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HOME DESIGN

WHAT THE PROS KNOW: ADVICE

Tools of the **trade**

DESIGNERS AND ARCHITECTS SHARE THEIR IDEAS AND TRENDS AS THEY SEE THEM

A few years back, "going green" was considered avant-garde and daring. Today, installing bamboo floors or countertops is thought of as environmentally wise, but no longer cutting edge. Those who want to be innovative and do something sustainable opt for paper and glass countertops. Wallpaper, once the rage, lost its universal cachet, but now many design gurus say it's coming back with a bang, though in new colors, patterns and scale.

The bottom line: Designs change and vary tremendously to appeal to a hungry audience eager for what's new. Top design pros nationwide have offered us clever ideas that aren't on everyone's radar screen.

Yen Ha (left) with architect/partner Michi Yanagishita. The wallpaper is called "Hard Hats and Wigs."

Don't be chintzy with wallpaper

Yen Ha, architect, Front Studio, New York, N.Y.
frontstudio.com

Wallpaper is alive and well, as long as it's fresh, bold and graphic. There's black on black wallpaper [the one shown here was created by Ha's graphic designer Karen Shu] where it looks either matte or shiny, depending on how you look at it. Also popular are dark gray colors, black-and-white patterns, anything bold and nothing pastel or old-style with a chintz motif. Don't be afraid to try wallpaper and mix it with furniture in a way that's unexpected. Use vintage furnishings with modern floral wall patterns, for example.