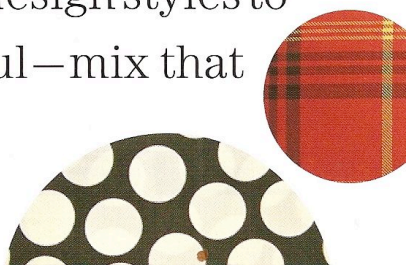
EDITED BY MARGARET FOLEY • PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRUCE WILSON

MIX MASTERS

You know how style clashes happen: Mid-century modernists fall in love with men who revere dovetail joints. World travelers find soulmates in the suburbs. You upholster in toile only to find happiness with a pioneer girl who loves bearskin. We asked four designers for advice on how to mix disparate design styles to create an eclectic—and beautiful—mix that says, "Welcome to *our* home!"



THE MODERNIST MEETS THE TRADITIONALIST

You met at a friend's dinner party, and you love to tell the story of your first conversation: He thought Aalto was the name of a band, and you thought Stickley was a candy bar.

When you're trying to decide how to create that most perfect union between the best of Eames and the best of Morris, let your house be your guide. Its style and era can give you clues on how to proceed. "We always start with the home's architecture, and the architecture should always dictate a good bit of the direction you're going in," says Henry Brown, the designer behind **Henry Brown Interiors** (1825 N.W. Vaughn St., 503-274-0966) in Portland. "The furniture needs to start contrasting with the architecture. If you want a mix in a mid-century house, you don't go in there with *all* mid-century furniture. What we would do is use some of the mid-century classics, but also mix in some vintage pieces or Asian and European furnishings that aren't quite as typical for the period."

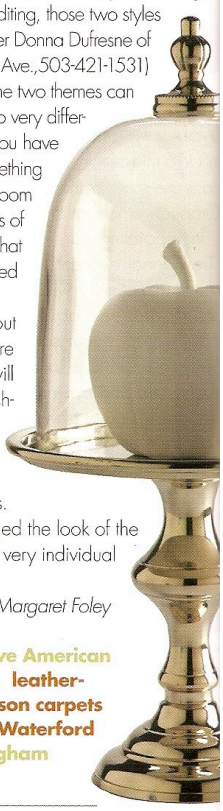
Incorporating transitional design elements can make the melding of eras seamless. "Transitional elements are a great way to blend," says Brown. "An easy way to blend mid-century with other periods is through upholstery or fabrics. That can mitigate your ability to bring in something that's severe with something that's a little more decorative. You can use upholstery that is not as thin and streamlined as mid-century upholstery. You wouldn't necessarily do overstuffed and opulent, but if you wanted something with a bit of a twist, you could add a tufted chaise. With fabrics, you can look at the colors and patterns. There are patterns and weaves that are of a mid-century ilk, such as boucle or horizontal stripes. If you wanted to go in the other direction, you could use something more like a damask or something in a traditional floral pattern. The transitional elements give the room a kind of grounding."

—Margaret Foley

HE LIKES SHE LIKES: **Morris Chairs** **Peter Pepper clocks** **Wiener Werkstätte** **Wenger chairs** **leaded glass** **Sputnik lights** **Art Deco tile** **Erres fans** **Roseville pottery** **tulip tables** **cast-iron heat registers** **Steelcase desks and chairs** **seahorse doorknockers** **molded rockers** **library lamps** **Eames hang-it-all**

MASTERFUL MIX (*clockwise from above*): Handmade pottery birds with mid-century organic appeal, $28 each, Ease (4823 S.E. Division St., 503-206-4377) in Portland. Antique botanical print in sleek, modern frame, $450, Bedford Brown (1825 N.W. Vaughn St., 503-227-7755) in Portland. Stickley poppy table, $1,200, Rejuvenation (1100 S.E. Grand Ave., 503-238-1900 or go to rejuvenation.com) in Portland. Antique brass lamp, $85, Old Portland Hardware and Architectural (4035 S.E. Division St., 503-234-7380) in Portland. Hand-carved wooden owl, $52, Pendleton Home Store (210 N.W. Broadway, 503-535-5444) in Portland. Spherical pottery vase, $10, Canoe (1136 S.W. Alder St., 503-889-8545 or go to canoeonline.net) in Portland. Sculptural porcelain tealight, $135, Canoe.

THE ARISTOCRAT MEETS THE PIONEER GIRL



It's hard to say who has inherited the better wildlife trophy: You have the sable antelope that your great-grandfather shot while he was on safari with the Prince of Wales, and she has the claw of the grizzly bear that almost did in her great-great grandmother.

When it comes to decorating, true love can conquer clashing—and inherited—lifestyles. "With careful editing, those two styles can marry successfully," says interior designer Donna Dufresne of **Donna Dufresne Design** (1338 S.E. Sixth Ave.,503-421-1531) in Portland. "This is a situation where the distinct contrast between the two themes can be what you build around. If you have the opportunity to marry two very different styles then you have the opportunity to *really* mix it up. What you have here is a great mix of the organic with the indulgent. Think of something like taxidermy with velvet drapes and old worn rugs. That gives a room such a wonderful look and feel. There's a unique sense, too, in terms of the quality of items that have been passed on through time. Things that have a similar level of quality, but different backgrounds, can be used to create a unique style throughout your home."

If a lot of what you own are inherited items, really think about what you want to have on display. "Identify the pieces that are most important to you," says Dufresne. "Showcasing those will make the space all the more wonderful. If some of your furnishings and accessories are part of your history and your family's, that adds a wonderful personal element. Think about doing vignettes. I worked with a client who had a collection of old toys, and we put them on a wall of ledges. That not only changed the look of the toys, it changed the look of the room. It was like a wall of art, but it was something very individual that had been incorporated into the room's design."

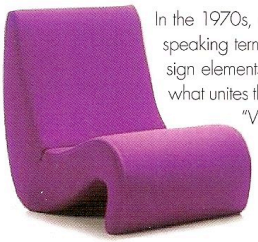
—*Margaret Foley*

HE LIKES SHE LIKES: Velvet Native American pottery gilded frames braided rugs leather-bound first editions muskets Aubusson carpets pelts swords bobsled coffee tables Waterford crystal what-nots marble busts gingham ceiling medallions cast iron

RUSTIC *AND* REGAL (*clockwise from top*): Handmade antler art, $95, Bernadette Breu (1338 S.E. Sixth Ave., 503-226-6565) in Portland. Glass-topped display stand, $265, and ceramic apple, $42, Bedford Brown (1825 N.W. Vaughn St., 503-227-7755) in Portland. Table covered in 18th-century French fabric, $1,200, Bernadette Breu. Rustic lamp base, $70, and Western shade, $72, Pendleton Home Store (210 N.W. Broadway, 503-535-5444) in Portland. Bucking horse bookends, $45, Pendleton Home Store. Aristocratic velvet slipper, $145, Bernadette Breu.

THE SLAVOPHILE MEETS THAT '70s GUY

You had your own version of the Cold War the day you arranged your living room: He mistook the silver samovar for a stylized trashcan, and she mistook the rain lamp for a bird feeder.



In the 1970s, Russia and the United States were barely on speaking terms, but that doesn't mean that their iconic design elements have nothing to say to each other. Finding what unites them can bring about a peaceful coexistence.

"With a combination like this, you're pitting the strong textures of the 1970s against something that has its own force, but not a lot of texture, so it makes for a happy marriage because you can play one against the other quite nicely," says Darci Shaver, a designer and the owner of **Haven Maven Interiors** (503-984-6210) in Portland. "The Russian style can be very ornate and colorful, but colors like red, gold and black are common in both these styles. Those are colors that can be incorporated very well together to make things flow. Those styles have much more in common than you'd think."

Creating an effective interplay of pieces also adds a personal stamp to your living space. "When putting objects together, pay attention to details such as shape and texture to make the room work," says Elizabeth Daniels, the owner of **Ease** (4823 S.E. Division St., 503-516-0335), a home accessories store in Portland. "You can meld any style with any other style, but the details are what makes it work. It's the line, shape and texture of the pieces that help a room come together to make it functional and beautiful. You have to find those little aspects of each piece that incorporate and flow with each other. If chosen well, artwork, lamps and other accent pieces won't overwhelm a room, but they can break up the style a bit. That's a good way to incorporate distinct eras into a space and make it more design-inclusive."

—Margaret Foley

HE LIKES SHE LIKES: Beanbag chairs hand-carved chess sets original Star Wars action figures folk embroidery anything plaid silver tea glass holders animal prints icons shag carpet lacquer boxes rotary phones books with Cyrillic bindings Jackson Five posters matryoshka dolls pop art Vladimir Lenin statues

COORDINATED COLOR (*clockwise from top right*): Poster, go to internationalposter.com for similar posters. White lacquer animal-legged table, $495, Bedford Brown (1825 N.W. Vaughn St., 503-227-7755) in Portland. Black-and-white striped fiberglass lamp, $530, Lux (1333 N.W. Glisan St., 503-299-6754 or go to luxlights.com) in Portland. Five-dolls-in-all matryoshka doll, $80, The Russia Gallery (518 S.W. Yamhill St., 503-224-5070) in Portland. Classic 1970s troll doll, courtesy of Krista Colvin. Find trolls at trollhouse.dk. Hand-carved chunky wooden sunglasses, $500, Ease (4823 S.E. Division St., 503-206-4377) in Portland. Cushy, purple amoeba chair that makes you want to recline, $1,670, unicahome.com.