

METRO Property Interiors

OLIVER'S MOOD BOARD

THIS WEEK... ARTY

'The perfect piece of art for your home has to work in harmony with your other pieces of furniture or décor,' says Rachael Tate, buying and merchandising manager at The National Portrait Gallery. 'You should dare to be playful – art should reflect your personality, taste and style.'



Pjätteryd

Not long ago Youtube pranksters tricked gallery goers into thinking a £7 Ikea artwork was a valuable contemporary piece. Try the same with this piece on canvas created by Svetlana Rabey. £25, ikea.com

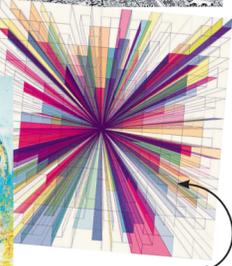
London Town

British artist Fuller, aka Gareth Wood, took ten years to create this meticulously drawn map of his experience in London. Smaller prints are limited to 150. £600, fullermaps.com



Unstoppable

The artwork of mixed-media artist Sharon White is currently selling well in Dubai, exhibiting in the city's Fairmont Palm until the end of November. £65, mumbojumbopaint.co.uk



One Point Perspective

Simon C Page is a self-taught designer and artist working from a studio in Saffron Walden. Mathematical in their construction, his prints have a precision that fits perfectly with a contemporary, modern space. £120, bluesuntree.co.uk

OLIVER STALLWOOD



Grand designs: Jessica Zoob

HOME'S WHERE THE ART IS

Joanna Simmons talks to an artist whose house is her own blank canvas

MAKING a tiny home work efficiently to suit family life was the driver for Jessica Zoob when she set about renovating her house in East Sussex ten years ago.

'It was all about storage and making sure there's a place for everything to go,' she says. 'I went for a look that is very pared back, too.' Plenty of built-in cupboard and trunk space helps Jessica's house function well and look tidy, which she really values. 'When anyone comes in they say "It's so calm in here." The house is a real haven and it also feels very easy to manage, so it suits my busy life. It's practical.'

When Jessica bought the house ten years ago it had been empty for some time. 'It was a shell and I stripped it back to its bare bones, moved walls around, added rooms and did a loft extension,' she says. While the

builders toiled, she had time to design all of the storage.

'The house has lots of angles and funny shapes, a bit like a boat,' she says. So she designed the kind of storage you might find on one. 'In the living room, you lift up lids on the bench seating and find storage underneath, like on a ship. It's more space-efficient than individual armchairs,' she says.

The living room and dining area flow into one another, an existing aspect of the property that Jessica didn't have to change. She added panelling to the walls and ceilings as well as a few select pieces of vintage furniture.

The clean white colour scheme provides the perfect backdrop for her pictures. 'I wanted the art to stand out and I like having flowers and sculptures around, so this is a very simple setting for everything to sing out from,' she says.

A successful artist, Jessica knows

Light and bright: The white panelled walls are the perfect backdrop for Jessica's colourful art



mainly with oil, which she enjoys for its rich tones, lustre and depth. Her pictures are hung around the house; flowers feature in her art and bunches of fresh blooms are dotted around the rooms.

One of Jessica's beautiful pieces, hanging in the hall, is neatly framed by the opening. A hidden sliding door can be pulled across to separate the living space from the hallway.

Jessica's daughters were six and nine when she carried out the renovation. 'I wanted to have a totally open house, with all kids welcome and everything child friendly,' she says. 'I wanted a really happy home.'

She's never precious, seeing the marks of time as adding to its character. 'The floor was painted lots

of layers and now all the scrapes and scuffs have made it more beautiful,' she says. Her girls are now teenagers, but the house still sees its share of wear and tear, so this unpretentious approach continues to work well. 'A teenager's stiletto heels can do as much damage as a child roller-blading through the rooms' she says.

Storage is concealed behind much of the wall panelling – hiding everything from the TV to the vacuum cleaner.

Painted flea market chairs sit around the dining table. 'Years ago the girls and I thought we would paint them different colours,' says Jessica. 'We started work one morning, still dressed in our pyjamas.'

The kitchen sits at the rear of the

house, with access to the garden. 'I gutted it and then had the units made,' she says. The low door beneath the shelf on the back wall opens on to storage for bins and recycling boxes. 'It's a little Hobbit door that you just duck through,' she says.

A collection of small cups hang above the sink, framing the view to the garden. 'They are so sweet', says Jessica. Some are from Igigi, an interiors and clothes shop in Hove, others are market finds.

A tiny door in the living room leads



THE NEW WAY TO DESIGN YOUR HOME



Tiny details: Cups hang above the sink



Quaint: Jessica gutted the original kitchen and had new units made



Homely: Neutral colours keep it simple



Pared back: The extension's upstairs sitting room also features Jessica's art

sitting space provides a quiet spot to relax. Shutters are used here, as they are everywhere in the property. 'In a little house it's good to choose simple ingredients and keep them throughout for a calm feel, rather than having lots of different things going on,' explains Jessica.

Daughter Kat's room features a built-in bed with hanging curtains, made from fabric printed with her mum's Big Smile design (inset above).

In Jessica's own loft bedroom, fresh white bedding is punctuated

by a few colourful cushions. She chose white plaster for the walls, which is treated with a glaze to create a soft sheen. 'It's lovely, it has a real life to it,' she says.



The sloping walls and ceiling posed a few challenges, though. 'I had so many different people making bits of furniture for this space,' she explains. 'I couldn't find individual pieces for this room – the access was too tricky – so it was all made in bite-size pieces and brought in.'

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