

FORECASTING INTERIOR TRENDS (Part I of II)

By Milou Ket



Supra Natural: contemporary theme with white, light neutrals and some cool pastel colours for a kind of modern and timeless interior.

Furnitex Australia's resident trend forecaster, advisory member of the MoOD Brussels' Trend Board, and founder of Milou Ket, Styling & Design, Milou Ket reveals the trends to expect in 2010.

MANY FURNISHING COMPANIES refer to my books although my experiences of close collaboration with them are rather limited. I publish a styling book for the total interior, and it provides forecasts more than a year in advance. My book shows themes with colour cards, mood boards, and about 200 real samples that are glued into the book. Worldwide I have many weavers, printers etc as my customers, but also lots of other manufacturers that use my book as the starting point of their collections.

Also I show important colour combinations. For most companies, this information is sufficient to give a clear impression of things to come. The book explains the sources of inspiration, the colours and colour combinations, the materials, the prints or treatment of the materials, and then the most important items. Teams of designers start preparing their collections with my book as a guideline. These companies interpret my book with their own product and history in mind.

HOW I WORK

To make my styling books I inform myself well. I sit in seminars; travel a lot and visit trade fairs, always hunting for new ideas. I am a member of fashion institutes in different countries and have my sources of information on fairs, exhibitions and retail shops globally. I usually have six target groups in my books, based on taste, colour preferences and mentality: for instance a contemporary customer with



Soft Technology: a young, uncomplicated theme, based on fresh pastel colours, reminiscent of a modern laboratory.

neutral colours, a young consumer with a preference for modern materials and colours. A more romantic customer, the ecological interested consumer, the world traveller, and the customer with interest in classical products and luxury. I propose a very wide choice of possibilities.

I HAVE DEVELOPED SIX THEMES:

1. Supra Natural

Nature is still the great source of inspiration, but it changes shape: new technology makes us shift our attention to biology and science for a modern approach. 3-D printing makes a future of “mass-

individualisation” possible. Especially solutions with light are of importance. Opposed to clean and smooth industrial products, such as glass, translucency, iridescence, transparency and metallic, we see the need for texture and tactility, to balance the clean feel. Also glittering effects and metallic add interest.

Often poetic elements play a role, such as laser cutting, origami, and perforations. We see layered effects, organic shapes, furs and hides and over-dimensional products. Hand crafted techniques also offer the possibility to make a product more special, personal, imperfect, irregular and a-symmetrical. Textures, furs, and open fireplaces add warmth. Wood, mostly in light variations, varies from unfinished and course, to

super thin and almost transparent. Paper and cardboard are appreciated for their lightness, transparency and colour. Outdoor products are important. The colours in this direction are light and cool.

Without a doubt, white is the most important colour. It stands for purity and clearness. We see skin, cool pink, cool mint, light blue, white, cool yellow, cream and beige colours. Also we see some natural colours. Sometimes a dark brown is added. Grey in different gradations still plays a role. Silver is added for interest.

2. Soft Technology

This young direction in almost acid pastel colours is influenced by the colours of technology, as in a laboratory. White is indispensable in colour combinations to obtain a fresh and clean effect. We see different interpretations: from clean and modern, sometimes even futuristic based on the results of modern technology. We see effects derived from the view under the microscope and from medical equipment, or the transparent underwater world, to more romantic, organic, tropical and kitschy influences. Prints are very important, in particular in multicolour variations.

Also here the effect of light is very important. A soft artificial effect of colours seen through a transparent or translucent synthetic material is the key. Artificial materials such as glass, plastic, Plexiglas, silicone, rubber etc. give such a diffused, yet colourful effect to obtain a modern result.

The colours are often combined with white for a fresh effect. Once in a while a small dose of black is used, but only in small quantities, for instance for thin lines and outlines. As colours we see heavenly blue, radiant orange, fresh pink, coral, sunny yellow, light emerald, spring green, fresh turquoise and fresh lilac.

Iridescence, multi-foil materials, gels and reflective aspects are important in this direction, to obtain a modern look. Sometimes fluoro elements are added. Silver and gold are also still important to add some special effects.

3. Flights of Fantasy

In this feminine direction the emphasis is on a romantic, quite conservative styling. The colours are based on faded flowers, such as hortensia, with many pinkish and faded aubergine colours. Old-fashioned feminine techniques such as crochet, knitting, lace etc. play a role, and are beloved elements in the feminine interior.



Flights of Fantasy: romantic and feminine based on faded flower colours.

Sometimes these elements are translated in a modern way. Gold and silver are added to emphasise certain parts of a design. Sculpted mirrors, crystal chandeliers, period furniture, and floral determine this direction.

Decorative textile products are very important, such as curtains and upholstery, but also pillows, throws old-fashioned lampshades, etc. The prints, weaves and other colours are carefully colour-coordinated.

We see a lot of forged iron furniture and beds. Painted products are often affected to give a worn-in antique and vintage look.

The colours in this direction are inspired by the faded colours of an old bouquet of hortensia's. As colours we see mauve glow, peach, raspberry, banana, old rose, faded aubergine, faded blue, and faded green. Also our beige colour from the first range "Supra Natural" is used as a separate possibility. This beige colour gives an altered effect when it is combined with the range. With white, however, the total impression is much fresher. The colours are often applied among each other and tone-in-tone.

4. Bright Kaleidoscope

In this colourful style direction we see very bright colours, based on synthetics. True colour is back, and also multi colour effects are very important. Often white and black are used to make the colours shine even more. The colours in this range are

very bright, almost as a colour explosion and based on the myriad colours as seen through a kaleidoscope. Multicolour effects are important. White and black are used as an accent. We see bright red, orange, bright yellow, lime, grass green, deep turquoise, pink, purple and electric blue. Red is an important colour, yellow a real trend colour. Both are often combined with white.

The colour, the light and the translucency of the material are very important. We see for instance glass, plastic, Plexiglas, resin, and silicone. Also high gloss materials are important, such a lacquer and high-polished materials.

Furniture is often modular to offer maximum flexibility. Furniture is often curved. Small furniture is popular as well as lighting as decorative objects. Transparent Plexiglas in neon colours adds a contemporary effect.

We see colourful ethnic influences. Colourful pixels and confetti are used as decoration. Colour blocking, spots and stains as from an artist's palette, are popular.

We see a return of objects, inspired by the Memphis movement, humorous and cheerful. We see photographic images and stylised flat flowers.

Sustainable ideas are important for green products. We see colourful recycled floor tiles.

▪ Part II of the article, together with the two remaining trends forecasted for 2010, as well as tips on how they should be applied, will appear in the next issue (September 2009).



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Milou Ket (www.milouket.com) is the resident trend forecaster at the Furnitex (www.furnitex.com.au) held annually in Australia. Every year at Furnitex's seminar series, Ket unveils the interior trend for the next year and beyond. She explores emerging design themes for the home, and uses her 30 years experience to reveal material, structures and form to inspire future product development. She has a broad variety of clients including: Volvo Cars, Ikea and Esprit Home products.

Ket is also an advisory member of the Trend Board of Decosit, Belgium (now known as MoOD Brussels) and has lectured for the International Colour Marketing Group in New York.

Working with the industry, Ket produces "Innovation Lab", a special issue of the Milou Ket Trend Service. It is an inspiring vision for the future, directed towards development of future products; showing materials, structures, designs, form and their potential application.

Ket spent some time studying in the US before returning to the Netherlands to start her career where she became an advisor and buyer. In 1980, Ket started her own company, Milou Ket Styling & Design. Her main role is putting together fabric and print collections as well as new product development for a range of different retail and buying groups.

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