



TIME TO WASH AWAY THE COVID GRAY

STYLE & DESIGN EDITOR CINDY TRIMBLE TRACES THE HISTORY OF WORLD WIDE COLOR OVER THE LAST SEVEN DECADES

It goes without saying that color trends are associated not only with advances in technology, but also with current events in our world. You can look at the past and associate many the colors of that time with historical events. Colors permeate everything we touch: our clothes, our homes, and the world around us. How will our current history (in the making) and color trends of today look to future generations? Has the turmoil of the last few years resulted in the idea that we must be “neutral” in everything we do? Has this “neutral” feeling spilled over into the world of design by painting everything “GRAY?” Have we become afraid of color because we need to be neutral? Have our choices been limited by profit margins generated by data mining? Interesting thoughts.

Have the words “color” and “unique” become adjectives of the past in relation to social and artistic history? I guess we will find out a few years from now.

The “Mid-Century” 1950’s was celebrated as the “stay at home” mom’s era, so our mom’s bathrooms and kitchens were color matched in soft pink or earthy olive making the homes such a pleasant place to stay (1).

The 1960’s were the free-love and psychedelic times bringing wild, vivid, iridescent and psychedelic colors— hot pink, neon orange, electric blue (2).

The 1970’s brought disco, lava lamps, and sparkly, shiny, bright colors contrasted against a neutral background like white, black or khaki (3).

Next came John Travolta, The Bee Gee’s and Donna Summer in the 1980’s concurrent with the public awareness of the LGBT generation. We were introduced to the full spectrum and “rainbow” of colors set against strong neutrals of white, black and mauve. (4)

Hello Y2K and millennials!!! The technology revolution is ramped up even more bringing



world events and entertainment into our homes instantaneously. The famous, yet outrageous millennials touted their personalities with vibrant colors. Miley Cyrus, Paris Hilton, Lady Gaga, Pink and Katy Perry stepped out with outrageous, in your face colors and layers of patterns that never would have made sense before this time (5).

Then from 2015 to 2019 the world begins to cry for calmness with New Age lifestyles and an emphasis on calm and “spa like” environments that heal. Soothing blues, turquoise, white and warm grays dominate with little contrast or patterns (6).

Hold onto your hat as a worldwide pandemic hits in 2019 and bold home fashion, just like everything else, comes to a screeching halt. We see a mass exodus of color in our homes with the predominance of gray on everything! Restoration Hardware takes over the home fashion curve with their total gray coating of their furnishings and showrooms. Reduced to shopping online, with no expert designer or savvy sales person to guide buyers to new trends and creative ideas, the general public opts for these shades of gray.



Some venture into using touches of black and white as seen with the popular farmhouse look, but homes and other interiors are mostly bathed in gray and void of large areas of accent colors (7).

What has happened to our world of color???

2021 is here!!! The pandemic is finally waning; people are busting out of their homes ready to get back to work and “life.” Concurrently, we are seeing life coming back into our home furnishing world with more colorful accent colors. 2021’s accent colors are dark blue with small dots of dark gold and chocolate (8).

Whew, what a relief to have some color back in our world, with an eye for more to come. Will this somber era be remembered as “Covid Gray?” Only time will tell. **ACLM**

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