

Decor Score: Color your world and do as the Romans do

by *Rose_Bennett_Gilbert*

Q: I'm about to do over our oldest son's room. He's going to be living with us for a year or so, waiting for his office to post him abroad.

The room's not very big (12 by 14) and just has one window. My question is about that window: what kind of curtains would be suitable in a room for a 25-year-old guy?

A: I'd suggest that, like the rest of humanity, 25-year-old guys have been living with all kinds of curtains since time began. However, that doesn't mean they're your only option.

COOL SHADES - These shades are from Levolor and come in numerous colors and interesting fabrics like brushed suede-cloth. CNS Photo courtesy of Levolor. The trim and tailored room we show here illustrates a handsome - dare we say "manly"? - alternative: ready-made Roman shades. Simple, assertive, and highly effective, the shades are also flexible. You can raise and lower them from both top and bottom to control light and outside exposure. The unfussy folds will help soften a window area with or without the side curtains used here.

These shades are from Levolor (www.levolor.com) and come in numerous colors and interesting fabrics like brushed suede-cloth. You can also ask for a room-darkening fabric that will leave everything in the dark. This brown-and-blue color scheme is also worth lifting, at least, according to studies that say blue is man's best friend, color-wise.

Q: Who says home decorating is child's play?

A: American Standard prizes the idea, literally. The company's asking you and your child to team up to win what they call a "home comfort makeover" worth \$15,000. First, get your under-12 child to draw and color a

picture of what he or she think a comfortable home looks like. Then you write a 100-word essay on why your family needs a comfortable home. Online voters will chose the winners. Think fast: the contest closes Sept. 20. Two little catches: you have to own both a home and a HVAC system. Catch all the details at www.americanstandardair.com/comfy.

Q: My husband comes home with, ah, strange things he collects from the street. Most recent treasure: an old wooden dolly on wheels. It probably came from a train station somewhere. He wants to refinish the thing and bring it in the house. I'm thinking it can go in the garage. Please help.

A: You may be crying "help" to the wrong person. Your dolly may be old but I'm betting she's still full of life. Depending on how big she is, try her out as a cocktail table in the family room (an idea stolen from designers Kay Douglass and Sixie Peeples, who used an old RR cart between white chaises in one of the most original room in last year's Atlanta Symphony Show House).

More thoughts: Roll your dolly against a wall and load her up with books and baskets for miscellaneous stuff. Or take her back outside, where there should be a winning role for her on the patio, shunting dishes and such from grill to table.

The point is to look at furnishings and serendipitous finds with a fresh eye. Breaking the mold - breaking the usual decorating "rules" - can be the very making of a personal sense of style.

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