

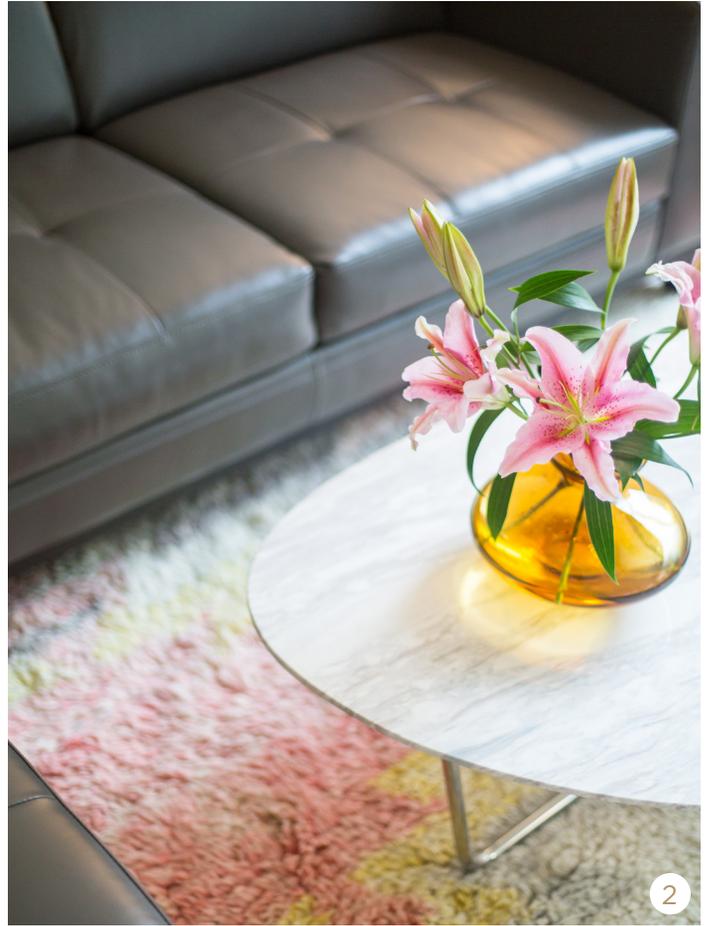
DESIGNERS

Tools. Techniques. Talk.

TODAY

THE MAN WITH A PLAN

Christopher Guy
Harrison stays
ahead of the curve
by constantly
evolving.



IN RUG DESIGN, THERE ARE CHANGES AFOOT

BY THOMAS LESTER

Of all the elements that go into design, the rug can serve as a way to tie other design elements together or it can create an expression of its own as the star of the setting.

Either way, it's one of the most critical pieces of a room's design and interior designers agree that their clients are paying more attention to this element.

"With the increasing trend and popularity of removing wall-to-wall carpeting from every room of the home and replacing it with longer-lasting, more durable materials, we're having the most fun ever with area rugs these days,"

said Jason Clifton, a principal of Bauer/Clifton Interiors, based in Juneau, Alaska. "We're finding here at our studio, Bauer/Clifton Interiors, that our clients are much more adventurous when it comes to exploring bolder patterns, colors and textures of area rugs than in the past."

Celebrity designer Nikki Chu said there is a huge consumer interest in natural and woven flooring, particularly hard-wearing surfaces such as concrete and wood tiles in higher traffic areas.

"This type of tactility has become a key driver in sales



Left: Soft, soothing tones are important for interior designer Shayla Copas' clients, and that look is reflected in the rug selected here.

Center: Interior designer Natalie Reddell believes saturated colors will continue to be important as designers and their clients select rugs for rooms.

Right: Bolder patterns, colors and textures are vital in the designs undertaken by interior designer Jason Clifton.

for both textiles and floors," Chu said. "The patterns that we continue to see are herringbone, geometric, tonal contrast and rugs that break from the traditional constraints of pattern — that embrace a more organic aesthetic."

Additionally, contrasts between neutrals and pops of color are becoming more commonplace.

"Lately, I have had a consistent request for lighter backgrounds and bold colors to lighten up and bring personality to spaces," said Richmond, Va.-based Natalie Reddell, principal of Interiors by Natalie. "Durability is often a concern for my clients, so indoor/outdoor rugs are very popular and a great solution for clients who have pets and children."

Shayla Copas, owner of Shayla Copas Interiors of Little Rock, Ark., agreed. "I am noticing our classic clients wanting soft soothing tones, and then our transitional clients are asking for rugs with pops of jeweled tones. We are also continually asked for neutral rugs in sand, creams and grays."

So what's to come in the floor covering arena?

"I believe new weaving techniques will take natural fibers to whole new levels. The continued development of synthetic threads that mimic the characteristics of finer threads (such as silk) are produced in more sustainable methods," Clifton said. "For example, there's already indoor/outdoor rugs being created that look and feel like any other rug, increasing the durability and longevity of rugs."

Copas sees the continued growth of Moroccan-influenced rugs as a trend to

keep an eye on.

Colorful entries should sustain their place, according to Reddell, with traditional patterns getting a new lease on life with a re-imagined palette.

"I see a movement toward saturated colors, which I love, even in more traditional rug designs," Reddell said. "The bold colors keep the traditional patterns fresh and relevant. I am noticing a fresh appreciation for pastels, too, combined with luxurious fibers like silk for a soft, sophisticated look. I think consumers are paying more attention to details, and so things like beaded rug fringe and sculpted textures are far more appealing."

Chu keeps coming back to sustainability as something that she believes clients will want more and more.

"This is a growing factor for both consumers and brands in today's market. Many carpet brands are focusing on sustainably and social responsibility programs for retailers who are committed to these initiatives," Chu said. "There is an increased use of recycled materials and ecological cleaning products that are certified as only using chemicals that are safe for living spaces."