus smaller-scaled prints and patterns.
- ◆ Contrasts in textures and layers presents unlimited possibilities for creating individuality.
- ◆ Clashing patterns be it plaids with plaids, plaids with florals, whatever . . . it's all about mixing scales, patterns, and colors.
- ◆ Nature as inspiration will be the genesis of more designs:
 - snakeskin, shagreen, alligator, suede, animal hide, feathers, leaves, florals, and bark.



*11th C Italian Marble
Venice - St. Mark's Basilica*



18th C Italian Bargello



21st C Italian Missoni

- ◆ Natural patterns captured from Nature; the morphing from 11th C Medieval Italian Marble, to 18th C Italian Bargello needlework, to 21st C Italian Missoni fashions.

The Lost Generation *Continued from page 3*

their Boomer parents came of age in a period of great expectations and excesses. Guarantees for a secure career channel no longer exist; there are no magic formulas to follow that will lead them down the same golden path of triumph that the Boomers skipped along.

Born with technology, they are prime prospects for Mass-Customization to fulfill their quest for pioneering different, distinctive products in both fashion and home décor. Gen Y is more adventurous in creating color combinations and pattern combinations, mixing together prints or stripes with plaids and geometrics. They begin with a classic, thrusting it to its boundaries and beyond. Their limited financial resources are an incubator for this innovation.

Reaching their earning years during a depressed economy will lower their eventual earning potential and make them forever cautious consumers. These young adults are developing the same fiscal patterns as their great-grandparents who came of age during the Great Depression. They are saving, are fiscally cautious, searching for value, are more inventive, and appreciate quality over quantity.