



# a comedy of colour

Fun, colourful and full of energy – this reborn bach is the perfect haven for comedian Ewen Gilmour.

Like love and marriage, comedy and colour seem meant for one another. Somehow, it's not surprising to discover funny-man and ex-Waitakere City councillor Ewen Gilmour's freshly extended bach in Port Waikato is a riot of wild, dramatically contrasting hues.

Step inside and you're immersed in a dazzling glow of yellows (Resene Gorse and Resene Supernova) along opposite walls. Turn into the living area and raging lime (Resene Sublime) cosies up to a deep red (Resene Bullseye) feature wall. There's nothing restrained about the kitchen cabinetry either. In deep sky blue, with a paua shell laminate benchtop and deep red (Resene Bullseye) glass splashback, it announces its existence, loud and proud.

Ewen and his artist/drama teacher wife Cathy caught the colour craze big time when they experimented on 'the crazy wall' of their new music room. Ewen calls it "a kind of 3D chequerboard on acid". And the reason for such an artwork?

Even before they transformed the small rectangular bach into the handsome, black batten-and-board home it is today, the music room was reserved for Ewen's cherished old player piano. One of those wonderful pieces of musical memorabilia, the piano plays pre-programmed music via perforated metal rolls inserted in a small alcove hidden just above the keys. It was passed down to Ewen by his father and is one of Ewen and Cathy's prized possessions. The only other piece of furniture in the room is a plain wooden cabinet containing an impressive stack of the old rolls that can be inserted to give a varied selection of musical scores. Such inhabitants deserve to be set-off by something, well, off the wall!

The wall is a swooning flutter of lime, black, red, yellow and white. There's even a quirky pane of mirrored glass inset in the design, "because my brother is a glazier, and we could," explains Ewen, with his wry sense of humour.

So enamoured were the pair with the result, they were inspired to use vibrant colour elsewhere in the house. Although full of ideas and rearing to go, good sense prevailed so before they plunged in head first, they contacted Resene colour consultant Angela Fell. She worked through the whole house, giving valuable advice to ensure all of the colours worked together. It was Angela who talked them into balancing the effect of bold colour with a calming shade of white (Resene Quarter Spanish White) on all the ceilings, scotias, doors and surrounds and the skirtings.

While the busy, social rooms hit you in the face with their vivid hues, the less public areas – the toilet, bathroom and bedroom – are sanctuaries of tranquillity in shades of blue. Ewen couldn't go past the name, Resene Morning Glory for the bathroom. "What could be more appropriate," he chimes. In fact, Ewen tended to be swayed more by the names than the colours. Resene Westside and Resene Turbo didn't quite make it, however.

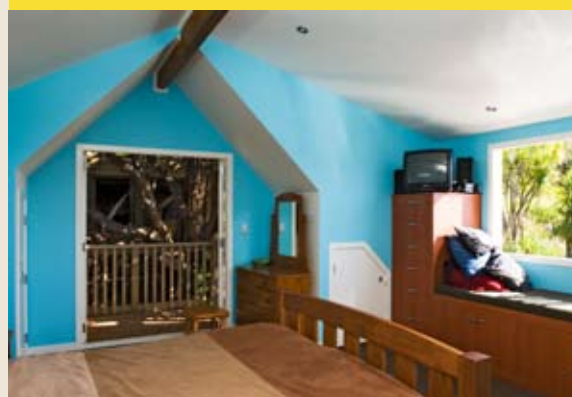
Upstairs, the lofty bedroom is demure in Resene Spray. Angela suggested they paint some walls off-white (Resene Quarter Spanish White) to emphasise the appealing angles of the tall, pitched ceiling. The bedroom opens through bifolding windows above a window seat and extends to a balcony among the bows of a craggy old pohutukawa. It was this tree that first attracted Cathy to the property.



**Left** Comedian Ewen Gilmour and wife Cathy live at the beach full time.

**Above** The startling yellow walls (Resene Gorse and Resene Supernova) are tempered by trims in Resene Quarter Spanish White.

**Below** The lofty bedroom is serene in Resene Spray.



Resene Bullseye

Resene Gorse

Resene Spray





Contractors were all locals... surfies. "When the surf was up, they were off."

She bought the bach back in 1997 when she had her first teaching job in Pukekohe. It was in 2001, as head of drama, that she met Ewen. She'd asked him to be the judge of a school talent quest. They headed overseas together for a while, Ewen was a roaring success on the European comedy circuit, and when they returned, they lived in West Auckland. Late in 2007, Cathy was diagnosed with a brain tumour and had major surgery, so Ewen quit his job as a councillor a term early and the couple decided to live at the beach full-time.

As the bach was tiny, the 'big revamp' began in March last year. They were fortunate that their contractors were all locals. The only problem was, they were also surfies. "When the surf was up, they were off," says Cathy. Things get done in their own time at Port Waikato and nobody gets resentful, she says. The couple also built a beautiful studio for Cathy on the hill behind the house.

This is not your average West Coast home. Having morphed from an ordinary little bach it now radiates positive energy, combating any negativity that might dare show its face inside. **H**

**Did you know? If you're planning a dark exterior paint or stain finish on your home's exterior, consider using a Resene Cool Colour. Resene Cool Colours are designed to reflect more of the sun's energy than a standard colour, reducing heat buildup in the coating, substrate and minimising heat transference inside. Available in a wide range of products and colours from Resene.**

- Resene Gorse
- Resene Morning Glory
- Resene Quarter Spanish White
- Resene Sublime
- Resene Supernova

**Above left** Ewen describes the wall of the new music room as "a kind of 3D chequerboard on acid".

**Above** Resene Sublime walls in the kitchen are offset by a splashback of Resene Bullseye and bright blue cabinets.

words Vicki Holder  
pictures Mark Heaslip