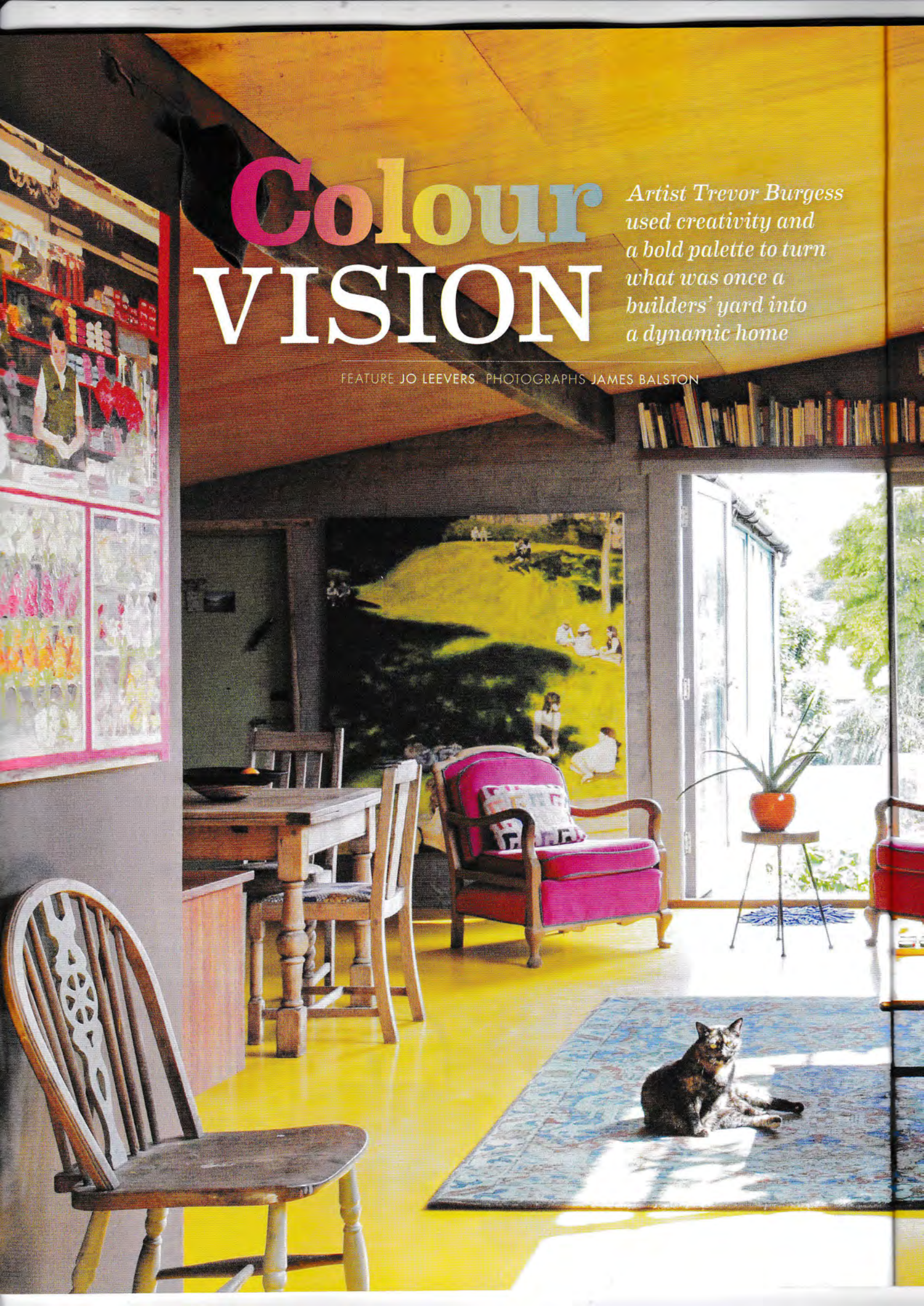


# Colour VISION

*Artist Trevor Burgess used creativity and a bold palette to turn what was once a builders' yard into a dynamic home*

FEATURE JO LEEVERS PHOTOGRAPHS JAMES BALSTON





Bright colours meet functional materials and repurposed furniture in the main living space of Trevor and his wife Andrea's home. The vivid shade of the rubber flooring was inspired by a trip to Mexico. The paintings are by Trevor. The sofa had been dumped on the street, so the couple cleaned it up and re-dyed it.



Trevor built the wooden kitchen storage, accommodating two ornate 1940s drawers and the cooker. Plywood sheets line the ceiling, while rubber flooring in Springfield Yellow from The Colour Flooring Company blends with encaustic cement tiles from Mosaic del Sur.



Trevor made the wall of shelving for books and LPs. The 1940s table and chairs were second-hand finds, sanded back to the bare oak, and the chairs recovered in African cloth from a London market. The side chairs are vintage finds that have been reupholstered.



**ABOVE** Vintage glasses on glass shelves are displayed in front of a polycarbonate window to the bedroom. They often shake and tinkle when trains rumble by. Elderflower wine ferments in demijohns on the floor. The paintings are by John Kiki (left) and Trevor Burgess (right).

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s an artist who paints street life and cityscapes, it makes sense that Trevor Burgess lives in a very urban location. His home is an old builders' yard, sandwiched between a busy London railway line and the backs of Victorian terraces. But behind his rickety garage door lies an intriguing home awash with vivid colours and upcycled furniture.

The building was derelict when Trevor and his wife, landscape architect Andrea Dates, bought it. 'It was in a terrible state, stacked with rotten timbers and piles of old pipes,' he says. Cement had been poured over the area behind the building, which has now been turned into a garden. Trevor and Andrea had the cement broken up and removed, chunk by huge chunk, and then sifted through the decades-old detritus beneath. Some of the prettier spoils – cloudy glass bottles, sections of slate and the odd rusted cog – are now displayed around their home. ▶


**The Owners**

Trevor Burgess is an artist (represented by cavalierofinn.com) and his wife Andrea Dates is a landscape architect.

**The Property**

A converted builders' yard in south London. There is a central room with kitchen, living room and dining area, plus a bedroom, bathroom and a WC.



A photograph of a bedroom with vibrant turquoise walls. A bed with a white floral patterned sheet and a dark wooden headboard is the central focus. To the left is a wooden wardrobe and a small wooden table with a chair. On the wall, there are several framed pictures, including a large one titled 'Wrap-up' depicting a truck. A pink text box is overlaid on the top left of the image.

Vibrant turquoise paint brightens the bedroom walls and sets off Trevor's inherited 1930s bed and chest, the detailing picked out in gold paint. A polycarbonate internal window lets more light into the room. The painting is *Wrap-up* (San Juan, Argentina) by Trevor Burgess.

Larger-scale reminders of the building's previous life remain too, from municipal door handles to windows with safety glass criss-crossed with wire. The bathroom was once the office, with a hatch in the wall where workmen queued up to collect their wages. 'We filled in the gap and it now makes a useful set of shelves,' says Trevor.

After clearing out the building, they set about converting the space into a habitable condition. Sheets of ply were used to clad the inside of the pitched

*'Originality was forced upon us because of our limited budget,' says Trevor. Colour is a big part of their style, with shades inspired by travels to India and Latin America.*

ceiling and they used sections of semi-transparent corrugated polycarbonate between the bedroom and kitchen. 'It's lightweight, insulates well and is easy to cut,' explains Trevor, who also made all the wooden shelves and the kitchen units. For an interesting touch, he incorporated a beautifully decorative pair of 1940s drawers into the cabinetry. 'Originality was forced upon us because of our limited budget,' says Trevor.

Colour is a big part of the couple's style, with vibrant paint shades



**ABOVE** Walls in the WC are clad in untreated plywood. The map is a vintage find; acidic colours brighten the corridor, looking towards the WC. The door handle dates from the building's days as a builders' yard. The side table is a charity-shop buy. **BELOW** Old family photographs are tacked to the ply wall in the bedroom. The vintage suitcase was found in a charity shop.



inspired by travels to India and Latin America - Andrea is Argentinian so they frequently visit her family there and have travelled around the continent. The bright yellow of the rubber floor, which replaced dusty grey concrete, was inspired by a trip to Mexico City: 'We were thrilled with the effect,' Trevor says. More colour comes from a pair of vintage chairs that Andrea bought in a junk shop and re-covered in pink velvet. She was also responsible for the subtle gold paint that highlights the carving on a ▶



**ABOVE** Trevor Burgess's painting of flip-flop sellers in Pune, India, hangs above the bath. The punchy and earthy paint colours are influenced by Argentinian interiors. **BELOW LEFT** Rusted relics hang by the back door, all found beneath the concrete that once covered the back garden. **BELOW RIGHT** Wild and more cultivated flowers frame the entrance to Trevor and Andrea's home. The blue paint hints at the bright interiors within.



1930s headboard and chest in the bedroom. 'The bed was passed on by my nana, along with its original mattress filled with straw. Andrea sanded it back and carefully picked out the carving in gold paint.'

Trevor's own colour-saturated paintings are hung all around this single-storey home. Urban life is a mainstay of his work, from anonymous London flats painted from estate agents' listings, to children playing in the fountains of Granary Square in King's Cross. Then there are paintings of markets, depicting fruit and vegetable sellers in Dalston and a stall piled high with flip-flops, in Pune, India. 'Markets are part of why cities exist,' he says. 'It's how they developed as trading centres and, in most cities, markets are still a hub of city life.'

Displayed alongside Trevor's own artworks are old family photos and two pieces by artist John Kiki, who inspired and helped Trevor when he was starting out. 'I was a trainee at a Norwich gallery and one of my first jobs was to pick up John's paintings from his studio, hidden away above a meat-packing warehouse. I was just stunned by his work,' he remembers. Trevor soon went on to help set up a cooperative studio in Norwich, where he and other artists renovated a disused warehouse - skills that were useful when he and Andrea converted this London space many years later. 'Whether it's to make a studio or home, most artists are adept at reusing objects and spaces in creative ways,' he says. 