



2018 COLOR FORECAST:

UPCOMING TRENDS
AIM TO RELAX YOU,
NO MATTER HOW YOU
DEFINE 'COMFORT'

BY BRANDY HADDEN, *D+D NEWS*

Color trend forecasts were released earlier than in years past for the 2018 predictions, keeping in step with the personalities most of them aim to speak to. People are busier. We're moving faster. We're always connected. In order to cater to the consumer who didn't want to wait until fall to see what the next up-and-coming trend in paints and design schemes will be, several companies released forecasts in the summer in advance of the wave of fourth-quarter announcements.

While the likes of PPG, Behr, Sherwin-Williams, Dunn-Edwards and AkzoNobel have released shades that cover a large swath of the spectrum, they all gave the same reason why: People just want to relax.

These companies argue that consumers are so plugged in that they are putting extra emphasis on their comforts at home, making their abodes places of refuge.



Olympic Paints' 2018 color of the year, Black Magic (on door and window), hearkens to a need for privacy in a tech-heavy world, the company says. Photo courtesy of PPG

THE COLOR OF QUIET?

In what some would consider the boldest palette prediction of the season, Pittsburgh-based PPG is telling consumers to paint it black, saying the "forgotten neutral" is the answer.

"In past years, consumers have gravitated toward open, airy spaces that are thought to leave room for exposure," said Dee Schlottter, PPG senior color marketing manager for Olympic and PPG Paints.

"However, in the current day, consumers often feel uneasy, restless or like their privacy is being invaded, so they crave deep, comforting colors that offer a welcome escape from the chaos of daily life. Olympic paint's Black Magic perfectly satisfies consumers' desire for privacy."

The three shades include:

- **Black Magic** – From PPG's Olympic line, this shade is said to work as a standalone statement or work well accenting other colors ranging from shades of gray to pinks and whites.
- **Deep Onyx** – The pick from PPG's Glidden brand is the closest hue to the "standard" matte black. If it feels too overwhelming on a whole wall or room, it's recommended as an accent with primary colors, earth tones or whites.
- **Black Flame** – A more regal point on the spectrum, the PPG Paints pick is a "statement-making black, infused with an undertone of the deepest indigo," the company says.

The three shades represent the darkest form of the cool color spec-



PPG Paints describes Black Flame, its 2018 Color of the Year, as a blend of two classic hues – black and indigo – that allow your decor to take center stage. Photo courtesy of PPG

trum, which isn't always necessarily associated with comfort, according to James Martin, founder of consultant group The Color People (Denver) and former president of The Color Marketing Group.

Speaking mainly on exteriors, Martin mentioned that there is a growing trend that's shifting base colors from warm, khaki colors to cooler, gray bases. But black? He says he's not so sure that will catch on as a widespread trend with consumers.

"The severe tones, while they appeal to the architectural hipster, don't appeal to the mass people," he said. "Dark houses, I don't think, are a thing people will gravitate toward. The majority of people want a comfortable-feeling house, light and pleasant."

Not that black can't be pleasant. PPG Paints also released its 2018 PPG Global Color Trends palettes, with Black Flame as the anchor color:

- The **Retreater** addresses the need of consumers to withdraw from daily pressures. This cozy theme includes air tones such as PPG Paints' blush Warmstone; Suntan, a nude; Flagstone, a cool gray; and Cuppa Coffee, a warm, wood-like neutral.
- The **Dream Weaver** adds pops of color such as a soft periwinkle, Love-ly Lilac; a coral, Summer Sunset; a dusty mauve, Brandy Snaps; and an earthy green, Secret Safari.
- The **Commoner**, for the minimalist, largely showcases primary colors such as classic navy in Mountain Lake; Red Gumball; and the yellow-green Grassroots.



If painting a room or wall Deep Onyx is too intimidating, Glidden suggests pairing it with white, primary colors, earth tones and light-grain wood finishes. Photo courtesy of PPG

- The Brave caters to those who don't shy away from dark colors with the forest green of Charcoal Smoke; the purple of Pinot Noir; and Black Elegance—black, with just a hint of gray.

These palettes bring the appeal that the singular colors could, for some, be missing, as many bring other complementary neutrals into the fold.

"An expanded range of 'neutrals' is always welcome and, whether in strong or more subdued versions, even such colors can create tremendous change and drama," said color consultant Barbara Jacobs of Barbara Jacobs Color and Design (Sebastopol, California). "'Neutral' does not have to mean 'boring.'"

Rebecca Hupp, RID, LEED AP ID+C, PBK Architects (Houston), also expressed that, although these trends in particular are a push out of her comfort zone, it's a welcome push.

"Using black in my design of spaces is something I typically shy away from," she said, noting, however, that she aims to work it into a future project.

It's projects that are more likely to involve designers — commercial spaces such as schools or hospitals, rather than the DIY homeowner

projects — that could be influenced the most by these forecasts, Hupp and Jacobs agreed.

A COOL CALM

The majority of the 2018 color selects are in step with the cool, calm and collected line of thinking, largely made up of blue hues that pull from earthy influences.

SANCTUARY AND RELAXATION

Behr Paint (Santa Ana, California) released a palette of 20 colors that center on its first-ever color of the year, In The Moment, which is described as a calming combination of blue, green and gray. This grounding neutral was designed with serenity in mind and the desire we have to unwind and recharge, the company says.

"In The Moment speaks to our society's desire to disconnect and be present," said Erika Woelfel, vice president of color and creative services at Behr. "Spruce blue, soft gray and lush green coalesce into a fresh shade that evokes a sense of sanctuary and relaxation amid our always-on lives."

Behr's 2018 Color Trends palette ranges from neutrals or pops of accent colors to capture the ever-evolving perception of "home," it says. The company encourages people to practice mindfulness at home by being attentive to simplicity through the intentional use of color to lift our moods or the energy of a space.

The color palette evokes a sense of personal health and wellness (blues and greens) and relaxation (calm neutrals and dark tones), along with colors or shades that are lively and optimistic. The palette is made up of hues ranging from the soft Positively Pink, the rich neutral Off The Grid and the green-based Nurturing to the warm, bold gold of Life Is Good, the rich brick of Civara and the jewel-toned Constellation Blue.

CONVERSATION AND INSPIRATION

Similarly, Sherwin-Williams (Cleveland) released several palettes preceding the announcement of its color-of-the-year choice: Oceanside. The company calls the color "a collision of rich blue with jewel-toned green."

"We have a growing sense of adventure, and it's making its way into even the coziest corners of our homes. We are craving things that remind us of stories of bright folklore, like mermaids and expeditions across continents — essentially, the color of wanderlust right in our own homes. The result is this Oceanside, a dimensional, peacock blue jewel tone," said Sue Wadden, director of color marketing at Sherwin-Williams.

The three palettes for 2018 aim to "drive conversation and inspiration," the company said, and draw from influences in fashion, nature, pop culture and global design.

- Sincerity, the softest of the three palettes, includes hushed tones intended to be blended to create peace and space; among them are three shades of gray as well as various browns.
- Unity, the loudest and most vibrant of the palettes, includes the color-of-the-year pick, Oceanside, along with bright primaries such as Heartthrob and pops of color like Exuberant Pink. Rich browns and complementary blues round out this palette.



For its 2018 color of the year, Behr selected a spruce blue called In The Moment, described as a soothing, restorative shade that speaks to our need to rest and recharge in both interior (top) and exterior (bottom) environments. Photos Courtesy of Behr

- Connectivity, a heavily cool-tempered collection, draws the most from nature with Queen Anne Lilac, Grape Harvest and Organic Green.
- "The connection to experiences, thoughts or moments in time is an important facet to life, which deeply influenced the color trends that are primed to take hold next year," Wadden said. "We eagerly await to see how these trends will unfold in the creation of unique new spaces."



COLORS FOR CELEBRATION

Dunn-Edwards Paints (Los Angeles) also released five color palettes united by a theme of "celebration — of our past, our present and our future," according to the company. Its color of the year — The Green Hour — is a deep, grayish green with a name inspired by the 1800s Parisian pastime of drinking absinthe in the evening,

most notably in the hour of 5 p.m., otherwise known as "the green hour," the company said.

That idea of evening socialization, along with travel and food trends, fashion, health and wellness, reportedly fed into the final selections for the palettes. With a shade of blue or green anchoring each one, the palettes include:



With tones it describes as optimistic and having the potential to lift the energy of a space, Behr's 2018 color palette includes hues like Constellation Blue and Civara, as seen on the office walls and door shown above. Photo courtesy of Behr



Sherwin-Williams describes its 2018 Color of the Year, Oceanside, as a versatile green-blue hue that is both opulent and mysterious. Photo courtesy of Sherwin-Williams

- Memories, which aims to take people back to 1940s French fashion, art deco and art nouveau with feminine colors representing luxury and a romantic spirit. This palette is targeted toward people who like to revisit and recreate the classics, and includes colors such as Mysterious Blue, Roses Are Red and Spiced Hot Chocolate, along with Caramelized and Desert Mauve.
- Natural Wonders is inspired by nature and innovation — or the desire to both be surrounded by nature but also not leave the city. A large swath of the palette is aqua-/skyscraper- and earth-/brownstone-inspired, such as Teal Waters, Art and Craft and Ancient Earth. Pops of pink appear in the mix with Posy Petal and Antique Coral.

- The Stars represents the increased use of augmented and virtual reality, coupled with the trends of both vintage and futuristic styles. This palette features brighter, more exotic pinks and purples, such as Cupid's Arrow, Purple Odyssey and Magic Night, along with retro-inspired Highlighter yellow and Go-Go Green.
 - Adventures takes it down a notch with more muted, earthy tones meant to represent the transport to a faraway land of myths and legends. Darker neutrals like Cavernous gray and Folklore brown mix with Cobalt and Rare Turquoise.
 - Childhood Joys reflects the comfort and routine of kids with shades inspired by picture books and fairytales, mixing warm neutrals (Hayride, Dusty Cedar and Antique Garnet) with cool basics (Pacific Blue, Purple Trinket and Royal Palm). Cotton Cloth anchors the set.
- Hupp tapped a few of these palettes to rise in popularity for commercial uses.



The colors in this room speak to the romantic, luxurious hues such as Desert Mauve, Mow the Lawn and Spiced Hot Chocolate found in Dunn-Edwards' Memories palette. Photo courtesy of Bethany Nauert for Dunn-Edwards



The Green Hour has dual personalities of being moody, dramatic and intense, while still grounding and tranquil, acting as a neutral," says Sara McLean, color expert and stylist for Dunn-Edwards. "It is dreamlike, mysterious, rich and cozy." Photo courtesy of Dunn-Edwards

"An elementary school library can use Dunn-Edwards' Childhood Joys palette and have a warm neutral base with accents of the cool basic colors to incite fun and imagination while also creating a sense of well-being, happiness and tranquility among the students," she said. "Open spaces in educational facilities can use The Stars palette to elicit interest and excitement in student areas where collaboration and creativity are encouraged and stimulating participation is needed."

She does note, though, that the palettes are not interchangeable.

"...[M]y color selection for interior spaces ultimately is determined by the intended use of the space. For example, some of these colors, like Dunn-Edwards' Memories, would be great in a romantic boutique hotel, but this palette would be too bold and dark for a classroom setting."

While the palettes are anchored in a sea of gray and blue hues, they each include a unique map of accent colors, something Jacobs says is vital.

"Cooler colors like charcoal or grayed slate and warmer tones of deep, soft rusty browns can pair well with each other, as well as with bright hues like golds, greens, and purples and the softer, 'watery/airy' colors, depending on how they are used," Jacobs said.

"Proportion and location are always important," she added. Whether cozy and nest-like or open and airy, it's the 'How (and Why)' the colors are used that is the most important consideration. The fact that a color is a 'trend' color — or not — is secondary. For my clients, that's where the color knowledge comes in, in the most practical and useful way for the long term. Color selection is not just a random, whim-based process but rather something for serious consideration."

She said she fully expects some of these palettes to make their way into small businesses, as well as areas of hospitality, healthcare and education, but the colors will also be in materials and products other than paint.



STAYING WARM

Jacobs said, however, more vivid tones tend to have a more immediate appeal, regardless of whether the hue is cool or warm, simply because they are more vibrant. "Something 'new' and bright is always eye-catching — for one reason or another," she added.

A warm focal point among the early 2018 predictions to date is AkzoNobel's Heart Wood, a color the company calls "a grown-up pink."

However, the thought behind it is the same: "As life gets faster, now is the time to press pause," said Heleen Van Gent, creative director at the Amsterdam company's Global Aesthetic Center.

"Our home needs to be a place where we can turn down the noise, where we can nurture our values and recharge. Color can play a significant role in addressing the

balance between outside clamor and inner calm."

Contrary to its counterparts, AkzoNobel has pulled from the warm qualities of wood and leather and released four palettes centered around the blush, only one of which surrounds it with blues.

- Heart Wood Home combines shades of pale gray-pink, blues and browns along with bolder ink blues and purples. Pulling more from the unpredictable colors of natural wood and leather, this palette aims to be "calming and restorative," bringing a little bit of the outside in.
- The Comforting Home aims to create a recharging environment by incorporating earth tones that combine clay-influenced hues with the signature pink. The rich colors pull from materials such as silk or velvet, creating warmth.
- The Inviting Home palette features the coolest tones out of this year's lineup, with shades of blue, neutrals and greens aiming to support a clear mind and sense of connection. These combinations are recommended for a space that's meant to be shared with friends and family.
- The Playful Home captures pops of yellow and gold hues selected to spark and energize. This palette would be best used in a multifunctional space with natural textures and fun patterns, the company says.

This combination of comfort and welcoming is what hits the nail on the head for Martin. He says that, although people want to unplug, they don't necessarily want to disconnect, especially millennials, whom he notes are now the driving demographic behind most trends.

"The millennium generation is very outgoing. They're out in the street and coffee shops and gravitating toward wanting to interconnect with people," Martin said, adding that warm colors added to an open, airy space reflect the exuberant and welcoming nature that people want in their homes now.

"Everybody wants to be comfortable," he said. "Take this and then translate it down to where your house feels pleasant." **D+D**



"A welcome home is a Heart Wood home," AkzoNobel says of its 2018 color of the year (shown at top). "This is where you feel instantly at ease, surrounded by the gentle grey-pink tones of Heart Wood," it adds. The palette of its Inviting Home collection (shown at bottom) offers cool shades of blues, easy-going neutrals and sea-green to color the rooms where you share with those closest to you. Photos courtesy of AkzoNobel