



**SITTING ROOM** Although the gallery wall is made up of a variety of styles of artwork, each piece includes a certain amount of white. This balances the arrangement, making it pop against the dark wall

## FACT FILE

**Who lives here?** Elaine Verdon, PR at Thinkhouse and her partner Simon, along with their beloved dog, Daisy.

**What we love?** Every corner of the home is filled with a personal touch and it's a look that serves as the perfect backdrop to Elaine and Simon's creative lives.



# BOLD and *beautiful*

PR consultant and the woman behind interior design business, Leo + Cici, Elaine Verdon's Dublin home is a testament to how unique style trumps all

WORDS AND STYLING  
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**HALL** An eclectic mix of accessories creates a welcoming atmosphere in the hallway **LIVING ROOM (opposite)** The Maser print is signed by the author of the quote, singer Damien Dempsey. Elaine painted a Billy bookcase from Ikea ([Ikea.ie](http://Ikea.ie)), mantelpiece and doors in the same colour as the walls – Farrow & Ball's Railings ([Farrow-ball.com](http://Farrow-ball.com))





## Great idea!

Using the same paint colour (Farrow & Ball's Railings) on the mantelpiece, bookcase and doors creates unification with the wall and leads you to believe that Elaine had her storage built-in, at first glance.



When Elaine bought this house ten years ago, the notion of splashing out on expensive pieces was the norm. She bought pricey curtains for the living room, a Duff Tisdall sofa and armchair and wallpapered her bedroom with a Matthew Williamson design. She made high-end hay while the sun was shining. Then, the recession hit. Twenty-somethings felt like their plans had come to a stalemate, in terms of homemaking. Not one to be deterred, Elaine ploughed on. Further updates to the house were done on a lower budget. A thrifty eye, a few paint jobs and the occasional trip to Ikea have allowed Elaine to keep the space fresh and current in an affordable manner. Because the bones of the home were built on the aforementioned high-quality pieces, the space looks and feels comfortable. The takeaway from this story is to invest in classic, well-made pieces. You can accessorise inexpensively later.

Proving this point, Elaine jokes that her obsession with cushions means that she regularly swaps them out. "In six months time, they'll all be different," she says. Though the selection of velvet, macramé and pom-pom cushions are similar in style to ones that cost a fortune, Elaine sourced them at Homesense, Rockett St. George, and Dublin favourite, April and the Bear. "Siobhan (Lam, who has now opened her first bricks-and-mortar shop on Cow's Lane following the success of her online store [Aprilandthebear.com](http://Aprilandthebear.com)) knows her customers so well. At this stage, she's able to tell which pieces I'm going to want – and she's always dead right!"

Other stores Elaine finds herself scouring are Designist, Industry & Co., Décor Furniture Gallery and the beautifully curated selection of moody-glam pieces on [Dust.ie](http://Dust.ie). Some of her favourite pieces, however, are those that she has inherited from family members. The





**MUSIC ROOM** The moody colour scheme continues into Simon's music room **KITCHEN (opposite)** An April and the Bear (Aprilandthebear.com) Mongolian lambskin rug cosies up the Eames replica chairs Elaine bought from Cult Furniture (Cultfurniture.com)



home is dotted with black and white photographs of grandparents, Leopold and Cecelia, who inspired the name of Elaine's interior design consultancy business, Leo + Cici. And an ode to Simon's family, perhaps? As the shoot took place, a plump cut of meat from his family business, renowned Roscommon-based Gilligan Meats, suppliers to Dublin's top restaurants, roasted away in the oven.

Although Elaine's taste in décor is certainly bright and bold, her knack for balancing everything out, against a muted backdrop, means her space is anything but brassy. In the living room, Elaine chose an Abigail Ahern-style charcoal backdrop for her quirky accessories. The colour she used was Railings by Farrow and Ball; a brand she uses time and again, hailing it for its amazing colour selection and easy application. On the floor, Elaine laid a striped Ikea rug over the timber flooring and now sits a hammered brass Urban Outfitters coffee table on top. The layering of textures works beautifully. To add a rustic element to the room, Elaine chose a vintage TV stand and end tables from Décor Furniture Gallery on Wexford Street. Other pieces in the room are

reminiscent of the 1970s; a disco ball, knitted pouffe and oversized baskets.

Possibly, what makes Elaine and Simon's home feel so unique, is their incredible collection of art. From Maser to Rachel Corcoran, the couple champion homegrown artists in every room of the house. Some particularly special works include an illustration done by Denise Nestor in celebration of the Marriage Equality Referendum and a Jessica Hische print bought during "Movember" in aid of cancer research. Another stand-out piece is a framed vinyl of Irish electro-jazz musician Kormac, whose band Simon plays in. It seems each piece must have a special place in the couple's heart to get a place on the wall.

Upstairs, the two spare bedrooms are used as workspaces for the creative couple's hobbies (which, in both cases, have become side hustles). Simon's music studio is jam-packed with instruments and equipment that rest on simple Ikea furniture. As Ikea is the master of squeezing a lot of storage into a confined space, it works perfectly. Elaine also turned to Ikea when looking for a neatly-sized desk that she could use when working on design projects. She chose a simple Linnmon desktop and



FROM MASER TO RACHEL CORCORAN,  
THE COUPLE CHAMPION HOMEGROWN ARTISTS  
IN EVERY ROOM OF THE HOUSE

CENTRAL ISLAND





## WE LOVE...

Elaine's flooring on the landing. These vinyl tiles from Des Kelly Interiors (Deskelly.ie) tie in, nicely, with the black and white walls. Elaine was also clever to use black and white frames for her prints, too.





paired it with Adils legs, which she spray-painted gold. Beside it, a cart from Søstrene Grene holds her favourite interior design magazines. The acrylic Louis Ghost chair is from Inreda and is made extra comfy with the help of a peach cushion from Monki.

Hidden storage in the form of built-in wardrobes and antique chests of drawers means everything on show is uncluttered, pretty and representative of their personalities. Practical but necessary things are tidied away and allows the small space to breathe. This is probably the number one tip for homeowners hoping to achieve a curated look like Elaine's. Yet, even if this top tip doesn't magically transform your space, you can always contact Elaine. We're confident that a quick look at her Instagram will have you hitting that Direct Message button in no time. **H**

**MASTER BEDROOM (opposite)** A black chest of drawers and Farrow and Ball's Down Pipe create a tranquil but sophisticated feel in the master bedroom **GUEST BEDROOM** The colour Elaine chose to paint the guest bedroom is Pantone's Colour of the Year 2016 Rose Quartz, which is available from Fleetwood Paints (Fleetwood.ie)

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