



COLOUR MASTERCLASS

Cool Stone

PART ONE: Learn how to layer a sophisticated palette of gentle stone hues for an inviting yet tranquil scheme. Interior designers reveal the secret to balancing colours so the result is soothing, never cold ▶



“ When we are developing a colour palette, we always respond to the client’s needs and create something that is appropriate to their wishes and their possessions. Often, artwork can inspire a scheme and, here, the painting by Peter Lanyon (on the far right wall), and the Ben Nicholson painting (on the left wall) provided the starting point. We wanted to create a calm room, and cool colours such as stone greys and grey-blues are very effective. This palette should use gentle hues that are subdued in their intensity. Such a scheme should never feel cold and there are many ways to bring softness and warmth.



Lighting is the absolute critical thing, on which you must not compromise. Cool colours can look very inviting with the right lighting, and creating the right ambience is crucial as to how the room is perceived. Here, many different light sources have been employed, most of which are very discreet, so there are not any harshly lit areas. Paintings glow from picture lights, or projector lights could also be used; we have concealed lighting in bookcases, and reading lights are opaque so that light is not cast through the shade but serves its purpose when needed.

catches the light wonderfully. The curtains also use a beautiful silk taffeta, which we love to use in all sorts of colour schemes. It adds a certain glamour and, where it is shot through with other hues, has great reflectivity and depth.

Layering of texture, pattern and colour is also intrinsic to everything we do. At first glance this room might appear to have a rather limited palette, but there are a wide range of patterns, tones and textures that work in harmony to create a calming space. It is critical to have this combination of patterns and textures that absorb and reflect the light to make the room feel natural, liveable and not like a hotel room.

Furniture and accessories also have a great impact on the overall palette of the room. Here, we have used nickel-and-glass furniture that was custom made and that was derived from the need to create a cooler, neutral palette. Having a lot of wood would alter the effect; however, there is some lovely exposed English Oak timber on the armchairs which provides some depth and contrast.

The walls are covered in a paper-backed silk in a warm silvery beige that provides a soft backdrop which

Our most important consideration was comfort – this is paramount to success. Although there is some formality to the space, it is in a country house and we wanted the owners to feel they could still curl up and read a book. Big custom made down-filled cushions on the seating ensure that the finished result feels cosy, soft and comfortable. ”



DOUGLAS MACKIE

Mackie is the director of Douglas Mackie Designs

The beautiful interiors of Douglas Mackie Designs reflect his architectural background – Mackie studied architecture at Cambridge University. After working in New York and London, Mackie set up his own company in 1995 and projects have included country houses in

England and France, as well as private London homes. Currently, he is working on large-scale projects in Chelsea and Gloucestershire. Mackie has a great understanding of the history of interior design and pairs this with a passion for textiles, furniture and art.

ABOVE LEFT
A silvery beige silk wallcovering, by Stereo, provides a soft backdrop with subtle shimmer. Curtains in a shot-silk taffeta from Lelievre add a touch of glamour.

ABOVE RIGHT
Subtle layers of textures, pattern and colour have been introduced through soft furnishings from the Sam Kasten collection from Twill Textiles.



Embrace the simplicity of a pared-back palette of stone grey and off-white, softened by creamy tiles.



EMILY TODHUNTER

Todhunter is co-director of Todhunter Earle Interiors

Todhunter founded the company in 1988 and became partners with Kate Earle in 1998. She has worked on a huge variety of projects from yachts to country houses.

“ Our aim with this back-of-house hallway was to create a plain, honest and somewhat sombre feel that felt right for the house. Although plain, it has been done very well with lots of shadow and contrast with dark and light. When working at the cooler end of the spectrum with bluey-greys, stone colours and dove grey, you do need to contrast with some warmer, creamier tones. If you put all cool colours together, however subtle, it would look dead; set them against something with a touch of cream and it looks far prettier.

In country houses we like to use Natural Calico paint from Dulux, which is a slightly yellow off-white and works well against bricks and stones, bringing some warmth. In London, we tend to go for a cooler white paint like Quiet White from Papers and Paints which suits the grey light, white houses and black railings. However, my biggest piece of advice is once you choose an off-white, use it everywhere. Do not have slightly different whites or cream on woodwork, cornicing and ceilings, stick to the same colour as all those variations will show up.

The cream and dove grey ceramic tiles look beautiful together and maintain the subtle and limited palette. The beauty of a neutral scheme is that you can add colour through cushions or lampshades, but I think you should not be intimidated by a cool palette, be brave and embrace its simplicity. As night falls I think it is better to have a yellow cast from lighting to add warmth. ”



A range of whites, greys, blues and warm gold work in harmony to create a soothing, cool master bedroom.



NATALIA MIYAR, HELEN GREEN DESIGN

Miyar is head of design at Helen Green Design

Established in 2002 by Helen Green, Helen Green Design is renowned for sophisticated, elegant interiors for London residences and luxury hotels, including suites at

The Berkeley, as well as town and country houses. Green entrusted Miyar to continue her brand values when she took over as head of design.

“ Whites, stone greys and soft blues are often associated with calming and restful environments, but as designers we have to be mindful to use warm tones that avoid a space feeling too clinical or stark, especially when considering bedroom schemes. In this London master bedroom there is extensive wall space and white paint. The paint has a grey undertone and complements the bright white curtains and bed linen which, alone, might otherwise feel too severe. The versatile texture and aesthetic of the curtain fabric from Rubelli is one of our favourites, as it works so well with the natural light that floods through the Regency windows. It is important to recognise that white paints can be constructed with either pink,

yellow or blue undertones. We wanted to avoid opting for any pink-based whites as this would appear too warm and unbalance the scheme. When purchasing white materials, it is advisable to study the fabrics and paints in daylight and in situation, as they can appear different shades in different environments.

Subtle integration of metallic colours can also soften a neutral room. The Jim Thompson fabric used for the headboard has a golden thread running through it to soften and complement the slightly darker tones of the metal trellis work. Silver and bare timber furniture finishes would have been too overpowering in this instance and changed the overall atmosphere of the room. The bespoke lacquer finish on

the console table introduces a new texture but doesn't distract from the neutral scheme. The pale-blue fabric used on the stools, positioned at the end of the bed, is a subtle tone that almost appears pale grey in colour, but by using gold finish on the stools' legs we have managed to enhance the blue just enough to allow the colour to come through. We normally work with two predominant colours when realising and creating a room scheme, and then we build upon this by adding a stronger accent colour to the mix. In this instance, the deep-blue throw adds focus and richness to the more neutral tones of the linens and cushions without upsetting the gentle cool palette and relaxed overall look. ”



TEXTURAL TONES

Beautiful fabrics, papers and carpet to enhance a muted colour scheme

TOP LEFT Subtly patterned wallpapers bring character to a limited palette. *Silk plain, Teal 310877, £48 a roll; Carrera, Linen 3010863, £48 a roll; Octavo, Ivory 310884, £52 a roll; Ebru, Silver 310859, £52 a roll, all Zoffany* **TOP RIGHT** Add warmth through texture with a sumptuous wool carpet. *Wool Knot carpet, Snuggle 1870, £54.95 a sq metre, Alternative Flooring* **BOTTOM LEFT** Soft silvers and off-whites are cool and luxurious. *Isis in Dove Grey, ED85001-910, £79 a metre; Zenith Reverse in Dove, ED75005-1, £75 a metre; Razzle Dazzle in Cream, ED85053-120, £98 a metre, all Threads by GPJ Baker* **BOTTOM RIGHT** Layer different shades of pale-stone hues with deeper metallics for a balanced scheme. *Elemental Range, from £54.40 a metre, all Linwood* ▶



PROFESSIONAL PAINTS

TOP Interior designer Katharine Pooley selects Marble I (left) from Paint and Paper Library for its subtle matt texture and versatility as a neutral base for elegant, pared-back schemes. £35 for 2.5l flat emulsion

For a touch of richness, Mouse Grey (centre), is a favourite colour of Edward Bulmer, founder of Pots of Paint. £25 for 2.5l emulsion
Patrick Baty, of Paper and Paints, advises that, "SC 488 (right) was matched to a colour that John Fowler employed in the entrance hall of an Adam country house. It has proved to be a very versatile, popular colour." £34.50 for 2.5l matt emulsion

MIDDLE Sarah Cole, director of Farrow & Ball suggests a range of cool neutrals that work in harmony together in a layered scheme. Skimming Stone (left) is a lovely off white that complements the deeper stone grey shades of Dove Tale and the ever popular Elephant's Breath.

£34.50 for 2.5l estate emulsion
Linen Wash (right) is a rich off-white recommended by David Mottershead, managing director of Little Greene: "It is a broken and pared-down natural linen colour; meaning it can be used instead of white when a warmer, deeper shade is required." £32.50 for 2.5l absolute matt emulsion

BOTTOM John Dison, managing director of Earthborn Paints advocates Nellie (left) as "perfect for contrasting with accent colours or for offsetting artwork in a drawing room; the finish is multi-tonal and unimposing." £31 for 2.5l claypaint
"Salt and Pepper (centre) is a beautiful universal shade and a lovely backdrop to crisp, white woodwork," says designer Helen Turkington of one of her favourite shades from her own collection. £33 for 2.5l matt emulsion
Pebble (right) is "a lovely soft stony grey," says Ian West, director of Ecos Organic Paints. From £38.13 for 5l emulsion ■

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P.80-81 GARY HAMILL PAINT SWATCHES HEATHER GUNN
PAINT SWATCH STYLING KATY GREEN & RUTH SARGISON