

BURNING Design Questions

'07 DESIGN TRENDS AND HOW ART & FRAMING FIT IN

Staying on top of the latest home-decor trends isn't always easy. Translating them into a language that makes sense for art and framing is even harder. We at FASTFRAME would like to make things a little easier. Three top experts give their takes on '07 trends and offer exciting ideas you can take straight to your local FASTFRAME store.

Edward Nader, Jr., CPF, owns Nader's Gallery in Shreveport, La., a shop known as much for its impressive art gallery as it is for the furniture and home accessories that accompany it. Nader is so personally



involved with his clients that he gives in-home art consultations, complete with design, lighting and hanging tips.

Gigi Steadman, ASID, is a certified interior designer and member of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID). She has been part of a team of decorators at Frank Patton Interiors in St. Louis for 14 1/2 years. Her favorite '07 trend is desert neutrals.



Daniel Fenski spent 20 years as design director for R.H. Macy's, Inc., before opening his own frameshop, Windsor Gallery, in Colts Neck, N.J. His experience gives a unique spin to the business and allows him to give framing and overall design tips.



Here's what our experts had to say:

▷ "Kinetic Contrasts" from Sherwin-Williams Color Mix 2007 (Image courtesy of Sherwin-Williams)

■ **FASTFRAME:** What colors are especially hot for 2007, and how does wall decor fit in?

Nader: White, white, white. It might be tinted with hints of color, but the bottom line is, it's still white. It's best to mix it up with some textures and tones to avoid a sterile or boring look. Those that insist on color might look for more weathered or softer shades.

Steadman: Mid-tones and deeper saturated neutrals are still the hot colors for 2007. However, browns are blending more into an undertone of gray—greige. Color accents are coming from Andalusia, South Africa, Asia, etc. Earthy colors of the Mediterranean have been kissed by the sun while deep oranges, peppery reds, golden yellows and blues in a stronger palette are sultry.

Fenski: Skin-toned neutrals are acting as the counterpoint to the "riot of color" that has been building. I completely agree with Leatrice Eiseman of the Pantone Color Institute who sites a "continuing quest for harmony" and "soft, colorful hues come to the rescue in an age of high anxiety." These are exactly the requests I am hearing from my customers. The majority of people visiting our store are looking for 30" x 40" works or larger. We emphasize to our clients how just one piece of good artwork can totally transform a room, even alter its mood.



■ What types of frame colors and styles are fitting into 2007 home-decor trends? How have they changed since 2006?

N: I am seeing a lot of exotic woods with primitive finishes and tactile textures. Framers will continue to display finishes with history. Lacquer is showing, but I think it will be short-lived.

S: Following this trend, frames are becoming more dimensional and more luxurious with embellished detail or touches of metallic. Florentine patterns also are making an appearance.

F: I'm on a quest for more contemporary profiles with distinctive finishes that express something more individual. Although gold, silver, wood and black finishes are still the staples, many customers are eager to consider more unusual possibilities.

■ Past trends in wall decor included metal art, oversized art and grouping. What's new for 2007?

N: Groupings are still big. Just about every leading designer is doing it. Having several things grouped neatly in a grid demonstrates order in an otherwise crazy world. A proportionate grid of mirrors making a big statement over the sofa is a fresh approach to an otherwise boring and retro look (see opposite page).

S: Asian-inspired art and accents are hot. With the upcoming Beijing Olympics in 2008, you'll see a lot of images in the media, which will help bridge the cultural divide of East and West.

F: All the above trends will continue in popularity. The difference will be how and where wall decor will be placed in relation to other objects. Placing them in unexpected ways with unexpected dimensions catches your eye. This adds considerable drama and action, as does contrasting design elements against one another.

■ What are the latest furniture trends, and how do they affect framing choices?

N: Furniture in general is showing classic shapes with simple, modern fabrics. Zebra and more exotic woods are starting



◁ Rubino, a raspberry red tone, is the newest introduction to the red family, according to the Color Marketing Group (CMG). Reds are heavily influenced by the upcoming 2008 Beijing Olympics as well as global influences from Central America and India. (Image courtesy of Color Marketing Group)

surfaces will complement the look of an Asian trend. The key is understated detail and restrained simplicity, usually with wide, curvilinear-shaped matting. Stacked mouldings are a great way to achieve a creative Bohemian concept, and computerized mat cutters can give the look of hand-painted mats. I expect the Asian theme to be more mainstream and very apparent while a Bohemian theme would manifest itself more in accent items.

to surface, along with lighter color woods, moving Wenge (the dark coffee brown color) out of the limelight. You'll see simple and classic frames still leading with richer and finer finishes.

S: Although contemporary/transitional styles are still strong, we're seeing a "neo-traditional" look emerge. It's a combination of the traditional, updated with clean lines, but without a modern look. Wood tones that are rich and warm without the black or looks-black finishes will emerge. These finishes are important to framing because framers can add detail or embellishments for more dimension.

F: Elegantly understated and rich, lacquered finishes are in vogue. Several different wood species such as exotic macassar and gaboon showcase obvious grains, burls and intricate inlays. The look is sophisticated and masculine, especially when paired with satin or polished metal accents as either fillets or applied metal castings.

■ **Cultural trends such as Asian and Bohemian-Czech are predicted to be big. What sort of framing solutions will complement these looks?**

N: Use frames with a rich finish to indicate some individuality and uniqueness. Hand finishing that gives the air of craftsmanship is what you're looking for.

S: The love of beautiful papers will translate into more patterned mats as a result of the Asian influence. Frames will be ornate and even embellished with pattern for the Bohemian-Czech influence. The rich colors of these trends will replace pastel artwork, allowing consumers to ramp up their look while keeping their basics. Think of adding layers to keep the influence in accents, but avoid locking into one look.

F: The more contemporary designed frame profiles with subtle yet interesting

■ **What is the most popular place for art in the home? What's new?**

N: I see more and more people hanging art in their garages. There are things that you love, that make you laugh or remind you of a fun trip, but they just don't work with your design statement. I had one client who blew up fun photos in black and white and framed them all in thin black metal. It turned out to be a fun room that you park your car in. You use that room almost everyday, so why not?

S: Most people look for something to go over the sofa or mantel. Bookcases,

came up with that idea of hanging at eye level? Shorter furniture is gaining momentum, so you have to drop the height of the work, or it will feel like it's levitating in the air.

S: Start with the largest piece or area. Over a sofa, for instance, decide if you want to do one large piece or a collection. Having a large item helps anchor the piece and create a focal point. Not every wall should have something hanging on it. Your eye needs some breathing room, and it helps the focus to stay on the important anchors.

F: Don't hang artwork in the obvious places. It reads as predictable, which means you never really look at it because you expect it to be there. The majority of people push everything up against the walls, leaving no focus in the center of the room with most items centered and symmetrical. Bring the furniture into the room, let it breathe, and use the traffic flow as a guide. Using contrast of color, form and texture helps each piece stand on its own. Also, look for opportunities to highlight the presentation of artwork. It can be placed on a table easel or hung with a decorative grosgrain ribbon or a plaster carving or lighted with a picture light. **FF**

▽ Grouping wall decor other than prints and paintings is a growing trend. This proportionate grid of ARTERIORS mirrors can make a big statement over the sofa and offers a fresh approach. (Image courtesy of ARTERIORS)



▽ Medium woods – hot for 2007 – give this kitchen an understated elegance. (Image from Sherwin-Williams Color Mix 2007, courtesy of the company)

especially the larger and deeper openings, are another spot. Adding artwork, instead of books, gives more interest to the space.

F: Hands down, artwork over the fireplace in the great room or living room still remains the main focus. However, artwork is now being used throughout the entire home, especially in kitchens and baths. There is also a trend toward artwork in specially designed garage interiors.

■ **How should a homeowner's furniture arrangement complement a frame arrangement/placement and vice versus?**

N: Always hang art in relation to the piece of furniture it hangs above. Who

