

# THE GREAT WALL

When putting up barriers is a good thing.

BY ZEM JOAQUIN

I love minimalist, gallery-white walls as much as the next art lover, but sometimes the simplicity screams for color, or maybe just a little texture. The price of saturated color used to be exposure to such toxic chemicals as ammonia and formaldehyde—that “new-paint” smell comes courtesy of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which cause eye and throat irritation and have even been linked to cancer. (Don’t get me started on their harmful effects on the environment.) Thankfully, times have changed and now you can finally have your hue and smell it, too. A range of wall paints is offered with low or no VOCs, and other popular wall treatments use such natural materials as clay and eco-conscious paper. Here are a few of the smartest ways to make your walls anything but flat.

## A FRESH FRAMEWORK

6 Skip the Scotch tape. Invest in real frames to display your real artwork. The Painters Place, a family-owned and -operated shop in Hayes Valley, carries an entire line of customizable **eco-friendly frames** made from wood from sustainably managed forests here in the US. \$85-\$150; 371 Hayes St., 415-431-9827, [thepaintersplace.com](http://thepaintersplace.com)



**ZEM JOAQUIN**, 7x7's green editor, founded the popular website [Ecofabulous.com](http://Ecofabulous.com). She is a board member of Global Green and Healthy Healthy World.

