



Portrait: Sarah Grace.

SAM GRIFFIN

Design director at creative-led interior design studio CTRL Space, **Sam Griffin** believes that the power of a strong narrative is that it fosters creativity and generates new ideas – encouraging people to connect and enjoy social togetherness.

How did you come to be in the world of interior design?

After a couple of years running a product design studio with two friends from university, our first spatial project came in the door. Approaching interior design from a product design background came with a lot of excitement; rather than considering the appearance of an object from the outside, the world of interiors was about creating environments from the inside. Now, eight years later, I spend my week designing bars and restaurants – immersive environments which cultivate togetherness.

Can you tell us about some of your projects where your use of colour takes centre stage?

Generally, when designing hospitality venues, we coordinate rather expansive material and colour palettes. Layering forms, materiality and colour to create depth and intrigue tends to be a common tool that I lean on. We've integrated colour a lot recently and I'm looking forward to using it more in our upcoming projects, both in-house and through collaboration with local artists. Some of my favourite colour moments from recent projects include: Siso bar and eatery, Remuera, where we finished the ceiling in Resene Santa Fe and Resene Denim Blue high gloss; Hotel Ponsonby, where we collaborated with

Art Dept on the feature paint finishes and landed on Resene Rice Cake with a vintage application; Picnicka, Tauranga, where we followed a buffalo check pattern and painted the entire ceiling in Resene Brown Derby, Resene Spice and Resene Leather; and the Sunset Rooftop Bar in Auckland's CBD where we chose Resene Just Dance and Resene Rice Cake. This last one is opening very soon and is unashamedly colourful, incorporating a salmon-pink with banquettes upholstered in a burnt-orange bouclé throughout.

How would you describe your approach to design?

Probably more so than our clients, I put pressure on myself to deliver creative ideas and concepts. Each project holds an opportunity to explore a new idea or reinterpret an old one, or what I really enjoy is marrying the two. To me, historical art, architecture, products, fashion and cars create an endless catalogue of ideas and precedents, waiting to be re-imagined and augmented for the contemporary world we live in. In short, find something old and make it new through a contemporary and fashionable lens.

Your colour collab here is based on elements from a vintage Land Rover Defender. What prompted you to work it around a classic vehicle?

I have a fascination with materiality, texture, colour, form, experience and environment. The colour combinations of vintage classic cars embody so much character and charm: pastel hues, tan leathers, bold-coloured upholsteries, timber detailing, rich carpets and chrome trims. The spatial experience is rich and full of life, engaging and tactile – it makes you feel something and encourages awareness of your surroundings and that's what I try to achieve in my creative work. Thomas has captured this narrative beautifully, telling the story of visual richness and tactility.

What led to your colour choices?

There was something about the high gloss of the blue body paint sitting beside the perfectly crafted ecru canvas, and the soft black rubber tyres. Tan-brown leather upholstery delivers such warmth, inviting you into the softly finished interior with perfect stitchwork and a complementary cream ribbed carpet. Subtle stainless-steel and aluminium fixings give small moments of metallic-silver relief and hold the composition together. 📍



Resene Shakespeare Resene Grey Friars Resene Pumpkin Resene Triple Thorndon Cream



THIS PAGE
Resene Pumpkin,
Resene Triple
Thorndon Cream,
Resene Shakespeare
and Resene Grey
Friars. Art direction
by Thomas Cannings.
Photography by
Toaki Okano.