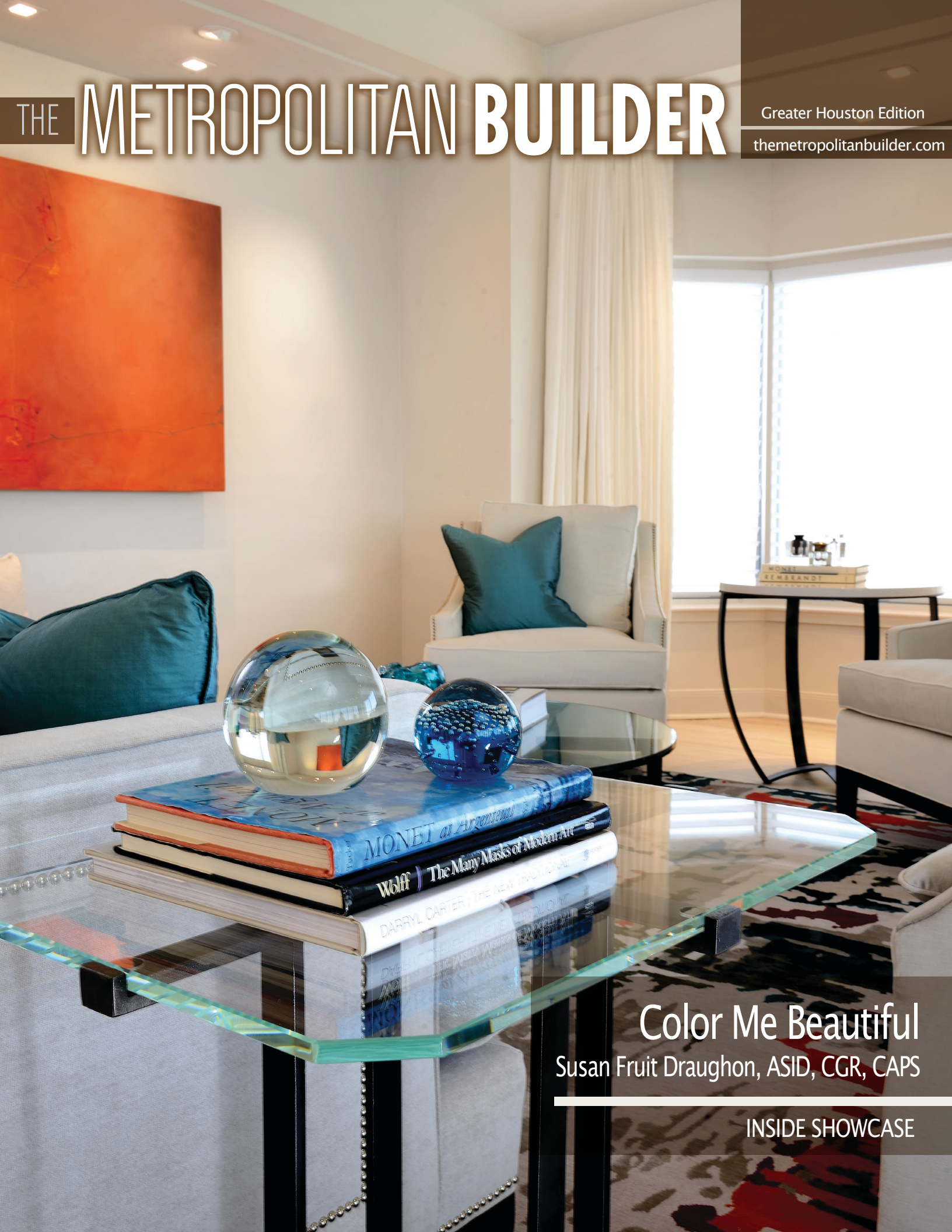


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Color Me Beautiful

Susan Fruit Draughon, ASID, CGR, CAPS

INSIDE SHOWCASE



Color Me Beautiful

By Susan Fruit Draughon, ASID, CGR, CAPS

AFTER

While a little color can go a long way in a room, playful bursts of color can make a room soar. Unfortunately, many people are afraid of using bold colors. Whether your room is large or small or your home is a single story or a high-rise condominium, color plays a vital role in the life of a room and has a profound effect on our everyday lives.

It is a well known fact that tired, drab colors date a room more than anything else. The solution to fixing this dilemma often involves starting over – completely over. I encountered this situation recently with a homeowner who lives in a high-rise condominium in the Med Center. During our first consultation, she told me she loves color, but she was afraid of using too much of it. She also was unsure of what colors to use and how to use them. Additionally, she wanted a contemporary look with clean lines but didn't know how to go about achieving that with the furnishings and color scheme she had. So she requested my help to create a fresh new look for her home filled with color and contemporary furnishings.

To set the stage for a new color scheme, a major renovation of her home needed to be done first. I started by adding a dropped ceiling around the periphery of the room to create a contemporary look and to provide a place for recessed art lighting that would highlight original artwork we would find or commission over time. Workers scraped old “popcorn” texture off the ceiling and



BEFORE



applied layers of smooth plaster to give an updated look. They then painted the walls and ceiling a custom cool white to match the atmospheric color directly outside the condominium windows. This custom color visually expanded the interior space and provided a soft neutral palette for all the vibrant colors we planned to use in the room. Lastly, workers sanded down the dark brown wood floors to the bare wood, stained them white and then grey



washed them to create a fresh, light, airy look.

With the renovation complete, I created a new color palette by designing two colorful contemporary abstract area rugs. These major design elements established the color scheme for the living and dining areas. Manufactured by Stark, the rugs are a combination of wool and silk fibers. The vibrant orange, crisp teal blue and deep forest green colors in the living room rug were

should feature wood frames and legs while others should have waterfall skirts. Polished nickel nail head trim, which is very popular right now, adds another layer of interest and sophistication. Note the polished nickel nail heads accenting the sleigh arms of the two lounge chairs in front of the window and used for decorative outlining on the sides, back and bottom edge of the sofa. To add sculptural contrast against all the upholstered furniture pieces, I custom-designed two iron frame occasional tables to keep the room light and airy and to made my client happy by reusing her prized burl wood and glass cocktail table.

In a contemporary abstract color scheme such as this, pillows on furniture are important accessory items. When used as repetitive blocks of color, they move the color scheme around the room. Note that there are two teal blue pillows and two deep green pillows but only one orange pillow. That's because its orange counterpoint is a dominating mixed media artwork, entitled Alamosa, by



repeated in silk and velvet accent pillows on the custom designed furniture pieces. I chose pale grey linen and light grey velvet fabrics for the upholstery to provide a cool neutral backdrop for the vibrant color scheme.

As important as selecting the right color scheme is for a room, it is equally important to select the right furniture pieces. For interest and variation, some furniture pieces

nationally prominent artist Robert Rector. The pillows and artwork work together to move the color scheme around the room, repeating and reinforcing the vibrant colors in the area rug. On the center cocktail table is a hand blown glass vase by Porta Romana.

A coordinating custom area rug featuring intersecting silk lines of teal blue and forest green on a pale grey wool



background defines the dining area. A custom designed dining table made out of walnut with splayed legs and a polished nickel collar was created for the area. We reused the client's dining chairs after reupholstering the seats in a blue and green cut velvet abstract fabric. A custom made polished nickel chandelier complements and completes the look.

With a fresh new color scheme established, my client is no longer afraid of using bold, vibrant colors in her home. In fact, she now embraces them and says she can't imagine living without them.

Susan Fruit Draughon, ASID, CGR, CAPS, is a licensed interior designer and a certified remodeling contractor with more than 40 years of interior design and home renovation experience. She has designed interiors for homes in Texas, Florida, California and South America. Susan is a recognized expert in solving design dilemmas, whether it's finding the right accessor, creative the perfect window treatment or tackling a major home remodeling project.

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