



Photo 1: The H2O color palette is dominated by blues.



Photo 2: The Fiesta color palette is bold and bright.

Design and Color Changes for 2001

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Photo 3: The Mélange color palette contains bright colors, yet less bold than the Fiesta.



Photo 4: The Gossamer color palette incorporates pale versions of color that suggest tranquility.

Well here we are again starting another New Year. Just when you thought you had 2000 under control, here comes 2001. And although it would not be fair to compare this year with the global festivities of 2000, it is always exciting to see what a New Year will bring in trends for color, home decor, and furniture.

At first, these trends can seem a little overwhelming; however, all it takes is a little simplifying and sorting to demystify and determine what we, as framers, need to know to be current with customers' desires.

First, there's color. Since the custom framing industry is another limb of the interior design tree, the influence of color is very important. Framed art and accessories are crucial in creating beautiful decor, and from a designer's point of view, the right accessories can make or break an interior.

The other areas of influence are social issues or lifestyle changes. You've probably all heard the terms Baby Boomers, Expanded Group of Older Generations, Generation X, Y, and Z and descriptions like Feng Shui, Zen, Global, and Eclectic. All of these represent a design influence or perspective.

Why is this important? Because everything, let me repeat, everything that you do in the art and framing world is affected by all of these things. When consumers make purchases such as new furniture, a new home, or an update of their existing home, these influences impact, and even guide, their decisions.

How does your shop rank on a scale of one to 10 in reflecting these new trends? And if your score is low, how can you improve it?

The first thing to do is go shopping—or at least window shopping. Look at textiles, towels, sheets, and bedding. Visit wallpaper, tabletop accessory stores, and furniture stores. Study the products. What is being displayed in the window and what pieces are showcased in the front of the store? Browse through magazines and watch programs on home decorating.

After this exercise, you will have a better understanding of what is "new" and what isn't. Use this information to make a plan for updating the look of your store and what you offer in it. Here's a glimpse of what you'll find is new in color for 2001.



Photo 5: The Subtle Nuances color palette contains dusty and somewhat masculine colors.



Photo 6: The colors in the Resonance palette suggest power and sophistication.



Photo 7: The Elemental color palette contains neutrals that can be mixed with the other palettes.

Color Forecast 2001

Colors for home fashions will range from soft, quiet, romantic shades to loud, vibrant, fiesta hues—and touch on everything in between. Consumers today are rejecting “cookie cutter” looks, opting instead to mix color, finishes, and style with a variety of influences affecting their color choices.

This is fabulous for our art and framing businesses, because it gives us the opportunity to meet this niche with all of the custom looks that we can create... layering textures and colors in mat designs, and stacking mouldings together to achieve a unique, personalized design.

This past fall, Leatrice Eiseman, Executive Director for the Pantone Institute, presented a program at the Highpoint Furniture Market on the color forecast for 2001. She shared some of the information with me. I have applied her forecast to the framing industry to give you an idea of what to look at for this year.

H2O: The colors associated with water, beach, and sand are playing significantly into 2001: blue, turquoise, blue-green, sandy beige, and seashell pink. This palette promises to do well as statistics show the blue family is a leader in the international market.

Fiesta: The next palette steps directly from fashion into home. Influenced strongly by Latin colors and the art of Francesco Clemente, this grouping highlights many shades of red, both warm and cool, accented by purple and yellow-green.



Photo 8: This storyboard represents the transitioning of the H2O color palette to framing design.



Photo 9: This storyboard using the Fiesta color palette demonstrates the vibrant designs that can be achieved.



Photo 10: Achieve the classic look that so many consumers desire with the hues of the Elemental color palette.



Photo 11: The colors of the Resonance palette can be integrated with global motifs, such as the popular animal prints, in frame design.

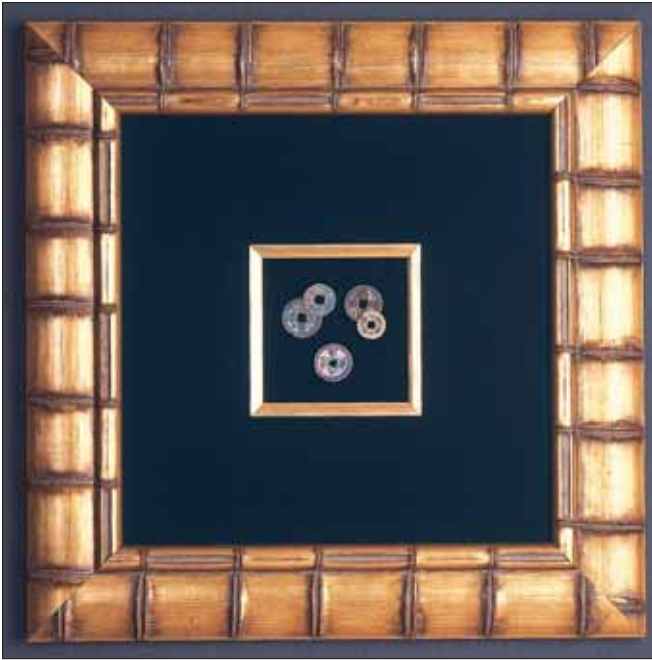


Photo 12: The strong blue in this frame design complements the natural "feel" of the moulding, reflecting the Elemental approach.



Photo 13: This design incorporates the bold characteristics of the Resonance palette.

Mélange: Transitioning down from the brights is the palette called *Mélange*. This is for the consumer that wants a sense of playfulness, but does not want the more vibrant shades of the *fiesta* palette. There are some interesting possibilities for combinations here. Look for rattan shades used with soft violet, or apricot used with

yellow-greens and periwinkle as important mixtures for 2001.

Gossamer: The next palette shows the more romantic aspects of color. The first is a group of *gossamer* colors: soft, quiet, a continuation of home as haven theme. Look for combinations of pale aqua, chalky pinks, and lavender blues.

Subtle Nuances: Just as the name implies, these are light to mid-tone shades, somewhat grayed down, a bit more complex and masculine. Look for the return of dusty shades, in every range.

Resonance: This is a palette of power and sophistication. Deep and resonant, these rich colors have been making a strong comeback. The browns to the red side and/or cranberry combined with plum, olive, or teal make for upscale combinations.

Elemental: The last palette is called *elemental*—the neutrals that are necessary as mixtures with every other palette, yet will stand alone. Gray is prevalent, along with rosy taupe, while blue-tinged neutrals continue to be important. As always, warm golden beige is a consumer favorite that works espe-

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cially well with the new reds and other warm colors.

Framing Ideas

Now that you know what to look for in color, let's examine some of the ways you can apply these trends to framing. Go through the same exercise I've shown here by

creating what I call "storyboards" to show your customers the frame designs that will work well with their decor.

The first storyboard, seen in Photo 8, is transitioned from the H2O color palette. Taking my cue from those colors, I put together artwork, and moulding to reflect

this theme and combined images from magazine room settings and fabrics.

The Fiesta example in Photo 9 shows a hummingbird print using the fiesta color palette that can transition into any of the room settings shown on the board. Also included is a child's table and colorful chairs and fabrics showing how easily these colors work into a juvenile room decor. The watches let the consumer see how fashion trends blend over to decor trends.

The Elemental storyboard in Photo 10 shows a combination of neutral wallpaper and fabric samples that demonstrate sophistication and timeless decorating. The use of objects suitable for framing adds interest and texture to this type of decor in lieu of color.

The Resonance group in Photo 11 is a powerful palette that complements the animal and global trends. The leopard print and the bird of paradise giclée are examples of how artwork and framing can update any decor. Also using metallic pieces, such as the handmade tile with a metallic moulding selection, adds drama and an upscale look.

These storyboards along with beautifully designed framed models demonstrate that you are current on the latest decorating trends and can help you through the selling process at the design counter.

So don't shy away from change—embrace it. It can be a wonderful motivator for success in your business. ■