

homestyle



Fifteen colors by Hirshfield's will be named by the public in a "name that color contest."

the trend

All-paint edition

Several items of interest for those who like their home decor by the gallon:

- **Hirshfield's** said it is sponsoring a contest to name 15 new paint colors in its **Minnesota Spring 2010 color collection**. Contestants are asked to create a name "that references the beautiful, Midwestern quality of life" for each. Here's the catch: You also need to be able to briefly explain why your prose applies. The winners — who will get a \$100 gift card in addition to bragging rights — will be announced by the end of the month. See additional details and enter at www.hirshfields.com/namethatcolor.

- Paint manufacturer **Benjamin Moore** has teamed with Eden Prairie-based **CambriaUSA** to introduce an **online design tool to help choose paint and countertop combinations**. The tool is being launched with the 16 new quartz colors Cambria added in September, but will eventually be expanded to include its full palette of 64 quartz choices; nine paint color options are suggested for each countertop. Access the free planner at www.cambriausa.com/benjamin-moore.

- **Consumer Reports** magazine tested more than 50 interior paints for its March issue, and found nearly all of the **top scorers had low amounts of volatile organic compounds, or VOCs**. The magazine said Behr brand performed the best in all three categories of paint: flat, semigloss and low-luster; it chose Behr Premium Plus Ultra as its top paint overall. Others that performed well in CR's tests: Kilz Casual Colors (low-luster, semigloss) for its hiding ability, and Benjamin Moore Regal for its resistance to fading. Complete results are in the magazine, which costs \$5.99 on newsstands.

KIM YEAGER



Mellin

Notes

GunkelmanFlesher said **Jodi Mellin**, owner of Jodi Mellin Interior Design, has joined its firm as a designer. Minneapolis-based GF also has a New York office.

& before & after

A makeover turns a standard Minneapolis loft into a stylish, family-friendly space.



SUSAN GILMORE PHOTOGRAPHY

calendar

MARCH 3-9

PARADE OF HOMES SPRING PREVIEW: More than 366 model homes display the latest in home trends and design. Free. \$5 for a tour of a Dream Home in Medina. Noon-6 p.m. Fri.-Sun.; and March 11-28: noon-6 p.m. Thu.-Sun. 651-697-1954.

STICKLEY FURNITURE ROAD SHOW: Mike Danial, a historian for the Stickley furniture company, gives a brief history of the American-made furniture. 1-2 p.m. Sat. Free. Reservations requested. Gabberts Furniture & Design Studio, 3501 Galleria, France Av. S., between 69th and 70th Sts., Edina. 952-928-3123.

ARTISAN AND RESTORATION EXPO: Exhibits feature Arts and Crafts-style furniture, textiles, tile and pottery, wallpaper and fabric, art and frame restoration and more. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Sat. Free. Gabberts Furniture & Design Studio, 3501 Galleria, France Av. S., between 69th and 70th Sts., Edina. 952-928-3123.

PLAN AHEAD

DE-CLUTTER YOUR LIFE: 6:30 p.m. March 11, \$30. Pre-registration required. Bloomington Kennedy High School, 9701 Nicollet Av. S., Bloomington. 952-681-6131.

MIXING STYLES WITH ARTS AND CRAFTS: A free half-hour interior design appointment with a designer. 5-9 p.m. March 11. Reservations required. Gabberts Furniture & Design Studio, 3501 Galleria, France Av. S., between 69th and 70th Sts., Edina. 952-928-3123.

GABBERT'S MARKETPLACE: Products from specialty artisans. 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. March 13-14. Free. Call to register. Gabberts Furniture & Design Studio, 3501 Galleria, France Av. S., between 69th and 70th Sts., Edina. 952-928-3123.

WHO'S WHO IN AMERICAN ARTS AND CRAFTS: Kent Gebhard speaks at a program for the Twin Cities Bungalow Club. 2-3:30 p.m. March 14. Free. Call to register. Gabberts Furniture & Design Studio, 3501 Galleria, France Av. S., between 69th and 70th Sts., Edina. 952-928-3123.

MINNESOTA SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS ANNUAL MEETING: Author Bette Jones Hammel and photographer Karen Melvin will discuss their book, "Legendary Homes of Lake Minnetonka." 6-9 p.m. March 17, \$3-\$45. Reservations due by March 10. For more information, e-mail info@mnsah.org. Minnesota Humanities Center, 987 E. Ivy Av., St. Paul.

BUILDING GREEN IN TODAY'S MARKET: 6:30 p.m. March 18, \$29-\$39. Reservations required. Century Junior High, 21395 Goodview, Forest Lake. 651-982-8110.

By KIM YEAGER • kyeager@startribune.com

THE CHALLENGE: Owners Michael Rabatin and Lenore Moritz wanted to make their model loft function for them and their two young sons, while honoring the architecture and the open floor plan.

The designer: Michael J. Rabatin, www.mjrdesignstudio.com, 612-616-9685.



The space: The two-story loft, which includes an open 1,200-square-foot ground floor, has a concrete staircase, concrete walls and round concrete support columns on both floors.

The approach: "The biggest issue was to arrange the furniture so it was open to the rest of the space but felt cohesive, not like a landing strip," Rabatin said. He created an "art wall" to serve as a focal point and to define the living space.

Art with impact: Rabatin used a system of aluminum rail tracks, grippers with hooks and tension cables to hang an assortment of art, including a relative's oil painting, batiks made by Moritz's grandmother and an Asian scroll painted by one of the boys. The Arakawa hanging system (www.arakawagrip.com) is adjustable, so the family can rotate new pieces in and out and change placement easily. "I feel like the Walker [Art Center]'s current exhibit, 'Benches and Binoculars,' has stolen a page from my design book," Rabatin joked.

Separate "rooms" in an open space: Rabatin had wall-to-wall carpeting cut into a 14-foot circle and bound. He said the circular shape helps to anchor the living area "without sacrificing a lot of the wood floors."

Kid-friendly moves: Rabatin said his furniture coverings, a palette of creams and neutrals, are "all

durable and strong," including the shantung silk covering the two chairs, pictured, and the cream-colored ultrasuede couch. "I have never felt that child-friendly spaces need to be dark colors," he said. "My cream sofa cleans just as easy as a darker color." Sleek, woven patio chairs provide part of the dining room seating. "I can pull them outside, we can hose them down," Rabatin said.

Living with toys: Two long, low Room & Board bookcases are placed at a right angle to each other, alongside the sofa. Toys are stored inside, and corralled in front of the cases in a series of flexible, oversized red buckets. It keeps the clutter to a minimum, and keeps the sight lines clean.

The colors: The concrete art wall remains unpainted, while cream, khaki and a deep eggplant are used judiciously in other spots. "Because the art wall is so strong with color and shape, I wanted the other upholstery and flooring to be subtle," Rabatin said. "With our windows showcasing the skyline, there is a lot happening in the space, so I didn't want the upholstery and floor to compete."

Attention to lighting: Rabatin orders full-spectrum bulbs online for his spotlights and lamps and uses dimmers on all. "The best lighting plan is one that has lights at differing heights," he said. Buying lighting is "like buying art for me. Each one of my lamps is unique, has a story and are mostly one-of-a-kinds. One is from the Paris flea market, one is from an estate sale, one is from a vendor from a New York flea market and one I made."

RABATIN'S TIPS FOR USING ART ON WALLS

- Either mix the frames or keep them uniform.
- Find harmony in the tones of the colors in the art. This allows for a mix of everything from contemporary art, sketches, photography and kids' drawings.
- Arrange pieces using the kind of elevational tricks used in visual display work. For example, let items climb left to right, peak in the middle, and drop down right to left. Or, line them up so they are even and square.

To submit before and after photos of a redecorated or remodeled room for consideration, please send uncompressed JPEG images to sendhomegarden@startribune.com. Please include your name and telephone number.

Kim Yeager • 612-673-4899