

Coloring The Season

The MARS Factor

BY MICHAEL REPER

Beep beep beep... This just in—or would that be this *Just Out*? “Can you write a column on home décor for our publication?”

“Me? The one who lives on the river in my little white house (no picket fence as of yet) with my Capricorn boyfriend and my adorable Pomeranian, Nigel Wayne?”

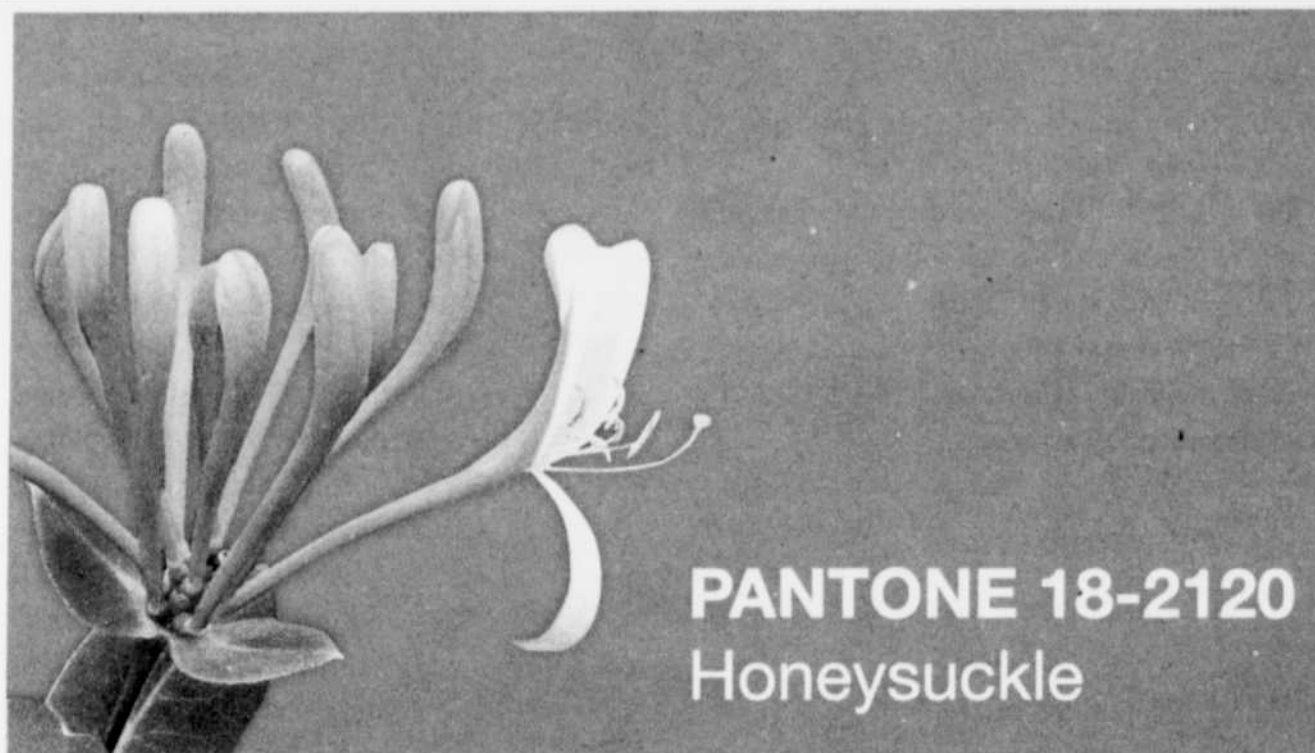
Well I *am* gay, appreciate all things beautiful, do interior design for a living, own a showroom full of gorgeous stuff and love to tend my estate gardens—at least, I do have a lot of yard. I enjoy being domestic (except for cleaning), like cooking and entertaining, doing crafts and feeding the birds... Yikes, I’m starting to sound like Doris Day or my mother Charlotte. The only thing I have not mastered as of late is crocheting—I’ll leave that to my wonderful partner, Keith.

So style at home—that seems so broad. My brain starts to run wild and the Taurus that loves a challenge is off and running. We’ll talk about interiors, trends, food, entertaining (my friends *do* call me “Martha”). I’ll share *her* favorite things, my favorite things, my favorite websites and some good, secret, inside shopping places in town and online.

Let’s just say anything style-related, thus leaving the closet door wide open. Where to begin? I’ve got it—in this gloomy, rainy month that seems to be predominantly gray, let’s start with the topic of color. We all could use a little in our lives right now.

Color is alive and well and in full force for spring, which I hope is just around the corner. Color experts around the globe—and, first and foremost, at Pantone—say that honeysuckle (Pantone 18-2120) is of the moment: a vibrant, energetic hue, a color for all seasons. Courageous. Confident. Vital. The color for 2011—and, yes, that would be *pink*.

Among other color winners for the year, those of love: red and orange, also the colors



PANTONE 18-2120
Honeysuckle

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of fire. In Middle Eastern countries, fire is seen as a cleanser and purifier; it prepares us for new beginnings. Fire burns away the unneeded.

Benjamin Moore says the full-bodied “Vintage Wine” is The New Black, a lovely violet-based brown that will surely please masculine men and drama queens alike. With all our bases covered, Sherwin-Williams has grouped 39 colors into four palettes: Purely Refined, Bold Invention, Restless Nomad and Gentle Medley. (Which one are you?) Visit their website (sherwin-williams.com) to see these gorgeous groupings, run out, grab a gallon and, please, use painter’s tape—either that or use a reputable painter. There’s nothing worse than a bad paint job.

Of course, color runs through all facets of design. I believe it starts in European fashion fabrics then trickles down to everything dé-

cor-related. It provokes emotion and also gives us the ability to make our homes into our castles, with all the accompanying uniqueness in character and statement. Fabrics—oh, glorious fabrics—beam with exotic, full-tilt color on everything: upholstery, pillows and bedding. Available through your architect or designer, Robert Allen Fabrics (robertallendesign.com) has just unveiled some amazing new textiles within the DwellStudio collection that boast some of the season’s hottest new colors. Lighting and wood items like dressers and coffee tables have taken a spin away from traditional clear glass and brown stains, respectively, to crazy hues and finishes.

For some fresh ideas in town, just walk through the door of Cargø (in the Pearl). I promise it will lift your spirits and give you an idea of just how bright color is raring to go. A few other local haunts to learn of trends in-

clude Bravado, Manor, west elm and Mitchell Gold. And there are also wonderful places on the web to stay current on ideas for your home (elledecor.com, interiordesign.net, wallpaper.com/interiors, apartmenttherapy.com).

Owning a showroom also gives me the low-down on what’s happening in the design world, and this time of year all the companies unveil their latest wares for us to ogle and order. Quite simply, spring marks the perfect time, as we head into sunshine and lollipops, to freshen up your home with a splash of color. Painting a room is a great way to transform a space with a little investment and a day’s work. If you’re afraid to do a whole room, try one wall and add some accessories to match. Perhaps a new rug is the answer, or a piece of art.

Fresh flowers and new towels provide a quick fix in the bathroom—mix and match a few colors with a new shower curtain. In the kitchen, opt for fun dishtowels and perhaps some colorful dishes for entertaining; there are great placemat and napkin options everywhere to create a dynamic table for your next get-together.

Remember that color is a way to personalize your home, so don’t be afraid to be bold and daring, and keep the splashes of color to the little things. I don’t recommend buying a lime green sofa, because you won’t like it in two years—instead, opt for a few toss pillows. And do as I say, not as I do; that cobalt blue couch in my living room is very dear to me.

Off to make the world a more beautiful and colorful place—cheers, and a happy house from MARS!

After 17 years of slinging drapes all over the globe, MICHAEL ADAIR REPER SELANOFF still loves his job and all the characters he meets along the Technicolor path. Send him pics of your house or ideas from your heart: michael@michaelreper.com.

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