



Benjamin Louie and big sister Anabel find there's loads of exploring to do in the boys' new room



Huge carpet footprints and a prehistoric forest help to set the scene

By Vanessa Johnson
Photography Ross Brown

Walking

Step inside Benjamin and Marcus Louie's bedroom and you feel like you might just bump into a T-Rex



These magnets will hold Benjamin's artwork in place

The starting point in this Tauranga home was to paint the bedroom walls with Resene Zibibbo and the skirting boards in Resene Spanish White, the colour used throughout the house. After that, the fun projects could start.

Looking back, Bridget Louie says the three dinosaurs that look down from the walls took the most work. She first transferred the designs from a book onto grid paper, then ruled up three MDF sheets (2400mm x 1200mm x 6mm) into grids, so she could scale up the designs before cutting them out with a jigsaw.

The painting process saw Bridget and husband Johnny reaching for lots of different Resene products.

Resene colours used:

WALL COLOUR Zibibbo (reddish brown) **SKIRTING** Spanish White

DESIGN FEATURES Splat + Tory Blue (medium blue); Tory Blue (darker blue); Lickety Split (pale green); Dizzy Lizzy (lime green); Grass Stain (darker green); Fizz (yellow); Frenzee (orange); Get Reddy (red); So Cool (metallic silver)



Three MDF dinosaurs hang on the walls



Plastic dinosaurs from the Playcentre Shop and the \$2 Shop



Marcus plays with the felt dino toy made by Mum



Bridget and Johnny Louie with Benjamin, 4, Marcus, 2, and Anabel, 6

with dinosaurs

“We undercoated both sides with a water-based paint and started applying coats of Resene Magnetic Magic. Because I wanted to use quite chunky, heavy magnets [on the dinos], we applied several coats of magnetic paint to make sure it was strong enough to hold the magnets we’d chosen.”

Although Bridget admits there were some “touch and go” moments with the Resene Crackle effect paint used on one dinosaur, she achieved the look she wanted and thanks 12 year-old family friend, Jasmine, for her help in applying the patterns and details to the final coats. The next challenge was getting the dinosaurs onto the walls.

“They’re quite heavy and we had to make sure they didn’t warp or fall down, so we used a stud finder and screwed them directly onto the wall and touched up with a bit more paint.”

Each dinosaur’s back is dotted with chunky magnets that the boys can use to

hang up their artwork. The magnets started out as drawer handles that Bridget found on TradeMe for \$1 each and then transformed with a bit of vision and a \$12 pack of 20mm magnets.

The vibrant prehistoric tree design decorating the melamine-coated toy storage cabinet (bought at Mr Shelf in Tauranga for about \$280) was made using the leftover MDF, attached using an Araldite adhesive, together with a screw or two for good measure.

Although less noticeable now, the boys’ beds had looked very different – one was made from pine and the other from rimu. Resene’s Waterborne Smooth Surface Sealer, designed for use on previously varnished furniture, allowed Bridget to paint the beds in Resene Spanish White

without having to sand or strip the frames. So, she could save money by reusing two existing pieces of furniture.

Two coats of Resene Blackboard Paint applied to the wardrobe doors turned an otherwise functional surface into another new play zone that Benjamin and Marcus – and even big sister Anabel – can enjoy.

Soft furnishings complete the look and Bridget found the striped duvet covers for half price in a Farmers sale and the dinosaur scatter cushion fabric at Harvey Furnishings in Tauranga. She made the felt dinosaur toys using materials from Spotlight.

The bedroom window is now dressed with a blackout blind customised using a stencil made from two star-shaped cookie cutters and clear Duraseal adhesive. Bridget used the stencil and Resene So Cool metallic silver paint to decorate the blind with stars, so that when the lights go out at bedtime, stars twinkle inside the room.

In spite of all the fun Bridget had painting and decorating, her favourite design element is on the floor. “I drew the footprint mat design on paper and gave it to a carpet overlacker. I ended up buying the polyester carpet and having six footprint mats overlacked for only \$70 and that was amazing value,” Bridget says.

While relieved to be finished on time, the couple haven’t quite managed to hang up their paint brushes yet. Their six-year-old daughter Anabel has her heart set on a fairy/princess/star-themed room, so landscaping the front garden will have to wait. (For the Resene colours used in this room, see the list above.)

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