



Susan J. Moss, ASID, IIDA
Trans-Pacific Design

Notable past projects: Mauna Lani Spa; Hilton Waikoloa Village, Kohala Essence, beauty salon, front desk, cafeteria; Hilton Grand Vacations Club at Waikoloa, salon; The Fish Hopper restaurant; Hanalei Bay Resort, timeshare units; the Orchid Hotel, corridors and ballrooms (with another firm); Islander on the Beach; Sheraton Maui Resort, rooms

Current project: Mauna Lani Resort, fitness center locker rooms, elevators and salon

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY?

Don't limit yourself. Be open to new ideas and influences and convey these through your work. Keep fresh. Don't rely on past work.

Each design should not only reflect the designer's creative influence, but it should also provide design strategies to create cost benefits for the client.

We also try to incorporate interior elements that relate to the locale. For instance, in the Mauna Lani fitness locker rooms, we had panels made for all the soffits over the vanities in the lavatories that were carved in Thailand. We sent patterns of tapa carvings to them, so that they would have that influence of Hawaiian tapa cloth patterns.

In another project, we found out the mythological stories in that area. We worked with a local artist, and she created carved artwork and gates that were like an artistic rendition of the myth. Then we had those carved in China.

When people come to Hawaii, they don't want to see exactly what they see in Iowa, or wherever. They want it to be Hawaii. There are all kinds of different ways to impart that feeling. One is to bring in some of the local history, while still keeping fresh with trends throughout the world.

TRENDS?

Of course, green design is very strong. Most of our suppliers are providing products that do not leave an impact on the earth's environment, or they have recycling programs. So we have carpet made out of plastic bottles, tile made out of glass from light bulbs. A lot of the major manufacturers will reclaim the old carpet from hotels and create new products from them.

Hawaii has always had the indoor/outdoor trend, using outdoor spaces for lounging and eating, and nationally this is starting to appear.

In products, I'm still seeing glass mosaics pretty strong with metal accents, electric mirrors for bathrooms, televisions hidden behind the mirrors, plasma and LCD televisions (no more armoires).

There's nature in everything — a lot of browns, mixed with blues, blue-greens, lime-greens, orange, a lot of golds and some red accents. A lot of mix of imported furnishings from China and Indonesia with other furnishings — things look very eclectic. Eclectic is a word that's been around since the '80s, but it's still there.

Hard flooring with area rugs is still popular. Using framed mirrors over bathroom vanities is just what everybody does now, as well as installing larger-than-life mirrors for drama in guest rooms and public spaces.

I think the Asian influence with Buddas, accessories, etc., is still really strong.

DESIGN TRICKS?

You'd think that painting all the walls in a room a really dark color would make it feel smaller, but it doesn't. By having the same color, it removes any reference points, so you really can't tell whether they're all close or far apart. It appears to enlarge the space and be more dramatic.

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