

# my style

The hilltop home of Wellington artist Turi Park has a long history of creativity within its walls

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Opposite The Wellington house has panoramic views of the harbour and Cook Strait. Above, from left Nestled into native bush, the artistic retreat is the perfect spot for Turi's creative endeavours; the artist with his work 'Interstate', an oil on canvas piece; blue Adirondack-style chairs enliven the deck.

This is the house that destiny built. When Wellington artist Turi Park went looking for a new home for him and his wife Jane, their two children Georgia, 6, and Jack, 4, and Kahu the dog, he was hoping for something with a studio and a bit of privacy. He never expected he'd end up buying the home of New Zealand's pre-eminent war artist, Peter McIntyre.

"This house has great artistic lineage," says Turi. "It's a privilege to carry on the tradition set by Peter."

It also has good bones, and the kind of light, airy, Californian bungalow look the couple loves. "We were also captivated by the front deck, which we added to and use regularly for entertaining, the great open-plan living space and the huge, private section, with views over Wellington."

Another drawcard was Peter's former studio, which Turi outfitted with a kitchen and bathroom. It now serves as the HQ for both Turi's brand consultancy business, Native Design, and for his large canvases.

The couple pushed out the front of the house by a metre and a half, added a main bedroom, a walk-in-wardrobe and an ensuite bathroom, and moved the poky former kitchen from the back of the house to be part of the expanded living area. The size of this space caused some consternation among the tradesmen, recalls Turi. "The heat pump guy told us to check out school halls to get an idea of how they heat the space, while the builder kept shaking his head at the size of our kitchen."

Indeed, one quote for a marble benchtop came in at \$18,000. "Instead, we used Italian tiles, which cost about \$900, and are easily replaceable."

They also doused the walls with white paint, creating the perfect backdrop for Turi's work, which combines photography and oil painting to "capture fragments of time within special places". "We often have people coming and buying the art straight from the walls," he says.

Since finishing the renovation, Jane has become a real-estate agent but, despite

"My interiors mantra is... simple, quality and lots of paintings"



Opposite The kitchen is the social hub of this home and has been known to cater for up to 20 people. Above, from left in the light-filled dining area is a table from Cranfields and Thonet dining chairs. The bentwood chair at the head of the table is a family heirloom. The oil painting is one of Turi's pieces called 'Gayatri Mantra'; the Park family has a soft spot for Temuka pottery. Turi in his studio, at work on an oil painting.

seeing hundreds of Wellington homes, she admits there's nothing as special as this place. "We've got this house exactly how we want it – right down to the laundry chute I had as a child and always wanted in my home. We're not going anywhere!"

**Turi: "We love living in Vogeltown because...** it's so close to the city. We can see the harbour, the Orongorongos and Cook Strait. On one of those rare still Wellington days, we're up here in our own private world.

**I'm inspired by...** travel, Jane, the kids – and I love discovering new food and international cultures.

**The greatest joy of the renovation is...** having a home that fits us and our life like a glove. And entertaining friends and whanau in a kitchen that rocks!

**The biggest disaster we had during the project was...** torrential rainstorms bringing down trees and causing landslides, which our insurance company didn't want to know about, even though we'd insisted on renovation cover.

**My favourite artwork in this house is...** my painting 'The Dream', completed last year, because it's a big, lush, gutsy oil and I reckon it's the best I've done.

**The key to hanging art is...** to do it with your heart and not your head. Hang it where it glows because you love it, and where you can see it at its best – because you need to see it every day.

**Jane's pottery collection is important because...** Temuka reminds us of growing up, and it's been a great way for Jane to get to know my Auntie Denny, the Havelock North garage sale queen!

**I paint to...** communicate visual memories and stories. For me, painting is a unique link to the space in between our real, physical world and the 'modern life of the soul', and this is where my interest lies. I'm making images that offer a richer conversation with the flow of the living environment around me.

**If we built again...** we'd put sustainability higher on our list. We'd look at solar water heating and double glaze the windows."