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COLOUR
PAST
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BY PAUL SEMKULEY

Colour comes in such an array. One would guess that is why a rainbow makes so much sense: a beautiful arc of every imaginable colour in the universe. What's even more astonishing is that a lot of the colours that we use and have today were made from natural organic materials: earth, minerals and vegetation. It wasn't until the 1800s when chemicals were used in conjunction with minerals to create one of the most beautiful colours; mauve. This was the beginning of the modern colours.

Painting one's room or home can be a very daunting exercise. It is one element that challenges people the most when they begin to decorate. Colour is one of the first things people notice when they enter a space. In an instant it will create the mood, style and ambience of the room, and will truly enhance the architectural and design elements of the room.

When I work with a client, I first look for inspirations. Being inspired starts your journey into creating a beautiful and well-thought-out room. Finding inspiration for colour can come from many things, but taking a look at the past and its history will provide you some of the most important colours that we still use today. Look to the renaissance for ochres, siennas and umbers, the ancient Egyptians and the Greeks for their use of blue and purple, or the Chinese civilization for their use of vermilion. By choosing the right colour, it will provide

you with the foundation necessary to build your room.

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All colours can be changed or enhanced to create nuances of colour. These are called Tint, Tone, and Shade.

TINT

- Any colour with white added, creates soft, youthful and soothing colours.

STONE

- Any colour with black and white added, creates a "greyed down" colour. These are the most pleasing to the eye. They are complex, subtle and sophisticated.

SHADE

- Any colour with black added, creates deep, powerful and mysterious colours.

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Your colour choice for your walls can change your room from calm and serene to bold and energetic. Painting a room is the easiest and most cost-effective way to introduce change or simply update your surroundings. At times, we will make suggestions to our clients that wallpaper is also considered a colour, a treatment for walls and ceilings. It not only provides you with colour but can also bring texture and pattern to the room or hallway. Consider it as a feature wall to create a focal point as well as adding an additional design element to the room.

Now that the walls have been painted or papered, we start to look at the furniture and how it works in the room. Larger pieces like sofas should be upholstered in neutrals (not necessarily beige), giving you a clean foundation to build upon. We can easily update and change the colours of the room through the use of accessories like decorative pillows, glassware/ceramics, found objects and artwork. These all begin to add layers to your room, giving it the well curated and manicured aesthetic. If you're willing to take a risk with colour, place one chair or smaller piece of furniture in the room to give it the unexpected "bang" of colour. With several tints, tones, and shades, there is a myriad of colours to choose from.

Whatever colours you choose to work with, remember that it must please you and make you want to be in the space. Not all rooms need to be full of colour, nor do they need to be subtle and subdued. As a designer, I recommend often that you take the one colour you love and start to build on it. And when you're not thinking about it, throw in a colour you wouldn't ever dream of... It might just be that colour that will bring you and your room to life!

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