



testpot art

Tracy Rasmussen Artist

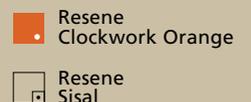
An ordered mind and a passion for colour has seen artist Tracy Rasmussen use Resene paints in some extraordinary works.

Artist Tracy Rasmussen's twin passions are order, and colour... in that order. And she goes to considerable lengths to celebrate those qualities in her artworks.

For her *Alphabet of Colour* works, for example, she bought a testpot of each colour in the Resene The Range 2004 and 2005 fandecks and let the names of the paints determine the final artwork: each paint colour appears in alphabetical order according to its name (ie, all the paints starting with 'A' are in the first column, in alphabetical order, and so on).

The impetus for the colour chart works was a 2004 commission for the Columbar 'corporate crash pads' apartment building in Auckland. Resene paints were being used on the project, and Tracy was inspired by the colour swatches.

Each testpot was used to paint one little rectangle of colour on to the plywood board which was her canvas. Each little rectangle had to be masked off and painted. The painted areas were then given about 10 coats of polyurethane, "for gloss and physical depth".



Tracy is a perfectionist with lots of patience: the Columbard commission involved 145 works, and an artist with less determination could easily have been tempted to choose a less laborious methodology.

After that commission, Tracy continued with the theme. Her piece, *The Alphabet of Colour 2004*, was a finalist in the 2004 Wallace Art Award, and was snapped up on TradeMe by a London-based collector.

Tracy (27) enjoys the results of her endeavours, and although it definitely helps that the art is saleable, to her the works are not the main event.

“The work is a tangible memory of the process,” she says, “but it’s the system I created, and which created them, which is the real artwork.”

Paint colours are a perfect medium for Tracy, who loves to work with everyday and domestic items.

In her 2002 work *Bookcase* (made during her studies for a Bachelor of Visual Arts at AUT; she graduated in 2002), the raw material was 654 second-hand hardcover books, selected for their size and colour, not their content. The main work has the books in a white bookcase, organised into bands of colour, and alphabetically by author within their colour groups. Smaller works in this series are variously based on the number of pages in each book, the first and last sentences in the books, and authors’ names.

Given her strong sense of order, it’s not surprising that Tracy has always had a hankering to be a librarian. And it may yet happen – she’s very versatile.

She has spent the past three years in Sydney, where she was visual merchandiser for the funky and avant garde Swedish design store kikki.K.

She also gained a floristry qualification in Australia – so she could better express and enjoy her love of colour through flowers – and now, back home in Auckland, is studying French with a view to living in France. She’s also waiting to hear the results of her application for an internship at the Tate Modern gallery in London.

Wherever Tracy heads to next, she’ll no doubt be amassing influences and material to categorise and catalogue into intriguing works of art. **H**

