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Change the view with removeable, peel-and-press art

by **Rose Bennett Gilbert**
Copley News Service

Q:We've lived in this house for three years and I still haven't brought myself to choose anything to hang over the living room sofa. I think I'm intimidated because it's the most important wall in the house.



Affordable new peel and press art forms add color punch to a mostly white bedroom.

But after three years, I'm embarrassed by that blank wall. Do you think I should hold out for the exactly right artwork, or should I just put up something that's "OK" and keep looking?

A:I'm a great fan of blank spaces, especially over the sofa. As you so rightly observe, this is the most important wall in the house ... or is it, really? Anyone sitting on the sofa can't see what's behind them anyway.

Doesn't it make better sense to focus your "best" art on the walls facing the sofa?

A viable alternative: Keep changing the pictures until you find something that feels exactly right. There are several ways to do that — with hammer and nails in hand — by hanging a narrow shelf on which to prop a succession of different artworks; or exploring an entirely new way of viewing art.

The abstract over the bed in the photo we show here is part of a new collection called transForms Fine Art Transfers. As the name implies, it involves a simple rub-on transfer process: You peel off a protective backing sheet from the artwork, position and rub onto any smooth surface, including walls, cabinets, ceilings and windows. There are thousands of artworks to choose from, from Egyptian motifs and cartoons to art decor, wall murals and trompe l'oeil, like this intriguing abstract design.

Maja Palej, vice president of design for transForms, says the designs blend in to become flush with whatever surface you put them on, and last brilliantly until you're ready to peel them

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off and try something new. Available at home centers, department and specialty stores, the artworks cost from \$20 to \$1,200. Have a look at www.transforms.net.

Fab Fabrics

Fabrics stole the show at the recent International Home Furnishings Market in High Point, N.C.

Technologically advanced fabrics originally designed to live happily outside on the patio have sneaked into living and dining rooms. Strictly indoor fabrics have been crushed, tasseled and mixed into a dazzling patchwork of different patterns on the same sofa or chair.

Traditional French Provincial prints are encased in clear plastic on totally untraditional folding cafe chairs and used on settees in tandem with clear Plexiglas spindles. Long, shaggy chenilles bring new life to the old beanbag idea (in fact, beanbags also showed up as outdoor furniture, and in buttery leather for really "in" sophisticates).

"Easy care" are the operative words for many of the new fabrics. At Norwalk Furniture, designer and HGTV star Joe Ruggiero wrapped sofas and chairs in bright country-style fabrics from Glen Raven, manufacturer of the Sunbrella fabrics seen on outdoor umbrellas and awnings, boats and backyard furniture.

Far from the hard, stiff outdoor fabrics of yore, Ruggiero's fabrics are soft, even silky, to the touch. Most surprising are his posh new chenilles and a repertory of trims, fringes and tassels that give the pieces their finishing touch. For a closer look, go to www.joeruggiero.com; www.ruggieroideas.com; www.norwalkfurniture.com; or www.sunbrella.com.

Ruggiero says the new fabrics will shrug off stains and spills as effectively indoors as out. They also refuse to fade.

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