

SPREADING THE HUES



home profile

MEET & GREET

Erina (interior designer) and Matthew Emery (entertainment lawyer) and their son Oliver, 17.

THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom, two-bathroom art deco home with three living areas, plus a separate studio in Mt Eden, Auckland, on a 990sqm site.



Curated maximalism and a bold use of vibrant colour is a feast for the eyes in this interior designer's spacious family home in Auckland

Text **Catherine Steel** Photography **Babiche Martens**

SUNROOM/GARDEN GLIMPSE

The white chairs are from David Shaw. In the garden, the white wire chairs and custom-coloured yellow hanging chair are both from Ico Traders and the white dog chair sculpture by Eero Aarnio for Magis is from ECC.



“We were drawn to everything about the house, including the location.”

ERINA EMERY

Erina Emery has always had an eye for what looks good. Once adept at making people look their best, the fashion designer-turned-interior expert prefers designing homes.

With clients across New Zealand and overseas, Erina's ultimate job would have to be her own home. The art deco house in Auckland's Mount Eden has been a labour of love since buying it 16 years ago. Erina and her husband, Matthew Emery, have upgraded and polished it to colourful perfection.

On a 990sqm site, it features four bedrooms, three living rooms,

and a separate studio (with four rooms). The home has served the couple and their three children – Oliver, 17, Mason, 22, and Zoe, 19 (the latter two have flown the nest) – well since they bought it.

“We were drawn to everything about the house, including its location, which was great for seeing the kids through their school years,” Erina says. “We fell in love with the art deco aesthetic and the home's size, as we were already both working from home. Having that flexibility with an outdoor studio was incredible.”

The house had been in the same family for a long time and was very tired-looking and dated when they bought it, says Erina. “In



KITCHEN/DINING

The kitchen island base colour is Aalto Half Epiphany and walls Resene Alabaster. The cupboards are standard kitchen cabinetry that have been spray painted, the benchtop is from Terrazzo and Stone and the kitchen stools are from JS Interiors because Erina loved the shape (but that was all). "I had them powder-coated black and reupholstered to match the curtains." The blue and pink artwork on the kitchen wall was bought in Berlin.



the first year, we replaced all the carpets, curtains, light fittings and paint."

The bug for transforming houses caught on so much that Erina switched from fashion design to interiors. "I'd worked in fashion but always had a passion for interiors. I had featured my home in a few magazines as press for my clothing line, including for a Resene Colour Award. We moved to Spain seven years ago for one year, and on our return, I set up the house again. By then I wanted a career change."

The beauty of recreating her own home was that it could be done gradually over time. Initially, the couple anticipated structural changes but soon discovered the home's flow worked well. So, they renovated the kitchen and the outdoor space, making it more usable and inviting. "It was a tiny, paved area and small garden, so we excavated it and pushed it out sideways, expanding it from six square metres to 30sqm. We wanted a big space for lounges, dining and big-scale entertaining."

They knocked out the wall between the kitchen and dining areas, keeping the space in the same position. A self-confessed colour fanatic, Erina describes her interior style as "curated maximalism". One of the most captivating spaces is Erina's kitchen, a blend of colour and pattern that remains functional and designed by her. "I wanted something unique and interesting," she says. "I had considered a yellow kitchen





LOUNGE (opposite) The blue couch and white chair are both from Homage, the green artwork on the wall is by Andrew McLeod from Art+Object, the white vase with red lines from Bolt of Cloth, multicoloured artwork with white background on wall and blue artwork with leopard are both by Rohan Wealleans from Ivan Anthony Gallery, the round coffee table was bought from a Webb's estate auction.

DINING The dining table was made by UFL to Erina's specific dimensions, the dining chairs are also custom made and the Vitrine multi-bulb pendant came from a hotel in the Czech Republic.



“A big space for lounges, dining and big-scale entertaining.”

ERINA EMERY

because we previously had a yellow feature wall and curtains there. I chose Aalto's Half Epiphany Pink, which is a soft, bright but muted beautiful pink, and we paired it with one white wall to avoid it being too overpowering.”

Erina had seen and loved terrazzo surfaces, so bringing one to the benchtop was a no-brainer. “It ties in with the home's heritage, and we've featured that look at the home entrance, too. The pink is modern, and the terrazzo gives a nod to the home's history. It's so lovely to live with, and it means you can't see crumbs on the kitchen bench.”

While vivid hues were often a vibrant trait of her fashion designs, Erina continues to embrace her love of bold colour. When

they moved in, choosing a new carpet in red was the starting point for the bold balustrade. “I love primary colours, but also, I found this carpet which was the lead element, and I loved it. I considered using it in some of the main spaces but decided to use this more as a feature. I've always loved the feature stairs. Right in the home's entrance instead of boring stairs gives a 'wow' factor.”

The blue wall in Resene Time Out in Zoe's bedroom is a mature upgrade from the pink walls she had in her younger years. “The room had terrific curtains and the space evolved as she grew, with a canopy bed and art as she matured.”

The main bedroom's Resene Karen Walker Blanched Pink on the walls sets the scene for a blue and white throw bought in





BITS & BOBS

(above) The green bust on the plinth was discovered at Junk & Disorderly and painted green by Erina; the outdoor area used to be a tiny six square metres, but was excavated and extended (above right); the *Whaam!* Roy Lichtenstein pop artwork is a gift from a friend, the pink two-framed Volkswagen piece was a gift from a client and the banana cushion has a funny shopping history and was bought in Bali; a shelf in the reading nook displays sentimental collectibles either bought or from grandparents.



SUDDEN IMPACT

The red carpet on the stairs is repeated in a custom Resene “Emery Red” colour on the balustrade and gives the entrance area a wow factor.



BEDROOMS/BATHROOM

(above) Daughter Zoe’s room has a wall painted in Resene Time Out; the blue and white blanket in the main bedroom is from Morocco; the striped painted wall in the main bathroom ties in with the Flamingos wallpaper in a nearby toilet.

Morocco covers the bed. “I have lots of bits and bobs in the house as we’re massive travellers, and I love to pick up things on our trips. It makes for heavy luggage, but it’s worth it when you get home.”

Colour pairs with pattern in the family bathroom where a striped wall in Resene Pale Slate, Resene Jumbo and Resene Hobbush Pink matches the Cole & Son Flamingos wallpaper in the nearby toilet.

While it’s common to see house interiors reworked and small spaces replaced by open-plan living areas, Erina and Matthew decided against this, opting to retain the various closed-off zones. “The home has such flexibility for the way you use it. I’ve just moved my office into the landing upstairs. There are so many spaces that cater to a growing family, such as working from home or having au pairs.



REST ASSURED

The red outdoor table and benches are from Jardin, the giant wall ants were purchased in Spain, the outdoor couches are from Target and were reupholstered, and the round coffee table is from Coco Republic.

“The reworked outdoor space is amazing during the day.”

ERINA EMERY

When Mason and Oliver were young boys, we had an au pair live with us for six months in the studio. There are about 17 different rooms, three living areas, four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a laundry, and five studio rooms, giving you huge potential for how your life changes over time.”

“My favourite place in the house – there are so many good spaces – is the reworked outdoor space which is amazing during the day and gets beautiful light from the west.

Now, Erina and Matthew feel their work here is done. They’ve spent many happy years with their family, enjoying this home with its art deco sensibility and beautiful garden, but now it’s time to downsize. “We’re hoping to sell it,” Erina says. “I’m ready to renovate a whole new house.” erinaemery.com ●