

Nest Building

by KATE BRIDGER

Coming Home Again

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When I first began writing my regular 'Nest Building' column in February of 2008, my aim was to help readers discover, and give voice to, their own design and aesthetic sensibilities; to steer them towards choices that reflected, nurtured and inspired them and to help them become more critical about marketing ploys and trendy fads.

That was three years ago and my objectives have not altered. What have changed in the ensuing years, however, are the ways in which we express our sense of comfort.

Once it was wall-to-wall carpeting that conjured up images of cosy family life sprawled out on thickly cushioned pile; or practical, easy-care living on faux-marble Formica countertops. Today, warm, cosy and practical are expressed as hardwood flooring and other rediscovered natural products.

Since the start of this century, the stark industrial inspired minimalism of the previous decade has gradually surrendered to real living spaces that accommodate real people. Outside the immaculately staged urban loft, the shine of chrome and glass has lost much of its appeal and softness is creeping back in; feet are being propped up on coffee tables once more and books (for as long as they last) are allowed to lean into one another on shelves.

Cherished treasures are being returned living rooms—instead of 'saved' in storage trunks. They may be sharing space with more utilitarian and high-tech objects, but they all seem to get along just fine. The 'slightly shabby' are being rejuvenated, not discarded, and the mixing and matching of styles and generations is emerging as a conscious choice, not just a consequence of limited funds.

We are an aging population; we want to be surrounded by familiar objects, sit on soft seats and flip through the pages of a dog-eared paperback. It's not about regression; it's about choosing to bring the best of the baggage along and remaining true to ourselves. The primal concept of 'home' is that it is a place where we 'belong'. If all goes well, it is a happy concept we learn early in life and, as we grow up and move around, we continually try to track it down and re-create it. However, it is not static; it grows and evolves with us.

As of now, 'Nest Building' has found its new 'home' at *The Nelson Post*. This represents a big change as I trade newsprint for the Internet. I'm ready for it. I'm excited about reaching and hearing from new readers and I really hope that my former following will stick with me.