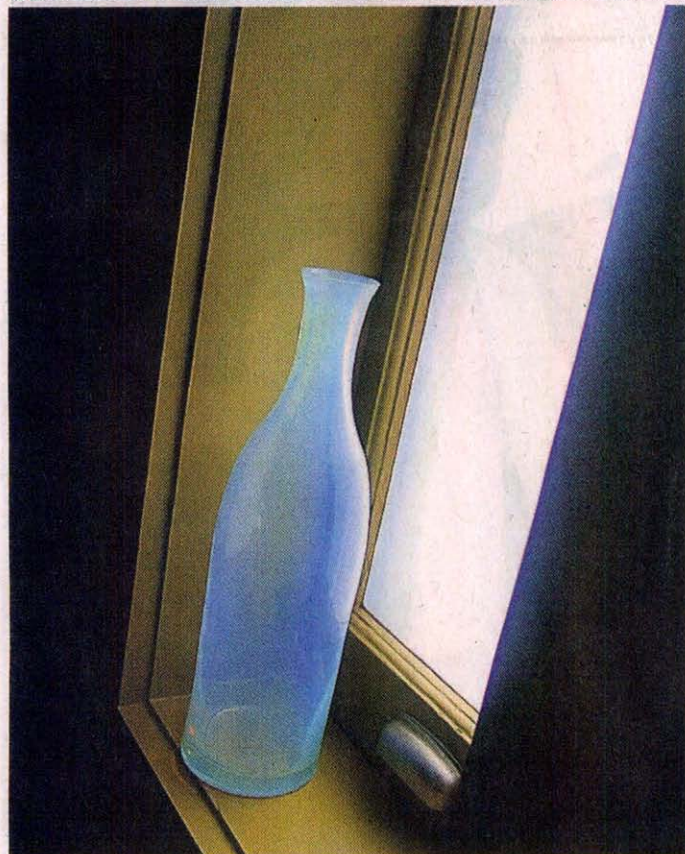
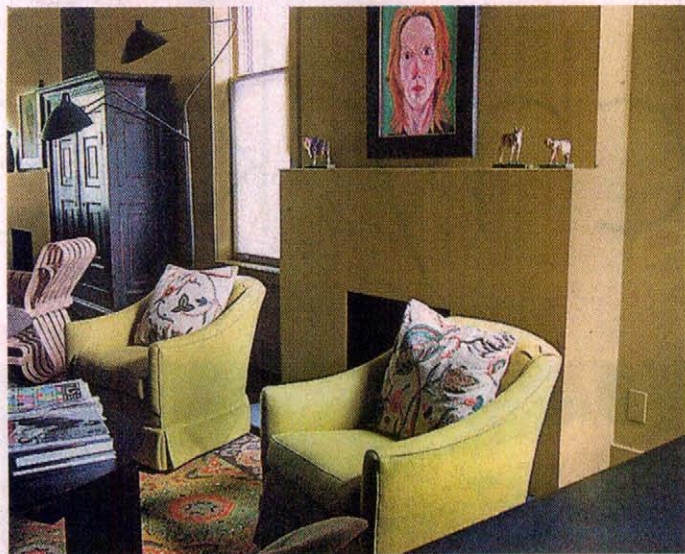


INTERIOR DECORATING



Toronto artist Denise Ireland has done her walls, upholstery and more in fig green. JANICE LINDSAY FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL

# When one shade fits all

With a little education, single-colour schemes are anything but boring



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COLOUR WATCH

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Colour flow – taking a single colour and carrying it through a home – is a common device for making any space seem bigger and more open.

What we tend to forget is that this principle works as well with colour as it does with whites or neutral shades. The home of Toronto artist Denise Ireland is proof.

Ireland's unifying colour is Pratt and Lambert's Fig #1680 (www.prattandlambert.com). It's a vivid, sunlight-in-new-leaves colour that sits on the border between yellow and green and shifts back and forth depending on the light. Ireland loves it "because it goes with everything."

Here's how a one-colour scheme works:

**If you are going to do it, do it everywhere.**

Ireland uses Fig not just on all the walls but on the fireplace surrounds and all the trim including windows. Only the ceiling stays light or white.

Reducing the colour to one shade lets more interesting things, like art, become the focal point. A self-portrait by Ireland mingles with another by Stanley Cosgrove and small cast-metal farm animals by Joe Fafard (both are fellow Canadian artists).

**Pull the furniture into the colour scheme.**

In her previous home in Rose

es was the most boring colour available. Their curving sculptural shape, not their colour, is the eye candy.

The only interruption in her yellow-green space is a wall of books. "Books, like the wall colour," Ireland says, "make a wonderful background."

**Colour flow works in any setting.**

In Ireland's Victorian home, the previous owner made the rather dark ground floor into an open plan and added contemporary details: flat-panelled maple kitchen cabinets, stainless-steel appliances, charcoal grey cement counters and sandblasted glass walls and backsplash. The lower panes of all the sash windows are sandblasted, avoiding the need for window treatments.

The lack of sunlight and the infusion of modern details would have made anyone but Ireland decide to use white. "White walls with flashes of bold colour can be fun," she says, "but using a single colour is elegant. It has a softness."

**Variety is the spice.**

The advantage of a monochromatic scheme is that just bringing in a bunch of seasonal flowers gives the room a refreshing colour shift.

To lighten and change the feel of a room for summer, Ireland will remove all the carpets but one, put a slipcover on the sofa – a pale sage linen printed with her own design in fresh leaf green and brown – and have fun with cushions.

Then she can enjoy going back to textures and monochrome in winter.

**Keep it simple.**

Colour is not tiring when reduced to a one-colour – any