



ANTIQUES

Call to Color *by Ann Sample*

A FORMER FASHION EDITOR EXPLORES HER PASSION FOR VIBRANT VINTAGE ACCESSORIES



For impact, designer Michelle Morgan Harrison adds small doses of color to monochromatic room schemes. She'll enrich a white room with spots of turquoise or enliven a dark khaki room with hints of subtle celadon. "A strong color among a cleanly-designed scheme directs the eye," she explains. "It allows all the pieces to be appreciated, not just the ones that demand the initial attention."

Before founding her design firm two years ago, Morgan Harrison worked as a fashion editor for *Elle* and *Mirabella*, as well as a stylist at Saks Fifth Avenue, where she created and styled interior design shoots. She launched Morgan Harrison Home after completing the renovation of a 1890s New Canaan farmhouse for her family.

Rainbow Bright | "The rooms I create are a fresh take on traditional," says designer Michelle Morgan Harrison (TOP LEFT). To add visual interest and cohesion she often accessorizes with brightly colored antiques such as this vintage glass decanter (LEFT) found at Commission Mart by Pamela. **Green Sheen** | A pair of Paul Hanson midcentury "jadite" glass lamps with original shades (ABOVE), catch Morgan Harrison's eye at Hidden Galleries. See Resources.



“As collectibles, vintage accents personalize and update traditionally-designed rooms,” says designer Michelle Morgan Harrison

Play Time | At Commission Mart by Pamela, Morgan Harrison is also drawn to a playful 1960s painting (LEFT) by French artist Marc Leroy. She envisions placing it in an all white living room. **All Together Now** | This collection of floral Opaline vases (BELOW) from Hiden Galleries particularly appeals to Morgan Harrison as she prefers to group accessories in a similar color palette together. See Resources.

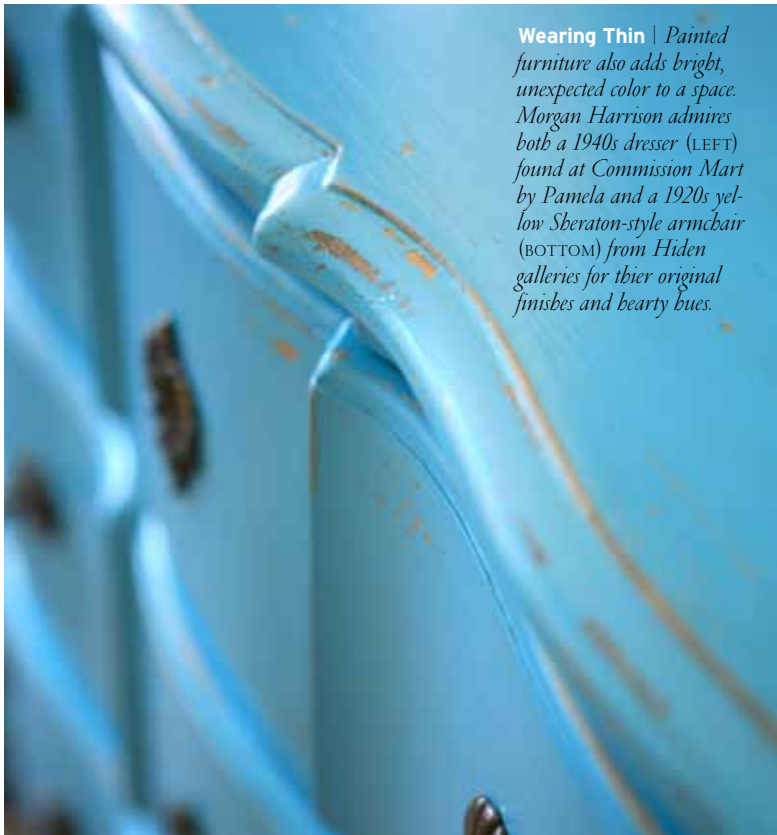
On a recent gray winter day, Morgan Harrison sought color in two of her favorite spots: Stamford’s Hiden Galleries and Greenwich’s Commission Mart by Pamela.

Hiden recently consolidated two locations, Hiden Galleries and Hiden II, into one space with 350 dealers (**47 John Street, Stamford, 203.363.003, www.hidengalleries.com**). Once inside the John Street location, Morgan Harrison is quickly attracted to a number of accessories. “Given my fashion background, accessories are important to me,” she says. “As collectibles, vintage accents personalize and update traditionally-designed rooms.” The first

accessory was found in Hiden’s impressive, ever-changing collection of Italian Murano glass lamps. Originally popular in America in the 1950s and 1960s, the often colorful, hand-blown lamps are once again a must for many designers. In the late 13th century, Murano glass became so valued that glass-blowers were forbidden to leave the Venetian state. Made from silica (sand or quartz), the glass is hand blown and formed with color added via minerals such as copper and cobalt. The glass is still produced in Murano today, made using centuries-old techniques. Morgan Harrison admired several pairs of lamps at

Hiden, including a bulbous turquoise set. She would place them in a predominately white living





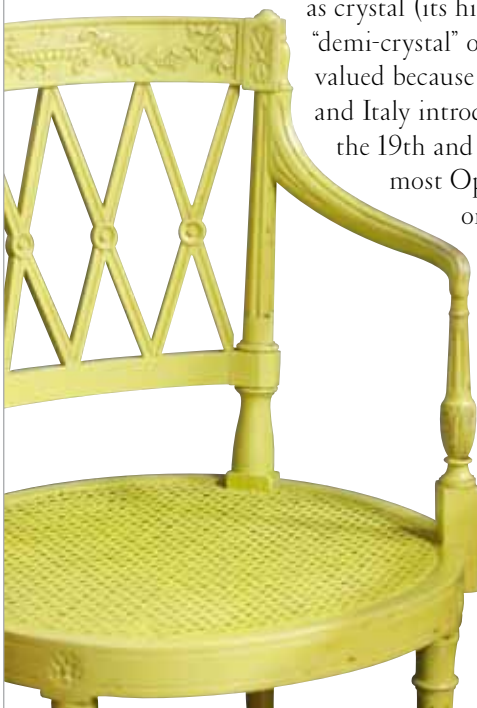
Wearing Thin | Painted furniture also adds bright, unexpected color to a space. Morgan Harrison admires both a 1940s dresser (LEFT) found at Commission Mart by Pamela and a 1920s yellow Sberaton-style armchair (BOTTOM) from Hiden galleries for their original finishes and bearty hues.

room with ebonized wood flooring topped by a washed out grey and blue Persian rug. The lamps would sit on mirrored side tables positioned at either end of a white tufted linen couch accompanied by a white lacquered bamboo low table.

Morgan Harrison is next attracted to a grouping of vintage Continental Opaline vases that pair nicely with Murano glass. The French introduced Opaline glass in the beginning of the 19th century. It hit its height of popularity mid-century, during the reign of Napoleon III and was made into many forms—vases, decanters and boxes. The glass was produced in bright colors and shades of white, and was often decorated with gilding or fitted with ormolu. Although it is not as precious

as crystal (its high lead content classifies it as “demi-crystal” or semi-crystal), Opaline is still valued because it was hand blown. England and Italy introduced their own versions in the 19th and early 20th centuries and since most Opaline glass wasn’t branded, its origin can be difficult to determine. “I tend to display collections monochromatically,” says Harrison. “I would group these blue and green Opaline vases together, along with an alabaster lamp, in a living room, arranged on a carved French side table.”

Morgan Harrison’s last selection at Hiden is the most striking—a pair of mid-century glass lamps with original shades designed



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by Paul Hanson. Subtle sage green, they are impressive in silhouette and size. "I would set them on burl wood pedestal tables flanking a Belgium linen-covered French settee," she says.

The next stop is Greenwich's Commission Mart by Pamela (**245 East Putnam Ave., Cos Cob, 203.869.5512, www.commissionmart.com**). The shop, once all consignment, is now a vintage and antiques store owned by Pamela Frisoli. It's comprised of three well-edited rooms, featuring small inspirational vignettes. Once inside, Morgan Harrison is drawn to a 1960s painting by French artist Marc Leroy. It appeals to the designer for its playfulness and color. She would hang it in an all-white living room with a sea grass rug above another item from the shop, a turquoise painted 1940s French dresser. "The space

would be monochromatic so that the colorful painting and the dresser would be the undeniable focal point," she says. A petite turquoise glass decanter grouped on top of a streamlined white 1960s lacquered chest appeals to her for its simplicity and impact. In a foyer, she would pair the vignette with bold turquoise and white patterned wallpaper. "To create a steady flow in a home, the foyer would be in the same house as the living room with the Hidden Galleries turquoise Murano glass lamps," she says. ●



Lady and the Lamp | Murano glass was born in the 13th century but items like these refurbished lamps from Hidden Galleries are still au courant today. Topped with a simple shade in a luxe fabric, they create a chic contemporary accent. See Resources.