

Arty Art Deco

Auckland

When a client comes to you saying "I want colour and artistic expression throughout my house in a way no-one else has" as an Interior Designer you not only say "We can do that!" you also jump for joy, clap your hands together and resist from hugging them. These types of project are unfortunately quite rare.

This client presented an almost blank canvas in their Art Deco home which was in a very bland condition, painted a 'dirty cream' on what seemed every surface. The home needed a kitchen and bathroom renovation along with an exciting new interior colour scheme. The existing furnishings were an eclectic mix of original 60s pink velvet, upcycled pieces and family heirlooms which all needed to be incorporated.

Art was important to the young couple who had started to collect contemporary pieces and didn't want to put cheap prints on the walls while amassing their desired collection. They wanted a sense of art around them and to really feel they were in an Art Deco home without it being a mere reproduction of the era or Baz Luhrmann overkill. They also wanted to have a sense of New Zealand in a subtle no blatant silver fern logos kind of way.

The floor plan was quite typically Art Deco featuring a gorgeous curved window wall in the living room flanked by the original scalloped fireplace and mantle. There was a great flow between living and dining rooms but the tiny enclosed kitchen definitely needed its wall ripped down to create more space, light and laughter for friends watching their own master chef in action.

The idea was to inject a sense of quirky elegance into the tired old lady and give her a modern edge. The kitchen began as the starting point and is literally the cliched heart of the house, as it is perfectly centralised. The existing shabby green cabinetry was removed along with a wall. We wanted to use traditional materials

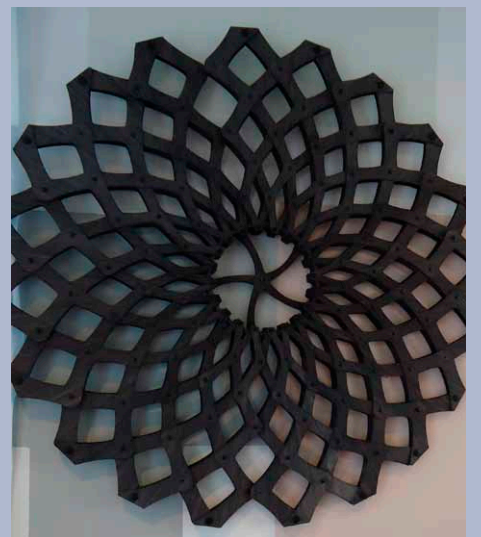
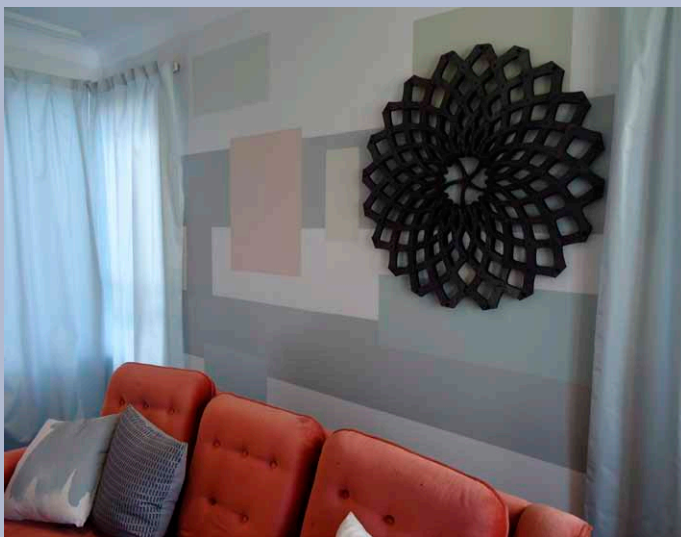
such as marble that would honour the era the house was built but also be very current. The kitchen would remain neutral in colouring but by using charcoal against stark white, a sense of drama would be created. Large colour blocking in the kitchen gives a contemporary edge. A dark charcoal, full wall pantry is mirror imaged by a full wall of black Italian Mosaics. David Trubridge boards were upcycled on the kitchen bench front creating local artistic reference and painted metallic silver to appear like sheets of textural metal sculpture.

Creating a sense of art was achieved throughout the house by actually treating the walls as canvases. Inspired by Art Deco glass work and furniture shapes, a simple masking tape method was used to create bold blocks of various Resene colours. The painted geometric design wraps across the walls from room to room interrupted by bare walls of Resene Black White which enables the design to breathe and not overcrowd the house. The charcoal in the kitchen is stretched out into horizontal bands in one direction as an entertaining dinner party blackboard, and bold striping in the entrance and fireplace.

Polished silk curtains cascading onto the floor in a soft metallic blue were chosen for their glamorous yet subtle lustre and enhance the graphic shapes of colour beside them. A juxtaposition of textures always makes a space more exciting.

The patina of the original timber floor is retained throughout the house including the bathroom. The dark shellac, well-worn in places gives authenticity to a house that is boasting 70 years young. To give the horizontal a final brush of magic an exquisite Catherine Martin hand knotted rug was added to the living room. The rug's colours work in complete harmony with the geometric wall colours pulling the elements together and proving the extra Art Deco glamour.

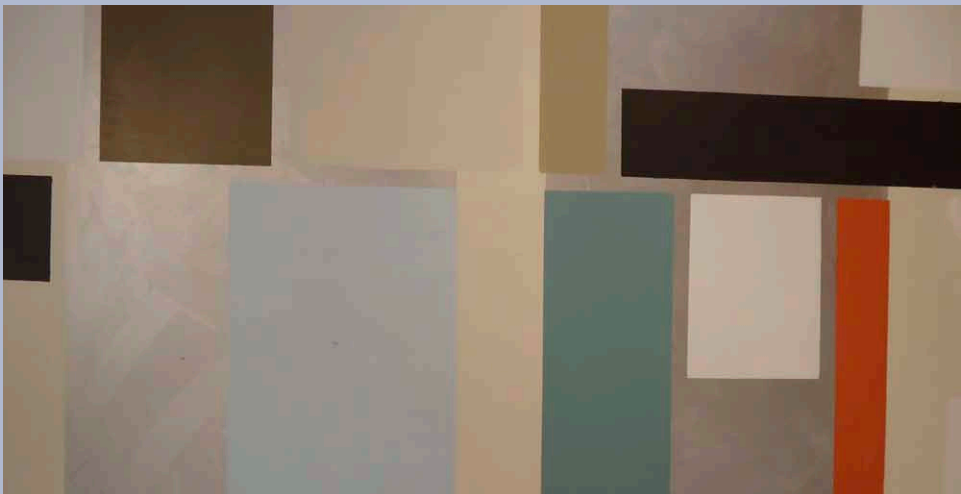






 Resene Alaska

Building contractor:
Gordon Gammie Construction Ltd
Cabinet maker: Richard Squire Designs
Interior designer: Kelly Gammie
Supplier – bathroom fittings:
Mico Design



The geometric design continues into the bathroom introducing new colours and increasing the intensity of pattern. A large freestanding bath visually pops against the rich Resene colours and its curved shape along with a large round mirror are modern and soft against the geometry of the walls.

It is difficult not to smile and feel you are in an arty space when in this quaint but quirky Art Deco home. The colourful geometric walls are artworks in themselves without being adorned by anything else.

As a designer working on this Art Deco house it was important to acknowledge tradition while mixing in the contemporary. I wanted the project to have a sense of authenticity so the first point of colour inspiration was the Art Deco palette itself, elegant pastels highlighted with sombre dark shades. Think Tamara de Lempicka, Sonia Delaunay and Leger or early Rita Angus.

Next, to avoid the project looking historically repetitious the colours also needed to be current and innovative. I felt that the colour palette also needed to be appropriate to the environment that surrounds it, colour that evokes a sense of New Zealand. Rich yet delicate colour is how I see the colours of New Zealand.

The Karen Walker Resene colours were perfect to depict the hills and shores of New Zealand. **Resene Periglacial Blue**, **Resene Ecu White** and **Resene Foggy Grey** were mixed with the gorgeous **Resene Wafer** pink and a delicious **Resene Celeste** green. In the dining room **Resene Linen**, **Resene Surrender** and **Resene Silver Aluminium** metallic make an appearance. **Resene Fuscous Grey** was used as the base neutral to ground the more whimsical pastels and give that Art Deco sense of drama with **Resene Black White** serving as the essential pale neutral throughout.

The blackboard wall stretching from kitchen to dining is finished in **Resene**

Blackboard Paint Black. The kitchen and entry share **Resene Fuscous Grey**, which is teamed with **Resene Soapstone** in the entrance.

The richer tones in the bathroom included Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen tinted to **Resene Fuscous Grey**, **Resene Half Sisal**, **Resene Triple Sisal**, **Resene Sandspit Brown**, **Resene Sandstone**, **Resene Escape**, **Resene Cutty Sark** and **Resene Hot August**, with a strong metallic silver accent. I thought the bathroom needed earthier tones with a little more intensity than the living area. The stark white of the large freestanding bath is a great contrast and helps the combination of colours on the basin wall really pop.

We had a tight budget to work with which I feel promotes creativity rather than hindering it. The geometrical designs in an array of colours were devised to provide the ultimate wow factor without the optimum spend.

