I know what I like

lovely mug ugly mug

What does it feel like to use a mug you like?

The feeling is that it is important to drink out of the mug that you like. I found that my son was like me. When he saw a new mug that he liked and hadn't drunk out of, he was really excited to be given it. I thought that was quite touching because he's quite male and grown up now, and yet there we were behaving like children!

So, it makes a big difference?

Very important, yes. it makes a big difference. Oh Yes. There are some mugs that I don't want to drink out of, yes, definitely. But there aren't any in this house, because I've got rid of them.

Favourite Mug

It's conker brown, glossy and it's Japanese and it's really nice to have a hot cup of foaming brown coffee in a brown mug,

The colour is very important.. Normally, I wouldn't furnish in brown. Because we had our brown phase didn't we? We did brown to death, so to speak.

It's porcelain, and it has a thin lip.

I bought - we bought them. , Yes, in fact it was me, because P doesn't - doesn't truthfully, he doesn't care about (mugs) much. He does care what things look like, but he doesn't fall for mugs like I fall for them. He hasn't got the mug gene like (my son) has got the mug gene I bought the green ones first, and then I decided that the brown ones were very alluring and actually the green and the brown go quite nicely.

Rolls-Royce

I do have a mug that I do drink out of- it's a Rolls Royce mug and my son gave it to me because he's employed by Rolls Royce. I was so proud that he got to be employed by Rolls Royce (even though they're ruining our planet with their airoplane engines), because I love airplanes. As big creatures or things that I admire. I don't ever want to fly an airoplane. I hardly ever wanted fly in an airoplane, but I think when I see them in the sky i'm wowed. When he got to work at Rolls Royce it was after a hardly distinguished school and university career. -So it was kind of a relief!

It's beautiful, well, it says Rolls Royce on it, yeah, and it's got their silly slogan on it which I can't remember but it is a beautiful Royal blue all over – but its not dishwasher proof and its chipping, so its not beautiful any more – so its emotional as well because he was pleased to give it to me . If (Rollys Royce) tip him out I shan't every drink out of the Rolls Royce mug again . So there is emotion as well. - He was pleased to give it to me.

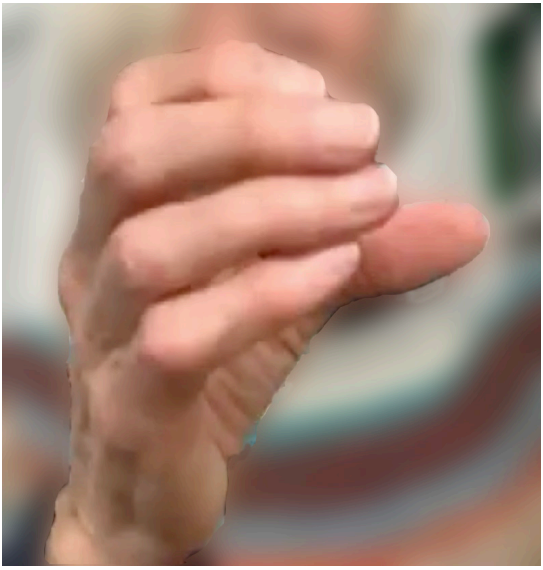
BS 221
BS 557 Light Orange
BS 174 Orient Blue

The David Mellor British Standard mugs

I like them very much actually, except I don't like the writing on them. That annoys me I don't need the writing. And they're porcelain too so it's a thinner lip and I rotate those so they all get used all the time. I don't just use just two mugs and keep using the same two colors.

So now, I have my favourite colours of those and and I want to buy an orange one .

I make myself give them to (my husband) often enough, but I don't think he cares, or he doesn't know.



What is it about the shape?

I'm one of these addicts for hot drinks and I like a mug to hold the heat. A tall mug will hold the heat better. I do love cups but they're too spread out and they cool very quickly..

So it's modified by practicality, you see, because actually I think the shape of the spread-out cup or mug is very beautiful, but it doesn't do what I want it to do.

A mug can be too big. Somebody once gave me a tall mug and I felt it was like drinking out of vase – there was something wrong.

Sharing likes – knowing others likes

I like it if I go to someone's house and and I see a mug, and I say: "Oh, can I drink out of that mug? " If they understand then that's what makes you close so they understand they understand the importance

They (my son and daughter-in-law) adore anything green. A big green double sheet they borrowed from me when they set up house and they use it as a tablecloth over a long tables for parties, and they didn't want to give it back

Green or or a bright turquoise that's what he likes I know his colour preferences, yes.

Do you have other things with similar qualities?

Yes we have a green sofa . This room used to be green, but it was little too bright, so we made the all blue-grey because we wanted a calmer room, so yes, we like green. I've got green plates that go with the green mugs .

Probably if you show me something green, I will want it. I can see there's a green container behind you, it's very satisfying, do you see?

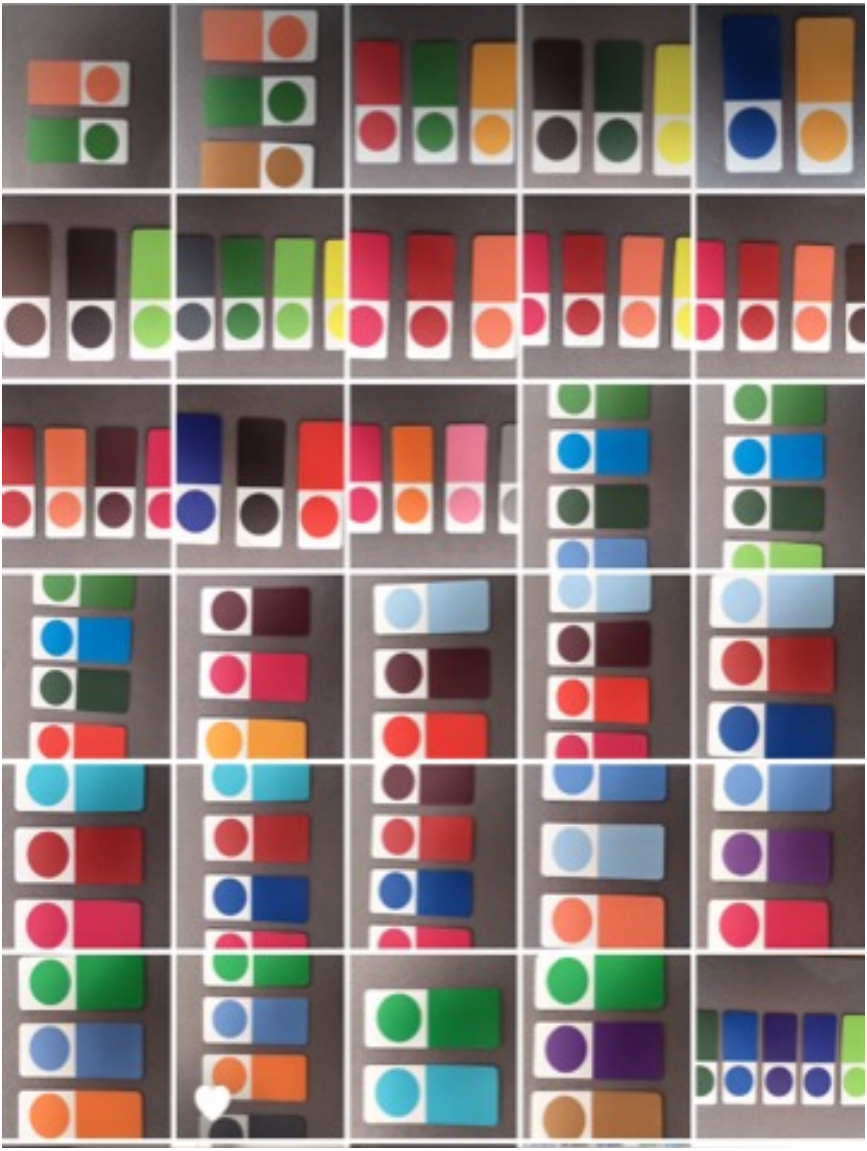
Yes, you see, I like to look at that and because I also like plants.

This one. I don't love it.

I don't ever drink out of it, This is just boring, it's plain white. It's a beaker, and I use it to measure the porridge oats in the morning when I'm making porridge because I do a mug full of porridge oats between us. But I never put it out for a drink. It's there in the cupboard for emergencies. It's OK but I don't like it, because it's not a very good shape and it hasn't got any colour.

The colour is very important. I dont like having pictures on mugs – because usually they are slightly poor quality drawings, and sentimentalised animals or mugs with slogans.

Colour

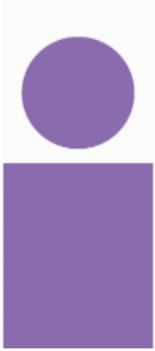


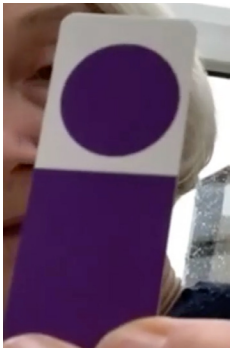
How can I say that I don't like a colour?

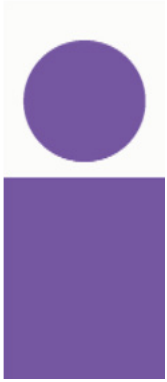
I wouldn't dream of it. Its about the combinations – that's the subtlety. (There are no colours I dislike) -because they all have possibility. I couldn't say I dislike any of these colours. Certain ones I would have a problem with, but then I would modify and by putting them with something else, it becomes beautiful.

Everybody has a colour palette. Tonally these are little deep for me. When I'm painting, I often use close tones. I use three colours: I would use a tertiary and two strong colours. So, I have one way, and everybody has a different way of using colour, which is really interesting. That's why painting, which is concerned with colour is really interesting.

I couldn't say I dislike any of these colours I'm just telling you that certain ones I would have a problem with, but then I would modify by putting them with something else, and then they become beautiful.





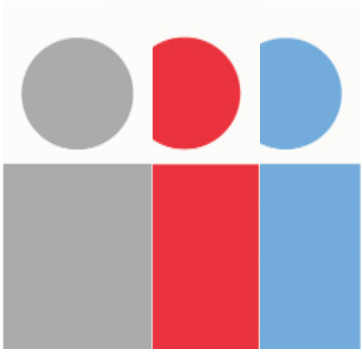


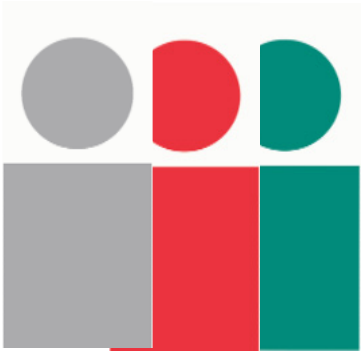
If I start with a colour that I don't like

I would normally never choose to wear that colour. But I do have a purple jumper that's deeper than that. I am very careful about this colour (I call it mauve) , because I think it's 'old lady' colour

But I could easily put something else with it that I think makes it OK - isn't that shocking? –What else do I put with orange? .Possibly a yellow that'll bring it down a bit.

But the trouble is, they're not the oranges or purples I'd choose. If I was painting, I'd have to modify. I wouldn't knit a jumper in those colours because they're not quite right, but I can't say I don't like them.





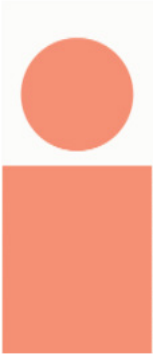
Another colour that worries me

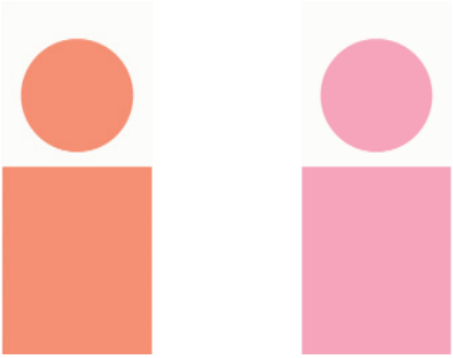
Bright red. I had a red beret, and I gave it away, because it looked so terrible. It made me look so pale and ill. And anyway, bright red worries me. I don't furnish in red. But I love touches of red.

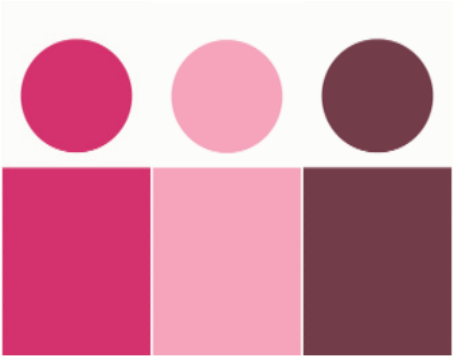
It's too bright for me because I'm not an extrovert. Some people adore bright red and wear bright red. I could never be a Labour politician. I could never climb into a red suit anymore than I want to wear all blue.

So I will pull it down by putting it with a nice pale grey – pale grey and red : that's much better. – and that pale blue is not bad

I think I prefer the blue green with that red, which is interesting because it's a blue red? Not brilliant, but..







A favourite colour is this peach colour

I like that colour. I particularly like pink – you've only got two pinks

I love pink and I love painting in pink, because its like having a pink car, people don't paint in pink . I've done weavings with pink backgrounds. It's quite fun to use it, because people don't always use pink because it's too feminine and sometimes in the art world you don't want to be thought of as trying to be feminine, but I love it .

These two, I am pulling up the browns, this red brown to bring it down a bit. But they're very strong for my taste.

I am really interested in colour

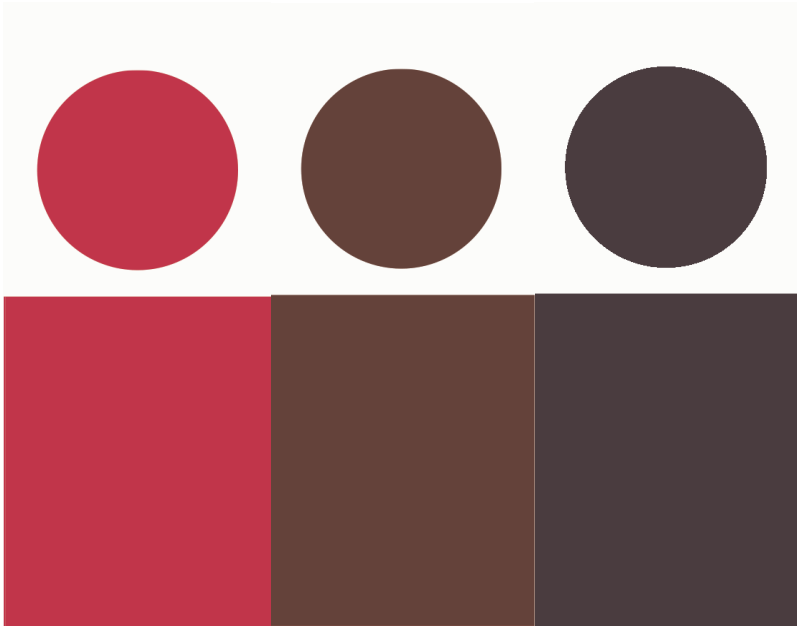
The last Hodgkins' exhibition at the Wakefield.. it was a big exhibition, a beautiful space, and he wanted very minimal number of paintings in the room. So, one small painting on a whole great wall. He uses really strong colour; a very strong palette.

He oversaw the printing of five of his paintings into small scale prints. They're just wonderful. It's got red and green and oranges. One them is called 'Bombay Sunset'. It's very famous. It's an early one. And his very last commercial painting is called 'Over to you'. It's just a sort of scribble, and then it's gone. It's just wonderful and we've got three of them in a line on the (bedroom) wall. It fascinates me his choice of colour.

So you know when you look – (when you're painting) you do get: 'that's what it needs' feeling and then sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't work.

You should always have your work up and have a look and look. Because it makes you think all the time if you confront your work,. But you can't have too many paintings hanging around.

If you do put it away you forget about it. We have very short memories in some respects.



I love working with blacks

This is quite interesting because I started with a black and a brown, or a charcoal and then there is this deep red. Then that becomes more acceptable do you see?.

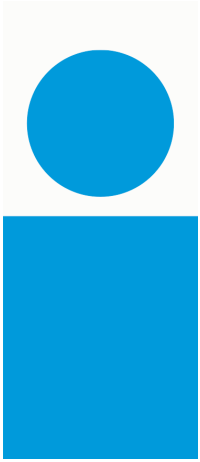
I love working in blacks, mixing your own blacks, because there are blue blacks, and green blacks, and purple blacks. We have less discrimination at the dark end and it's the same with whites, at the light end.

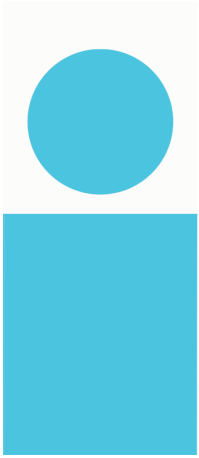
I am talking about doing paintings. I don't really do much textile weaving at the moment but I'm continually thinking about it. Tapestry weaving is so terribly slow and I require so many colours that I ended up working in miniature because I would bundle up lots of sewing thread together and use it for the weft.

These two together

Green and the dark grey, really nice..

But I think the white gets in the way.





These are difficult colours

I haven't gone for any of the blues, which is quite interesting.

I do like blue (but) these are difficult colours for me. This is too strong for me, this turquoise. I can't wear that colour.

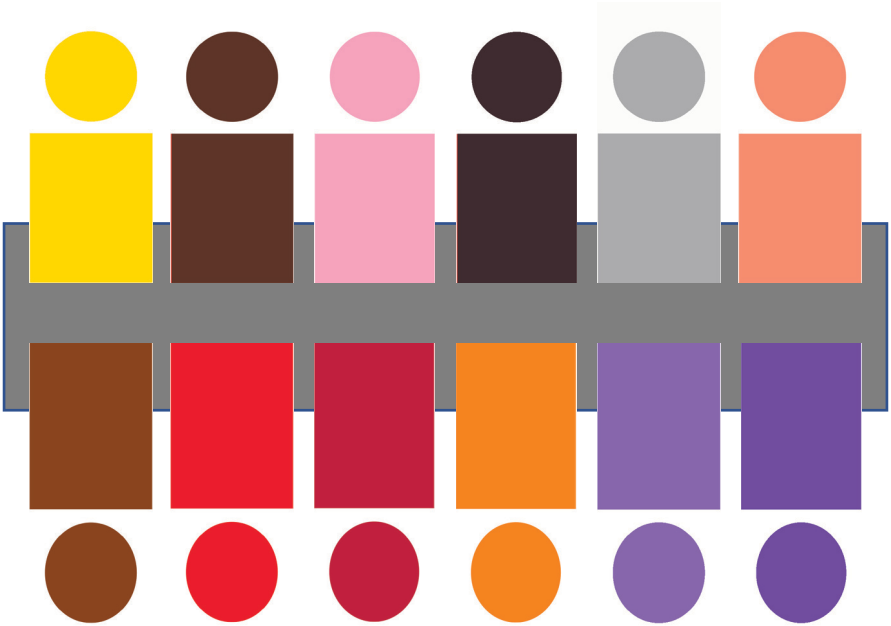
And that's that is just a bit too bright still . So often my choices are often to do with what I would wear. .. It might look very good on someone else.

It was lockdown that made me start to put the quilt together

I had it on the stocks for donkey's years and then mounting it and putting it on the wall, I got really excited again. This last year's been a wonderful exploration of colour again.

When I went to school, I was a little bookish child and I didn't read, but I wanted to read. It was Janet and John. The first book was bright bright yellow, and it was very easy, I must have read it very quickly, and the next book we went on to was bright red.

I got this thing about the reds and yellows. A lot of people wouldn't put red and yellow together, so I started doing the quilt in reds and yellows. They are harmonized and I have used more neutral colours and occasionally I have used a beige and at one point I threw a bit of pink in . It was great fund – it brings it down a bit it's not bright yellow. It is for some people. But it doesn't worry me because I know its what I like.



Twelve colours I have chosen

Reds and purples and then I've thrown in a little bit of yellow and the greys and browns. I quite like that.

BS 557 Light Orange
BS 174 Orient Blue

I have been thinking about those pantone mugs

I was thinking where did they start with these mugs, when they decided what colours to choose? I decided they probably started from a different point than I would have started. I would probably have started from a green or blue. I think they possibly started with the red or the yellow to see.

I am always desperately disappointed because I think they ought to have

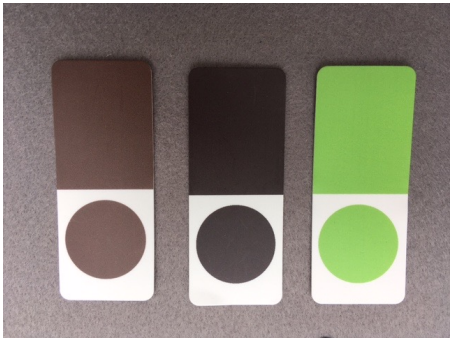
I think about colour a lot

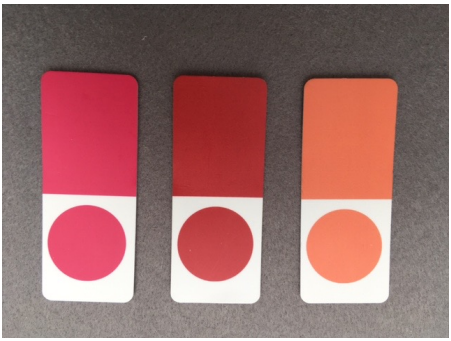
I've got a collection of sheets for the bed that over the years I've collected..

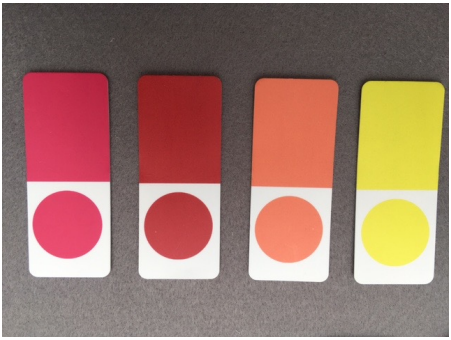
I found that some shops sold duvet covers in single colour

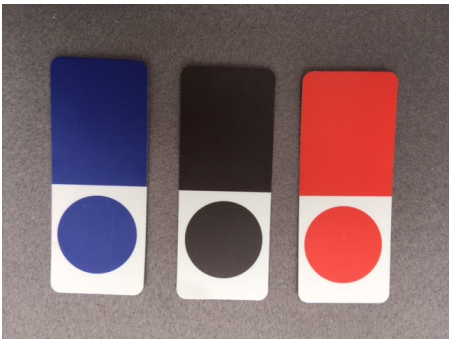
I started going around the sales and buying things like duvet cover and sheets and pillowcases in single colours. So each time I make the bed I try and make a different combination.

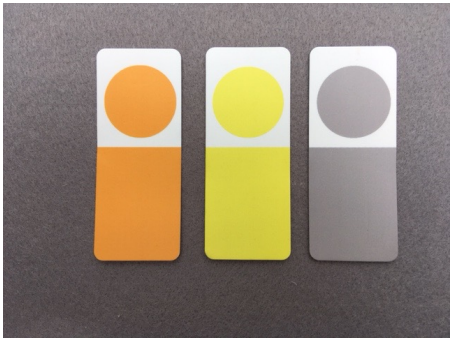
my experiments with colour combinations

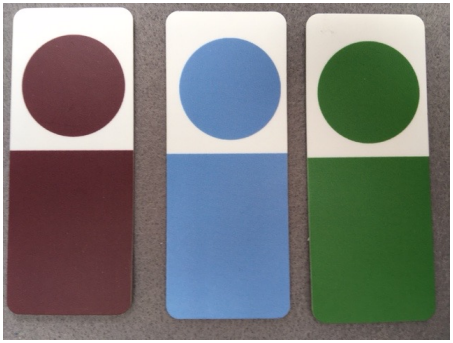


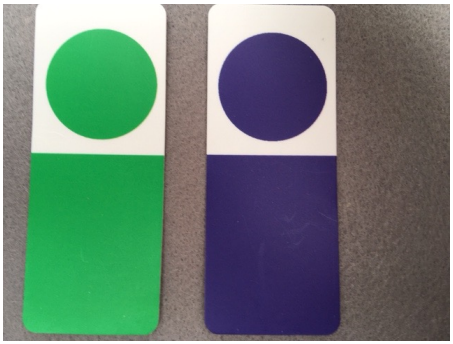


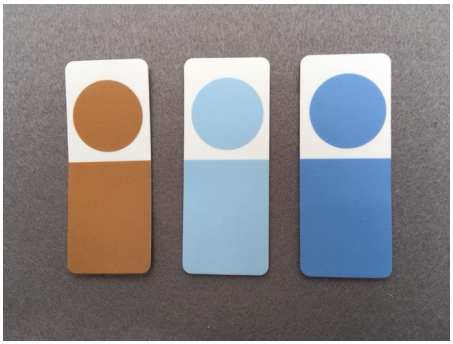


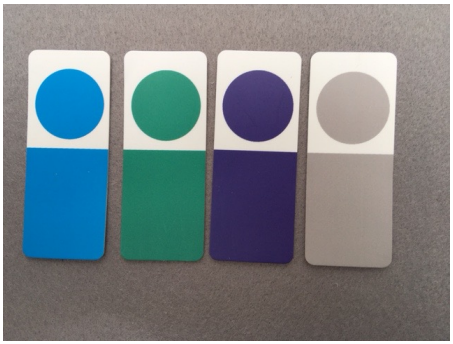


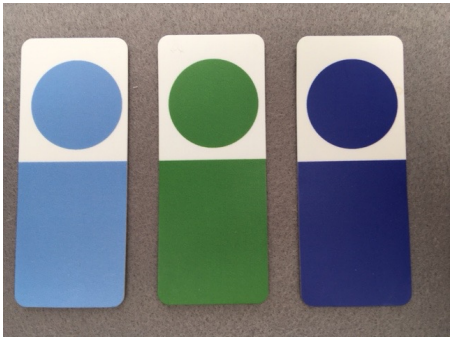


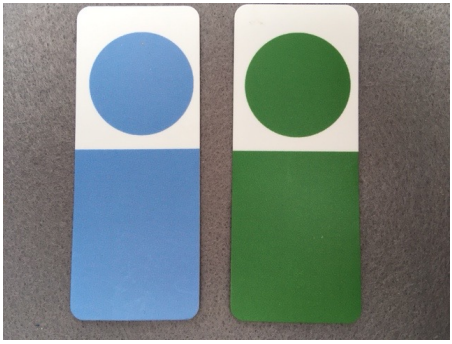


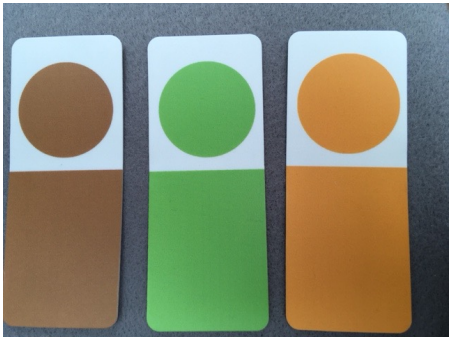


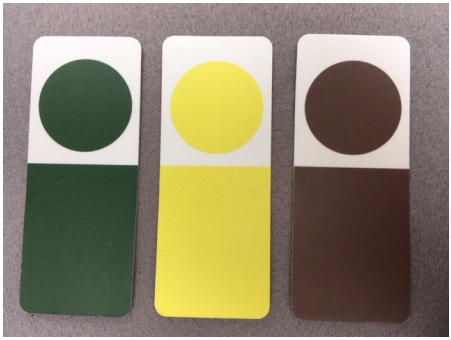


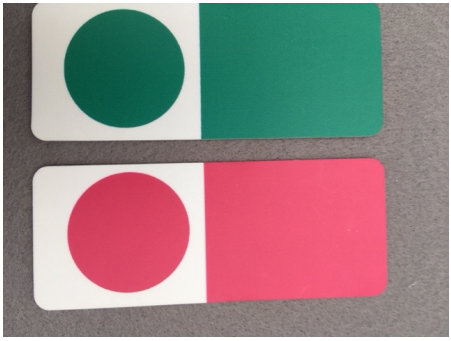


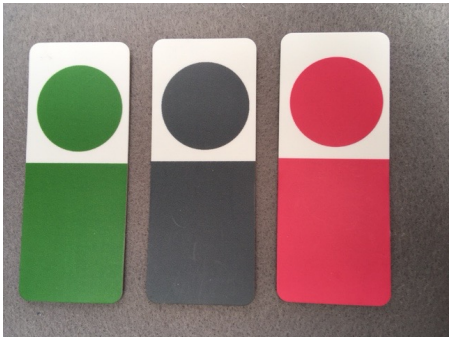


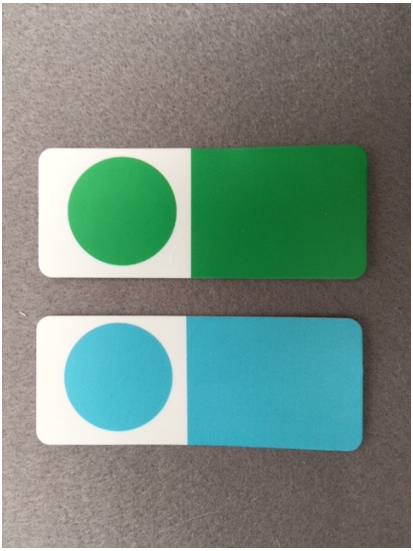


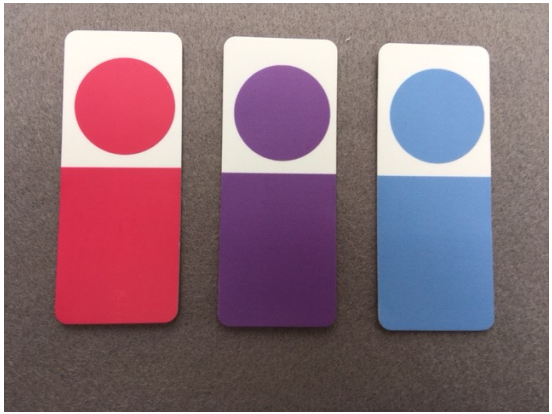


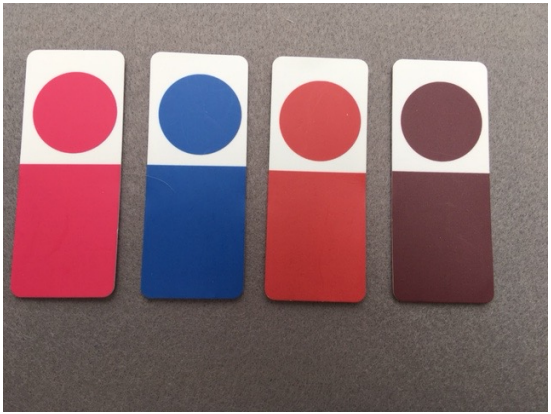


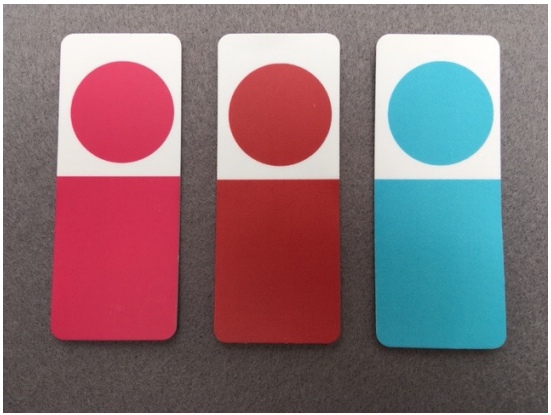


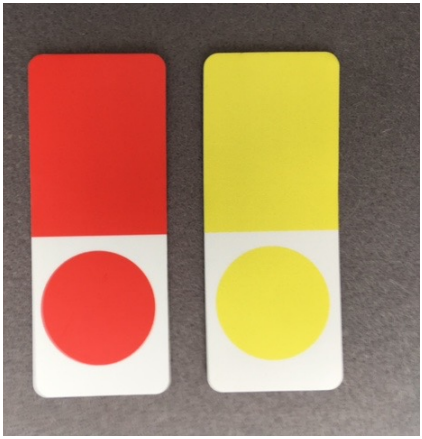


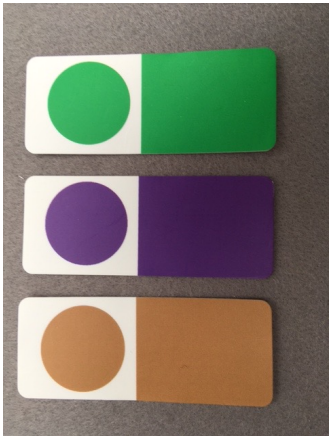


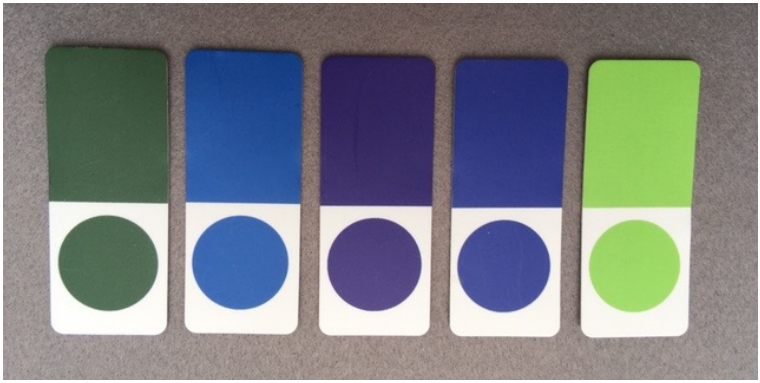


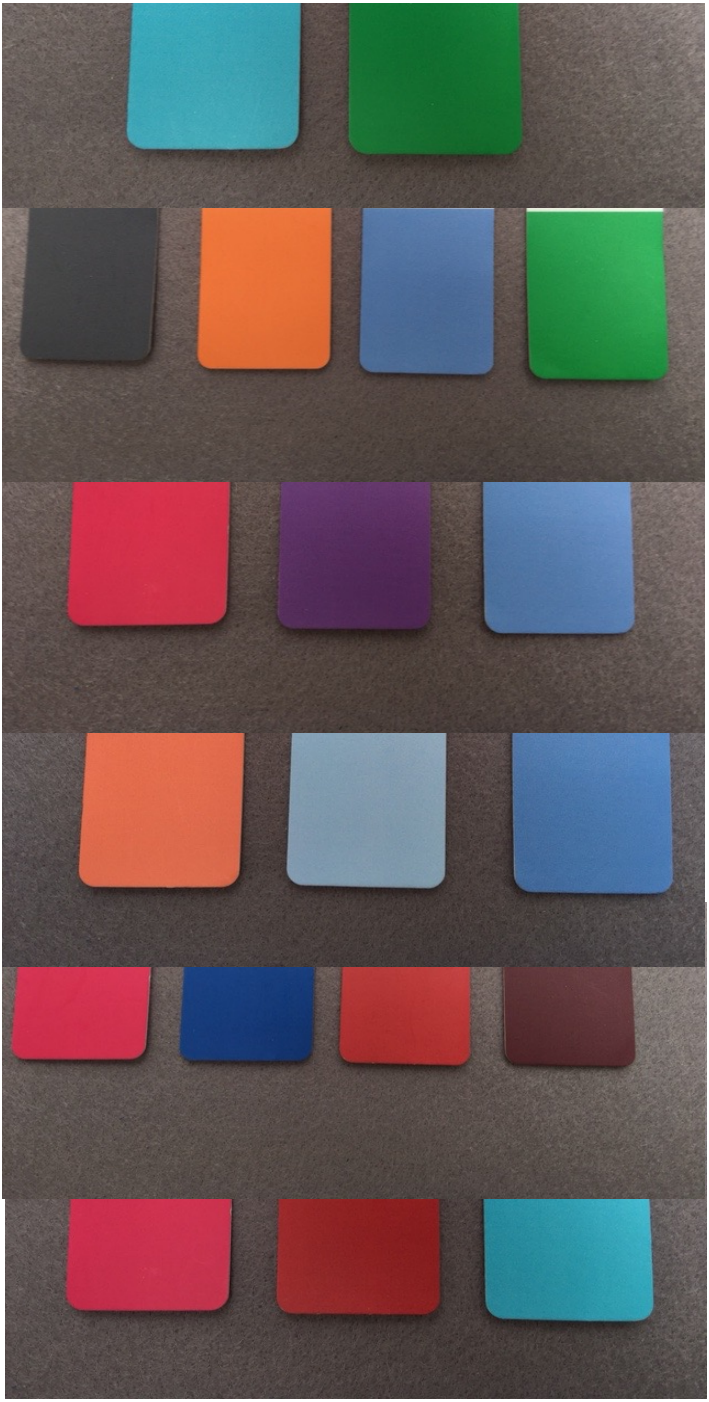












Personal Space

Favourite spaces

Well I'm very fond of the whole house, which is just an ordinary thirties semi and we've been here for 33 years. I would regard it as still unfinished because we are very slow, and we live with imperfections. We don't worry if everything is not perfect. We just have this idea (that)- oh, we're going to do 'that' one day, but it never happens, or it does about10 years later..

I've got a sofa that I want covered and I think we can afford it now because we've been locked in, ..I've got a strip of fabric lying on the arm and it's that colour now in my head.

It has to be satisfying to you what the results are - in your own home your arrangements are have to be satisfying to you and the person or people you live with

In your own home the places have to be satisfying to you and the person or people you live with

To go to hospital is horrific because you're living in public, if you're conscious. That's why we don't want to have carers coming in, because you're living in public. That's why people who need care coming in, they will be discomforted by the carer crashing in every morning and every night because suddenly their house is a public space. Even though the carers have seen it all before, you do feel judged.

I use this as my summer workspace

The conservatory. I am now sitting where I work. We live in this in the summer. We're beginning, not to eat supper in here now, because it gets black .. and I don't like the cold and dark so we're only having breakfast and lunch in here now because its September. This works because I am in the garden but I am protected by the glass from the cold.

It's the light - it's wonderful. This house has got a north/southish aspect, which means that (this) back end, in the afternoon, is in the shade - (which is quite useful if it's very hot) because then you've got the shade of the house. We never have to think about it being too hot.

It's the northern light coming in from the top: it's brilliant. If you bring an art book in here and look at the plates, the colours are just wonderful.

Nigel Slater

I started using it last summer to finish the quilt, and this is when I started working again. That was folded up -in a cupboard, under the eaves. Throwing away old work is not on - unless you are absolutely certain its got to go.

Once I got the quilt up and then I kept looking at it. and thinking, what if I done that? I could have had another …what if I moved that colour over there?- and so on.

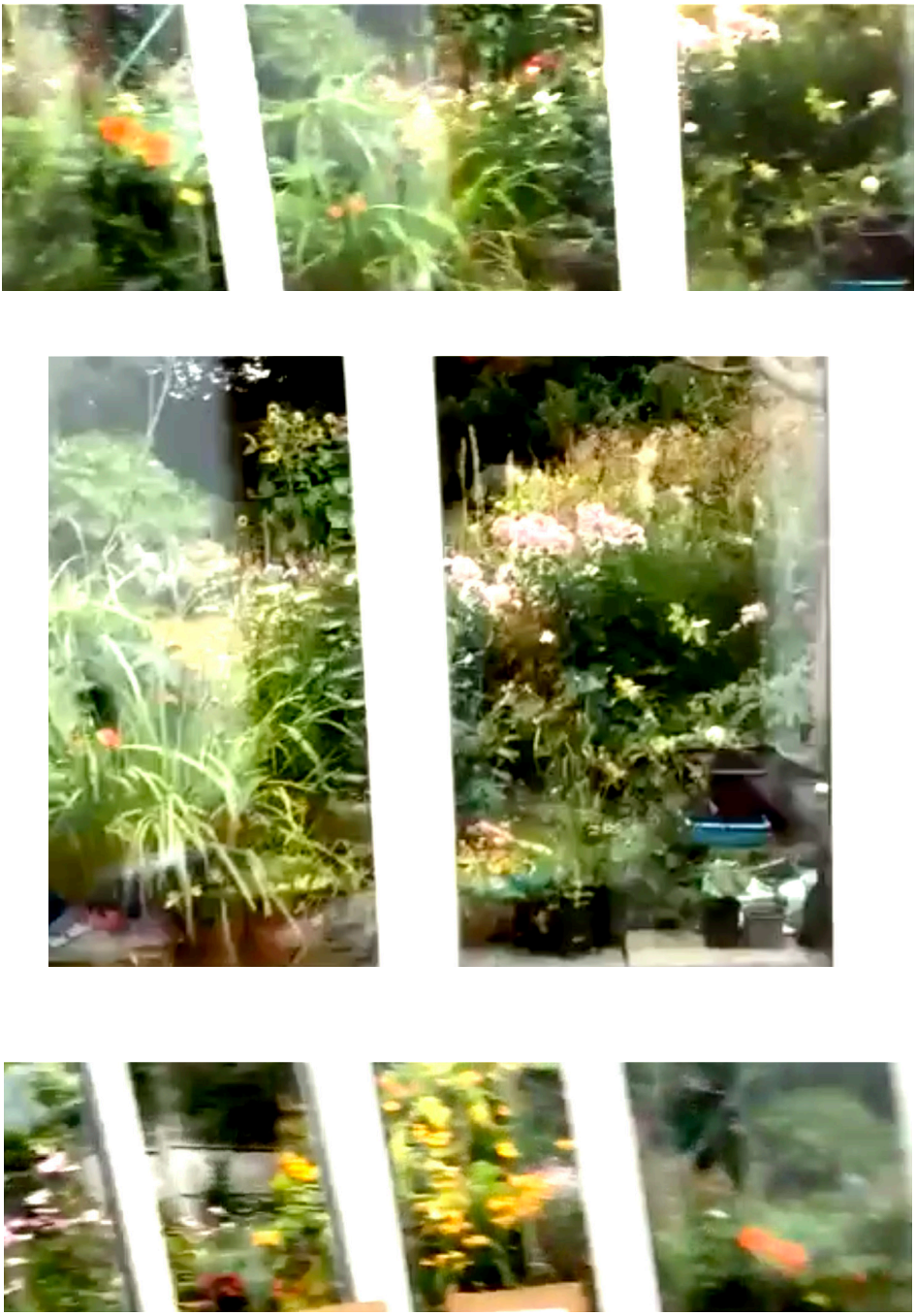
I suddenly realised what I was doing and then I sort of sidled into getting my paints out and working down here in this space.

It's a Lloyd Loom chair and it's an outdoor chair, because we do leave them outside, so they get out in the rain . iI's not really made of the old Lloyd loom stuff whatever they used - it's made of plastic. It's dining table height but its got arms. We find the comfortable, we like them

It's probably nine feet by possibly eleven, - and a big table (that doesn't matter if I get paint on it) . A nice, big, round, outdoor table that folds down. Quite nice chairs, which we like. The light is absolutely brilliant.

For the kind of work I do, I'm not into big - I don't have lots of equipment or anything. I have a jam jar and paintbrushes and little boxes of paints. I make little bits and put them all together. I used to weave. But I didn't mostly work big - I worked on very fine small pieces. I did do some big pieces but mostly very fine weaving. I've got small frame primitive looms which you clamp upright and it's tapestry weaving so you've not got lots and lots of equipment. You're just picking with your fingers.

That's my paintings. The large window sills mean I can just prop the boards up and when I am eating my breakfast and lunch, I look up and think : what am I going to do next?



I've got the best spot

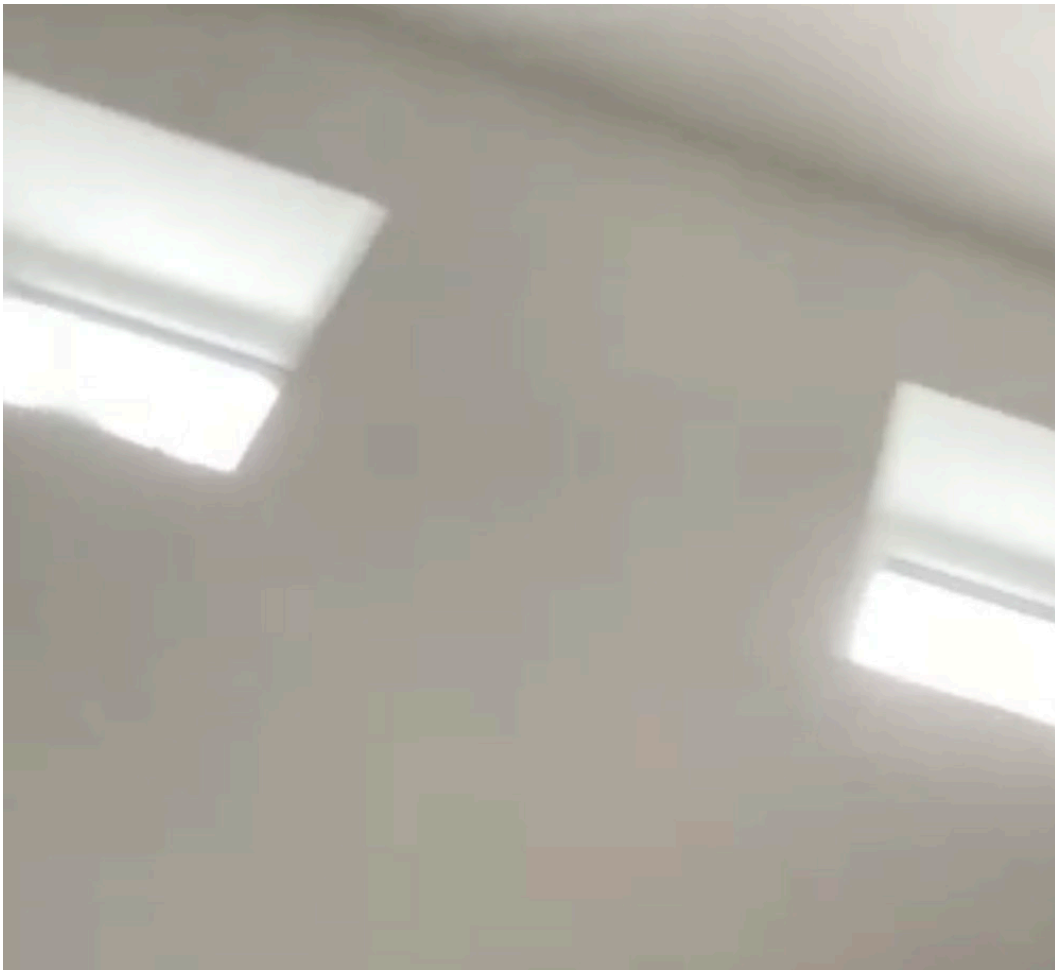
I look out on the garden, which is my flower garden. So I can see the flowers crowding in and, yes, I have been using them for colour ideas. So I've got a lot of nasturtiums growing quite near the window. That's quite fun, and then I've got to a pink slot where I've got different pinks.

So I have gone on making something through the years because I have always done the garden. I always think I'm not going to get it back, because in the winter, it goes, it just dwindles and dwindles. So the garden is another favourite place and it's quite private.

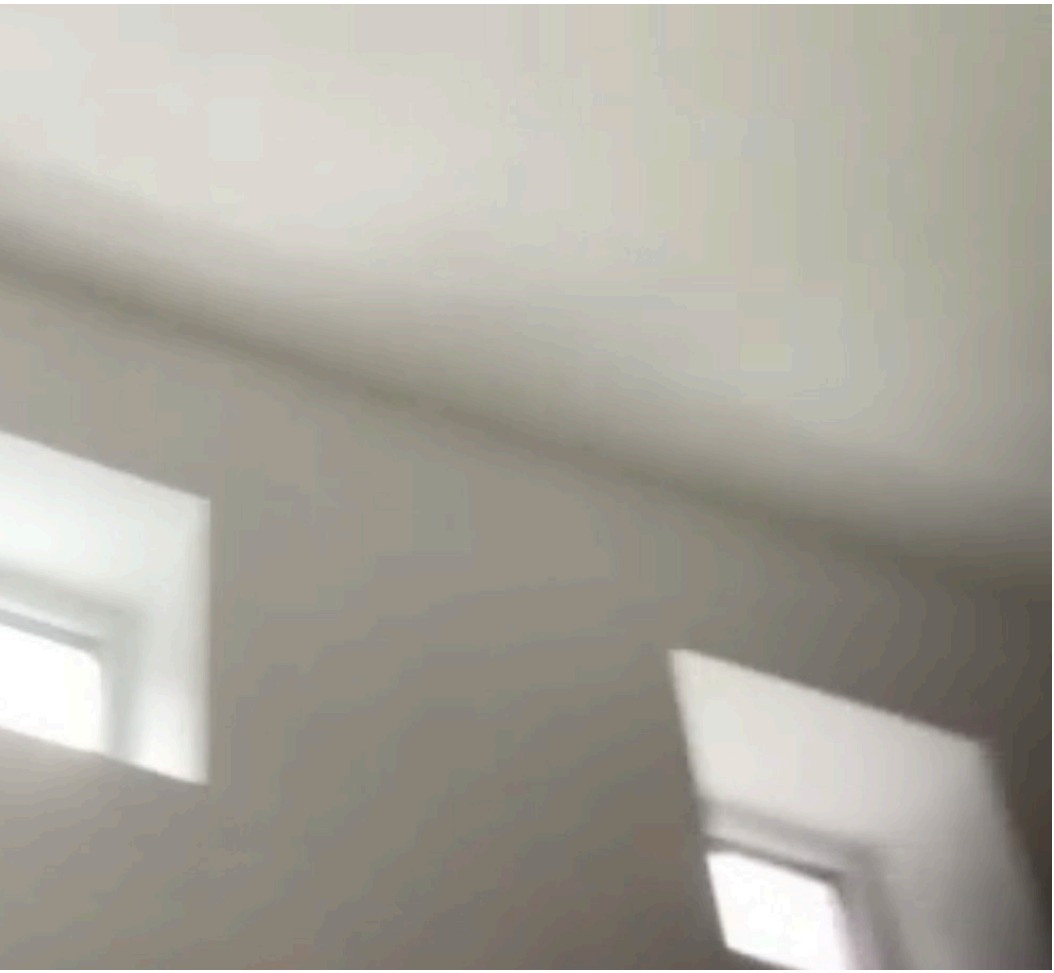
I never usually use landscape or flowers

I do to give me vague ideas, but I never usually use landscape or flowers. I can draw. I've always been able to draw but I don't mostly draw or paint realistically. I'm interested in pattern and colour. I have picked some flowers today because I bring them in to have a look at the colour.

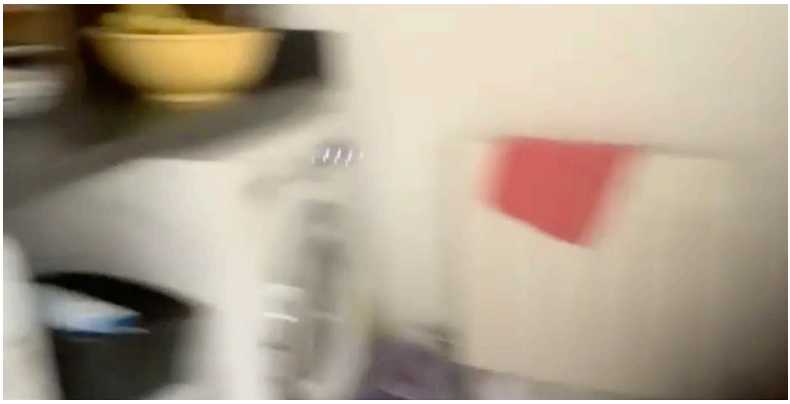
It's ridiculous because the light shines through the petals and of course you put opaque paint colour onto the paper ? It's like looking at a picture on a screen, looking at a petal. It's just got that vibrancy which you dont get with paint. It's back-lit.



We call it the laundry room and I love this space because it's so tall which means I can't clean the windows!



It's really tall and It's got a sloping roof, and I love big spaces. We can't afford a big house, never have. This my space by verticality. And Y plays the violin here - its incredibly echoey.



It's a circulation space isn't it

I've never had a laundry room before. There's an iron in here and there's a radio and CD and such like, so I like being in here.

And if we have had parties it's quite useful because there's an over-spill. I can put the look the rack away and the baskets away and it becomes quite a useful space.

Laundry takes a lot of space and having a washing machine in the kitchen takes up space, and cupboard space. We used to have the washing machine in the garage . And it's quite good to iron in .

This is very warm because it's new build so it's better insulated. When we get very old we might come and live in here.

This is the kitchen

Which is connected. We took the door off (and) we never put it back on again. I like the kitchen because it's yellow and new. I never had a new kitchen before in my life, and its got a nice mess, which I never bother to sort out very much.

I would like light coming in from on top, it would be great, but the two windows do make it light, and the view, obviously. Kitchen windows are terrifically important.

I do bake. I'm fed up with cooking supper - X loves cooking he finds it relaxing. So he cooks. I make breakfast and lunch and I bake bread. I don't make many cakes, but I do make a fruitcake about (every) two or three months, like a Christmas cake, and I do make nice biscuits sometimes. Baking bread - I like doing that, I dont think I will ever not like doing that.

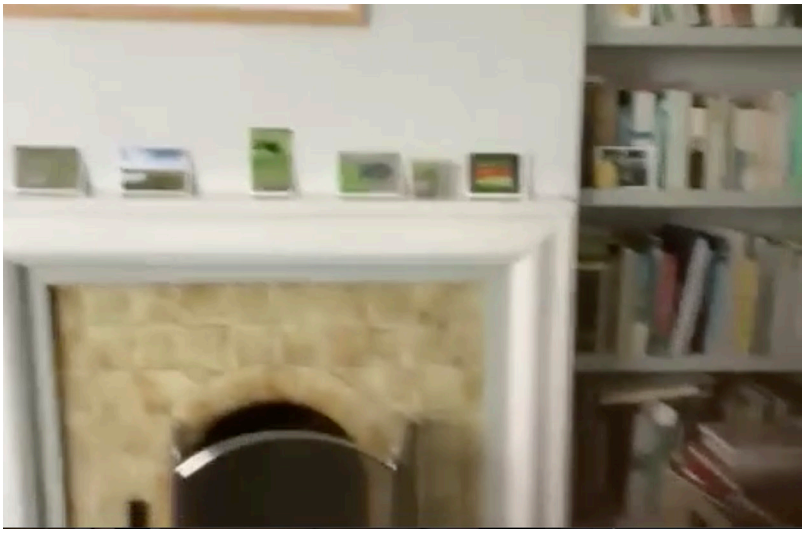
I quite like a fair amount of cleanliness. I'm not too worried about dust, but I think in a kitchen and the bathroom it should be quite clean. I probably would (miss cleaning), which is really stupid because I resent it like anything and get quite bangy and cross if I think I've done too much. I call myself the scivvy!

This is the dining room area

We like this very much, we like the space. So I tend to keep it, what I call, 'under furnished'. So we don't have any soft chairs in the back here. When my mother was quite old she would come and she'd say :" *I don't know we don't have a soft chair by this window?*", meaning the window that looked out onto the garden. And I thought: I don't have time to sit down on soft chairs I'm too busy running around doing my thing during the daytime!

In the winter this table is terribly important. Everything gets dumped (on it). There is another table with a heap of stuff to be to be processed that never gets processed, you know or letters that come that you put on one side .

(This table) gets used for all sorts of things, Pieces of wood, - we bring things in to have a look at on the table. So its very very important. It's clear now, but often it has things dumped on it, - and I usually I have a vase of flowers on it as well, dropping petals.



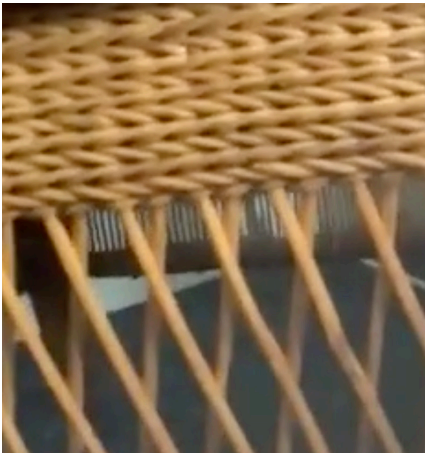
This is the sitting room

It's got books, quite a lot of books.

And in the winter- this is very important because we eat in here: another table.

(The photos on the mantlepiece)Those are X's. I put them out because I found them when I was tidying: these go in a line. They are important to him, You look at your own work, dont you?

I'm not sure what we're going to do now, because in the winter for years and years we burned a fire and coal is going to be off limits. We only use smokeless now but even that - you might feel guilty about. Last winter we only used the fire at the weekends so maybe we can feel less guilty about that.



This is a lovely chair from Africa

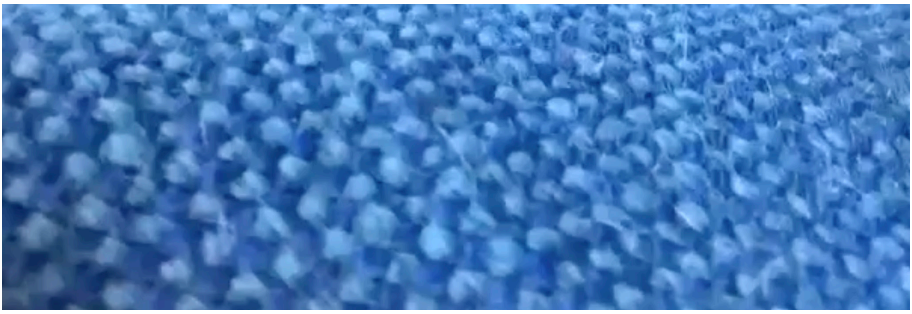
I have got a nicer cushion cover for that, which is bright turquoise blue. It's got the brown one on at the moment, because I washed the other one. It's a great chair and people come here and they want to sit in that chair. Like drinking out of the mug, you know? :" *Can I sit in that chair?*" It is beautifully, beautifully, beautifully made. You can get cruder versions, I think it's from Mali. It's beautiful. It's a weaving triumph. I think it's very important: handmade things. But we don't value that. People who make things by hand get paid peanuts, sadly.

We previously had a Gwen John chair, there. We bought that in Peckham market and took it back to our first little house in London on the train, I think. We had it and I loved it. Then because I think this room faces south, so the sun comes in, it began to crack and break up. All the cane broke. So then we saw this chair and we splashed out. I think that might crack up eventually but I am hoping it will see us out.

A corner of the artist's room in Paris, Gwen John (1907-1909)

The green sofa

I love it, and I go to sleep on it before I go up to bed, in the winter, and when it gets really cold it's got a rug on it. It's too low for X.



That's a sofa bed and it's SO UGLY!

X sourced it in Scotland from a firm that manufactured sofa beds for hotels, because we wanted a really good quality one.

When we finally chose the whole performance of the bed, we wanted to try to fit into this little space in this bay (window) which blocks the radiator, by the way. Very silly.

Why did we choose brown? Which is why the strip of fabric is on the arm, which is a very beautiful blue, is what I would like it to turn into. If it became a blue sofa I would love it more.

This is a very expensive fabric. Its wool and the weave .. the warp and weft are different - so you're getting different colours.

Over to you (2017-18)

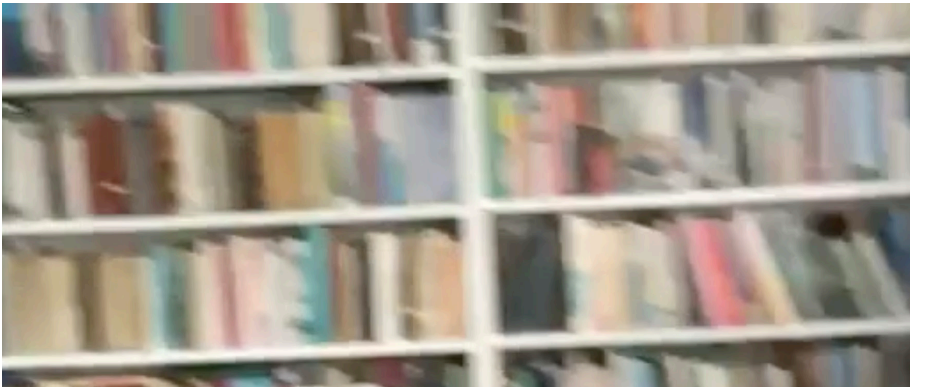
Bombay Sunset (1972-3)

Evening (1994-5)

Paintings by Howard Hodgkin

That's this week's colour: pink and yellow

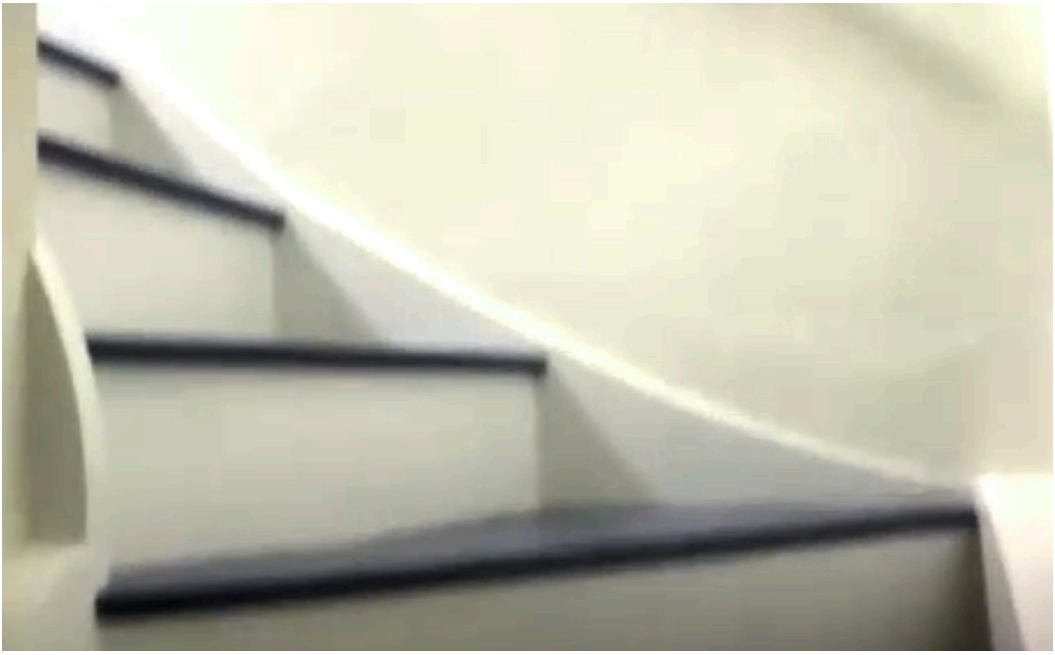
The Howard Hodgkins (prints) : these have unreflective class in, but it still reflects a bit. This one, at the end, the green one (left) , that was his very last painting called: 'Over to you' - it makes me think.. he knew it was good, and he knew it was fluent, so to speak….and (right) that's the breadboard (painted on a breadboard).



Books

Often we've had books in store, in boxes and then you just feel you've lost something, for good, and you can't do anything about it. Mostly now my books aren't in boxes. So mostly I know where to get them, which is great.

I do have a few books that I keep up here, - but they're also downstairs in the sitting room in the big bookstore and we've got more books in the back bedroom. So yes, lots of books. Because they become important, so you need them near you. It's a strange thing isn't it? I think why is that there. Why is it so prominent?



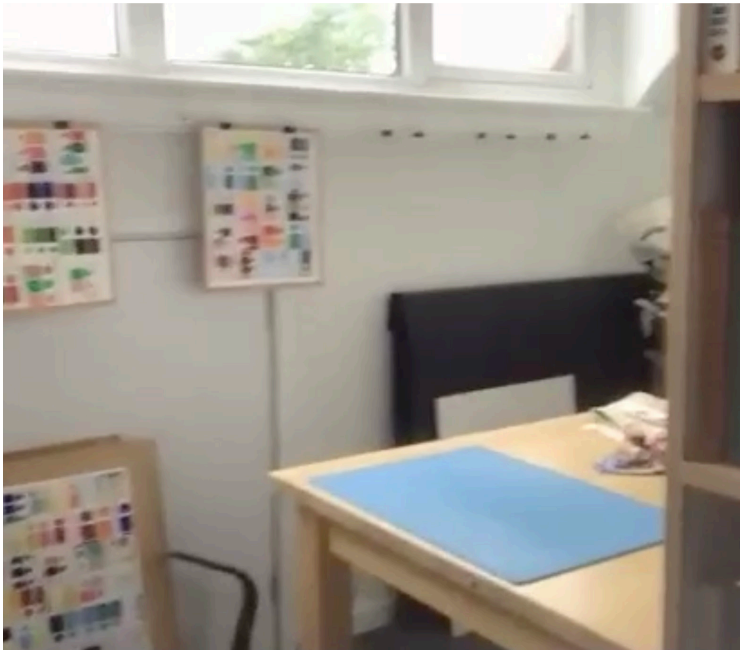
I like the idea of a den

I am interested in that word ‘den’

It was partly me pointing out occasionally that I didnt have a space of my own anymore. Because that room: we used to sleep at the top of the house - the children slept on the middle floor and we stopped at the top. The view is great from up there and then it became a dump.

So I’m taking you up the blue and white stairs, - I haven’t yet put anything on the walls, because I like them being plain.

1000
charm

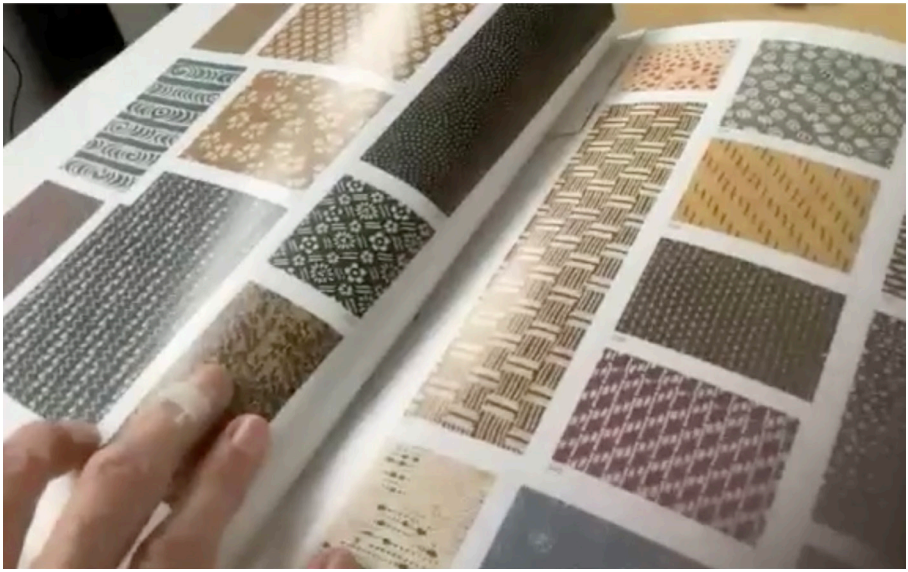


My workspace in the winter

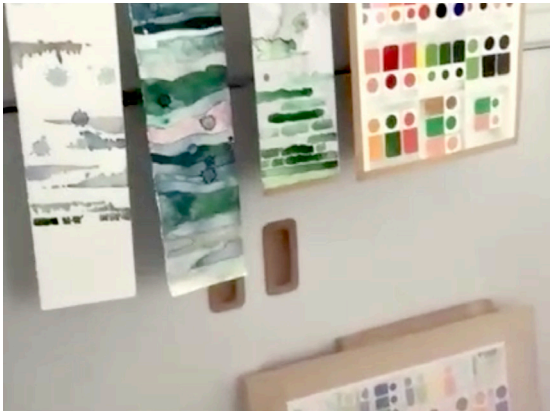
Is at the top of the house and it faces south and it gets too hot in the summer, and I don't want to draw the blinds, because then I haven't got so much natural light.

This is a roofspace. There's my work table and chairs and more books.

I've got this washing line under the window that we rigged up, and it's got bulldog clips that I will clear when I start a new topic, a new piece of work, and then it all goes down here in my big folder.



I was using this (book) quite a lot in the winter, which is great because it's textile patterns: very, very old ones. It's a good book - there's lots and lots and lots of (patterns). Yes, I use that quite a lot.



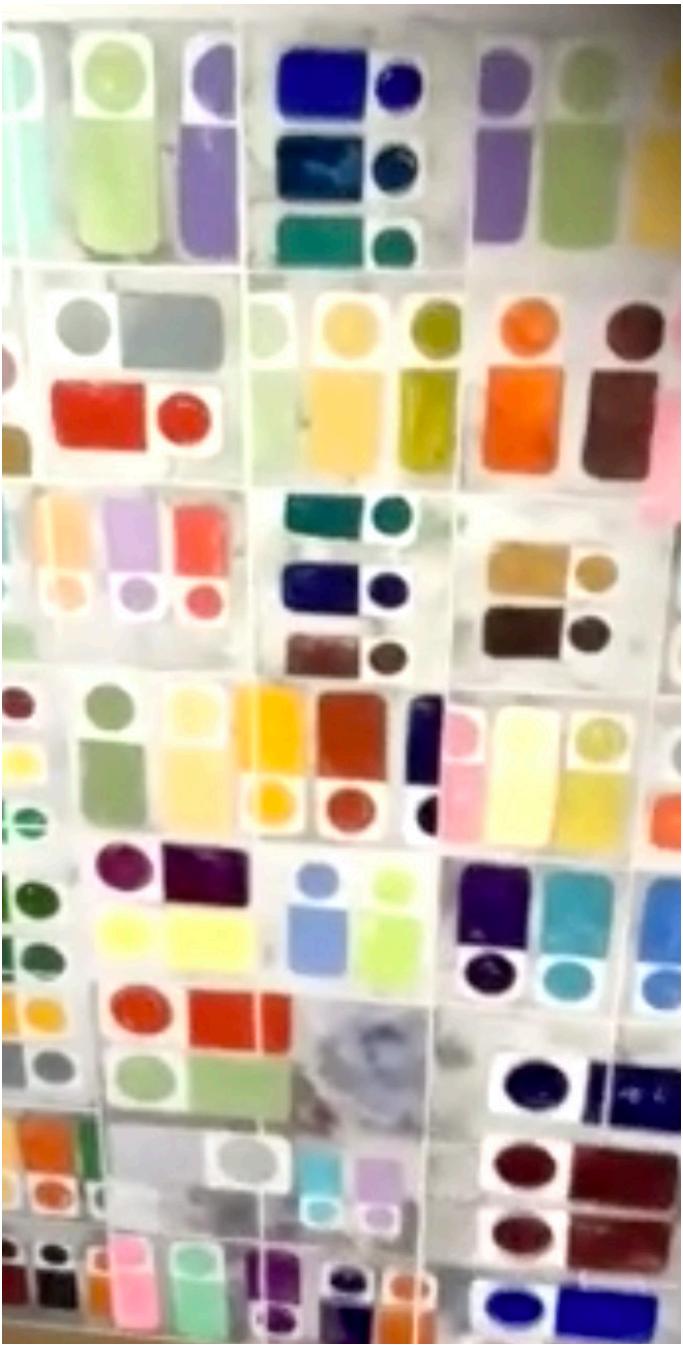
There's a rocking chair here that belongs to Y but it's quite nice to sit in and look at one's work.

Why one has an untidy workspace is because - I only mostly work in the afternoons, - just 2,3, 4 hours at the most. So you put that time aside and you get to your workspace, and you don't want to do clearing up or tidying or sorting or anything. Because I often worked on the dining table and then I had to clear it away. I have known all about clearing away for a long time. So having one's own space is quite good.

Maybe it's the freedom to choose not to do it

Mess is quite good. When lockdown came, people I knew said :*I'm going to do lots and lots of clearing up and tidying up,*" and I said :"*I'm not!* ". I am not going to be governed by miserable things, - making more heaps and piles, and then saying I don't want this, and I don't want that? Because sometimes you then regret what you've thrown away. And if you make art, I could easily have thrown away stuff that I'm using now. How about that? They came back to life.

But we are living in small spaces (which) means you have to be a bit ruthless at times.



This is an early one

I was actually thinking of cutting that one up because there are areas that I am not so happy with.

When I photographed (the colour cards) with my phone and I'd hold the phone away at different heights - so then they became different sizes, and I like that.

I could almost begin to have the spot one colour and the body another colour - I haven't started on that, - I don't know if I will. but it comes into my head that it's possible

I'm now into different background wash colours. I started with doing greys. I did several with grey backgrounds and then I realised I could use a watercolour wash. I've done two blue ones and I'm on a green one now. I don't know about using yellow or pink as a background, That would be interesting. So there's lots and lots of possibilities. Also, I could break the grid up. I could make it collapse, and then re-emerge. You could go on working on this for years, if you wanted to.

I do like this row of blues

I think those are really - yeah row blue I love that.yeah and I think i've repeated that in another one, so you take what you like and move it on to the next one.

My birthday colours are coming. I said that's what I want for my birthday: is more colour. I've exhausted over many years, this turquoise colour - it's like Kingfisher and it's a watercolour and it's so vivid and it's gorgeous. So I'm thinking about using that as a background.