

COLOR AND COLLECTIONS COMBINED

By ANGELA RABKE | Photography by MARK MENJIVAR

With an eclectic assortment of furnishings draped in unique color mixes, textures and patterns, we sat down with designer Galeana Younger of The Galeana Group in San Antonio to learn more about how she used bold fabrics to define these two spaces.

When you were looking at the room as a whole, did the overall room design follow the furniture pieces, or did you select your upholstery based on the room? In other words—which came first, the chicken, or the egg?

This particular client has a great eye and a bold style. She's not afraid of color and it's part of her design aesthetic. In her mind, pink is a neutral color! While I knew the majority of this project was going to be about recovering things, I still had to take the whole space into consideration.

The living room is very narrow and long — and the large sofa is a focal point. We knew we had to get that color right, so we found on a nice, lush green velvet. From that point, I took into consideration other elements that weren't changing — mainly the rug — and built a story from there. The rug has blues, reds and dark pinks in it so the Ikat print on the recliner was a great match. The chair opposite the recliner was her grandmother's. By incorporating a graphic, embroidered fabric, we added a different texture and injected a bit of modernity into an otherwise traditional furniture shape. The pillows were like the icing on the cake.

(Sofa fabric by Schumacher; recliner fabric by Vervain; vintage



chair fabric by Lee Jofa; trim on vintage chair by Kravet.)

The only things we changed in the library were the two chairs. The fabrics on the fronts and backs are different. Many people can't see how seemingly different fabric can, in fact, work together.

(Chair fabrics — front and back — by Christopher Farr Cloth)

The vibe here is so joyful and colorful, but there is nothing childish about it. Any tips for people who want to incorporate lots of color into their home, but are worried about it coming off as juvenile?

This house is a great example because there is nothing about this space that doesn't say "sophisticated." An easy way to begin to incorporate more color is by starting small. Sofa pillows are a great place to inject a fun print or a bold hue because they don't have to be terribly expensive or permanent. Another great place is with your art and wall hangings, especially if your walls are a neutral color. Be careful with bright colors that seem to be "on trend" or "of the moment" because they will always grow old and outdated. Most importantly, be true to yourself. If your favorite color is green, then go with green! Just be bold with



your selections. And if you're just not confident enough, then hire a professional to help. I think it's always better to spend a little more money to have it done right versus spending money over and over again, only to make the same mistakes.

Collections add such a personal touch to this home! Well-curated art, pottery, orchids and artifacts are all on display. How do you help your clients display their important collections without creating a cluttered environment?

I think it's very important to display things. It makes for a well-lived home, one with a soul and a personality. This client has collected things all her life. She's in her 70's now, but she's amassed a wonderful and eclectic collection of trinkets, artifacts and other objets de art. It's about truly loving what she surrounds herself with and displaying these treasures in a beautiful way.

When arranging things, it's important that it be somewhat organized. I start by asking the client to edit their things. I don't want them to hold onto something just to display it. I like to create little vignettes, whereby I can combine different shapes, textures and colors. Or I'll group like things together. In my house, I have a shelf that is dedicated to Paris. Bottom line, I always try to create a story. It's not a story that has a beginning and an end. It's more like a paragraph. It provides a brief glance into someone's life. That way, things stay personal and relevant and hint at what kind of person the homeowner is.

Can you just tell me about your favorite piece in these rooms, whether it be furniture, object or art?

One of my favorite things is the portrait of the homeowner when she was younger, which hangs in the library. Her mother had it commissioned in the 1960s and had it hung in the family's living room, alongside one of her sister. It's a large piece, and it's magnificent and sort of regal. ❖

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