

SILVER ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Robb Report

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Power & Influence

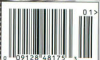
22 People Who Will
Shape Luxury in 2001

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at Home

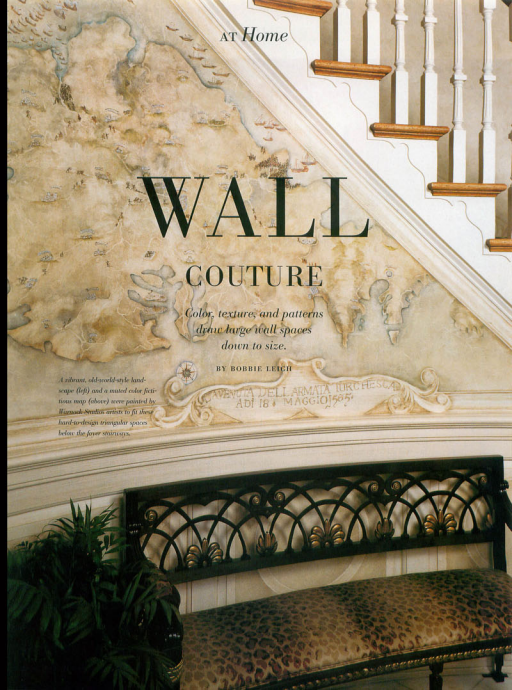
WALL COUTURE

Color, texture, and patterns
define large wall spaces
down to size.

BY BOBBIE LEICH

A vibrant, old-world-style hand-
scope (left) and a muted color fac-
tionous map (above) were painted by
Florence Ardenia artists to fit these
hand-to-design irregular spaces
below the foyer stairways.

AVENIA DELL'ARMATA TURCHESCA
ADI 18 MAGGIO 1507





PHOTOGRAPHY BY NANCY BELL EVERS

WHEN PENNSYLVANIA DESIGNER Ronal Fenstermacher was asked to transform a space with 30-foot ceilings into a living room, the objective was to make the immense, 4,000-square-foot room feel lively and livable. It wasn't an easy task, given the room's scale—it once housed an Olympic-size indoor swimming pool—but it's a challenge that is occurring more frequently in today's homes.

Many new high-end residences, some as large as 20,000 square feet, feature cavernous rooms. Unless the home owners purchase several 17th-century Flemish tapestries or oversize Ellsworth Kelly paintings, the dilemma is how to create a focus and sense

The rich look created in this powder room by Ronal Fenstermacher was achieved by applying a bottom layer of gold leaf full covered with five layers of dusting.

of balance. Wallpaper is one solution, but the repeated patterns can often overwhelm a space. American patchwork quilts, Navajo rugs, and kilims can work, but on large walls they require some type of architectural treatment such as arches or wainscoting. Paintings hung throughout a room can also present problems unless they are huge or hung salon-style, where they are placed in groups, such as the Barnes Collection in Philadelphia.

Instead, home owners, guided by their architects and designers, are transforming the look of large walls with shifts of colors, textures, and patterns. Rather than using flat paint, they are incorporating techniques such as layered, lacquered, and upholstered surfaces, as well as using murals.

Fenstermacher's solution for "pulling back the scale" in the former pool space was dramatic. Together with decorative artist Nancy Bell Evers of Newtown



of the top of the wall; and Nike's "Just do it," which is stenciled above the dishwasher.

Other designers have developed equally creative ways to treat large expanses of wall. New York architect Michael Pierce enjoys using intense colors, often in various combinations of light and dark. "But the colors have to have multiple readings," he advises. "Good quality paint and color can bring out the different tones of light, so what may look cool during the day will have a warm effect at night."

Pierce worked with New York painter Rebecca Spivack to add warm translucent light and color to a client's Upper East Side residence, which consists of

two apartments joined together. Spivack, who is known for her lustrous, Venetian-style stucco walls, works with a variety of polymers and plaster, paint, and beeswax applications, creating abstract fields of color. For the conjoined apartment, Spivack used a variety of cubist configurations created by a dense layering of color and a smooth satin glaze.

Depth of color also played an important role in scaling down the 25-foot-high walls in Julie and Mark Yaggaroff's family room in Potomac, Md. "We went with a graduated finish that starts in a deep intense gold at the bottom and slowly graduates to almost cream at the top," says Julie, adding that when people first enter the room, they touch the walls because the effect is so extraordinary that no one is quite sure how it was created.

The work was done by Warnock Studios of Washington, D.C., which is known for its trompe

To successfully install this ceiling composite, made for a collector of old-world maps, artists first painted the map on a canvas and then attached it to the ceiling.