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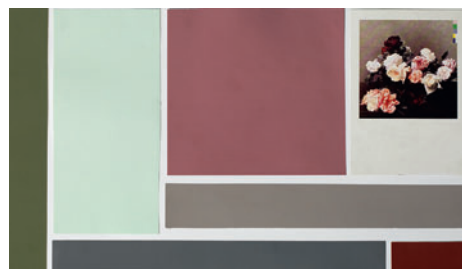
New paint colours

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COLOUR SPLASH

Hatta Byng and Emily Tobin look at new paint ranges, and review other news and events

In a seemingly saturated market, new paint brands continue to emerge. This year has seen launches by Conran, the Royal Academy, Konig Design and Abigail Ahern. The first, **Paint by Conran** (www.paintbyconran.com), is a collaboration between Conran and paint manufacturer Master Paintmakers. The company specialises in industrial paint-making and produces 'intelligent' paint for fighter jets, which contracts and expands when travelling at twice the speed of sound. The same science has gone into the Paint by Conran range, which is a far cry from the steely greys and blacks associated with aircraft. Shades include 'Dark Lovage', 'Damp Sheep' and 'Cornflower Heart' - the same hue as Terence Conran's famous blue shirts.

'I've always been fascinated and inspired by British plants and landscapes,' says Terence. 'For me, there is nothing quite like taking in the breathtaking views of our landscape.'

Mood boards created using the latest paint ranges released by the Royal Academy of Arts (above), Abigail Ahern (top right), Konig Colours (centre right) and Paint by Conran (right)

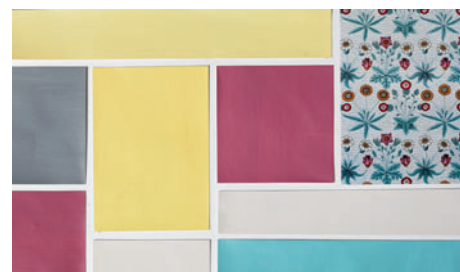


'When creating the range we worked with a colour psychologist,' explains Arnie Kosky, chairman of Master Paintmakers. 'She had some fascinating insights into how colour choices are influenced by people's mentality. For instance, in good times, people want flamboyant colours to reflect their positive mood. However, during difficult times such as the recent recession, people opt for simple, lighter colours. Generally speaking, things are looking up with the economy finding its feet again, so we wanted the Paint by Conran range to be awash with statement colours, which is particularly evident in the Kitchen Garden and Cottage Garden collections.'

Next there is the **Royal Academy of Arts**, with a range (www.colourandpaint.com) divided into four palettes and 56 shades. Three of the palettes have been selected by Academicians: architect Will Alsop; sculptor David Mach; and painter Ken Howard. The fourth features colours that have been used on the gallery walls during RA shows.

Will Alsop's range is inspired by the Norfolk landscape but viewed with an architect's eye, David Mach's range is a combination of personal colour memories and bold shades taken from his own sculptures, and Ken Howard's colours were inspired by his paintings of Venice.

But the most interesting collection in the Royal Academy paint range is Galleries, which is based on the colours used in exhibitions to display the artworks to best effect. If a living artist is on show, he or she sometimes helps select the backdrop colours. This was certainly true of the hugely popular *David Hockney RA: A Bigger Picture* exhibition, for which David Hockney was involved in the choice of wall colours. Two of these shades form part of the Galleries collection: 'Bradford Red' and 'Bridlington Beach', named after his hometown and seaside address respectively.



Konig Colours (www.konigcolours.co.uk) is the brainchild of Vanessa and Jasper Galloway of Konig Design. They launched the paint range after being frustrated by the colours available in the UK. 'We were always looking for specific colours and could never quite find the right one,' says Jasper. 'The solution was to create our own range of paints.'

Konig Colours evolved from their small studio in Buckinghamshire. All the paint-chip labels are hand finished and then delivered to a local prison, where prisoners stick the chips to each chart. The pair worked with manufacturer PaintPlus to ensure that the range is non-toxic and hard-wearing.

Finally, designer **Abigail Ahern** (www.abigailahern.com) has made her own contribution to paint. 'I'm obsessed with inky, swampy hues; it's taken years of experimentation to gain confidence and get to this stage,' she says of her collection. The range was inspired by Abigail's time living in Manhattan, with names like 'Hudson Black', 'Bleecker' and 'Bowery Blue'. Daunting though these shades might seem, they can be used to create atmospheric, sophisticated spaces that, as Abigail says, 'make you want to hunker down'. ▷