



a lifetime of colour

Resene Total Colour Lifetime Achievement award recipient Sylvia Sandford simply loves working with colour.

Tell us about your current ventures.

My work has always encompassed a wide range of activities and my days are exciting, inspirational and varied. It is a life of design and decorating, and of thoroughly good experiences. In a recent week I visited clients on Waiheke Island, in Tamarunui and Napier, then went back to my home near Miranda, south of Auckland, to host a corporate function and mark papers for my Open Polytechnic students.

What changes have you seen in our approach to colour as homeowners during the years?

It has become so much easier to understand colour as our everyday lives are so visually connected to it. Generally, homeowners remain cautious, admiring the use of colour others have made, but settling for a neutral palette that creates a no-nonsense background for themselves. I feel there is more knowledge of colour but as homes are bought and sold or as they become smaller, colour choices are driven by market demand and the desire to play it safe.

How would you describe your personal style?

When I was much younger I started collecting furniture. Each piece had a story to tell, so it has travelled with me until this day. The collection has been the backbone to my personal style. My living environments have been very different but always designed to delight the eye and exalt the spirit. That furniture has played a significant part in determining style. Both inside and out, I plan for comfort and welcome. My eclectic possessions are a personal expression that are woven into a scheme to suit whatever the role is. I like individuality based on the principles of good design.

What is your favourite decorating colour or colours, and why?

I have no favourite colour as I strongly believe in any colour becoming a favourite if it is used well. As textile

designer Manuel Canovas said: "There are no ugly colours... just poor combinations."

I think black and white are absolute and supreme in their effect. My restful bedroom is painted in Resene All Black. I do love the challenge of white. White is a chameleon changing with texture, pattern, light, reflection and luminosity. It is the perfect decorating canvas as a background or as a starting point. There is an architectural purity with white where it can define form, accentuate detail, clarify space or enliven light. It was the perfect choice for both inside and out when I renovated an old kauri church in Miranda where the shifting hues of white captured the simple and naive beauty of the structure.

Is there a colour you would never use in your own home?

Any colour that's harsh and painful to my eyes meets this criteria. Colour is so personal. Any harsh colour can be veiled with grey to make it more pleasant. This clever trick takes an equal quantity of black and white mixed together, and dropped into the offending colour. Immediately this new tone will have a friendliness that could be embraced.

What are your three favourite colours from Resene's latest The Range fashion colours collection, and why?

The palette is wonderful; I could find a place for them all. So I have chosen a triadic scheme with similar intensity to paint a series of wall stripes of varying widths in a child's sunny playroom – Resene Skydiver, Resene Bright Lights and Resene Smitten. **H**

Go to www.habitatbyresene.com/blogs-people/sylvia-sandford to discover Sylvia's fail-safe rules for using colour in interiors.

-  Resene Bright Lights
-  Resene All Black
-  Resene Skydiver
-  Resene Smitten
-  Resene Half Bianca