

we're loving

STYLE TIPS, IDEAS AND PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR HOME

Custom colours

The home of Benjamin Krebs and Blott Kerr-Wilson is filled with colourful pieces of furniture they've restored themselves, such as this brightly painted sideboard. To see more of their charming home, turn the page. →



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With some creative thinking and a lot of hard work, a ruined old mill has been transformed into a lovely home

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We've discovered some seriously cool products and creative people this month

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Useful tips for around the home from you, our readers

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Wrap coloured wool around old bottles to make gorgeous personalised vases

52 Winter brights

Warm up your home with hot-hued homewares

White with brights
The white rooms in Benjamin and Blott's home are punctuated with colourful furniture and artworks. To update the oak dining table, they teamed it with red office chairs. ->



the millhouse

This old mill was in ruins, but a clever couple brought it back to life, transforming it into a **bright & whimsical** family home

writers tina hom/living agency & elle lovelock
photography jean-marc wuillschleger/living agency

who lives here? | Photographer Benjamin Krebs and his wife, artist Blott Kerr-Wilson, with their two sons Auguste, 14, and Tanguy, 12. Blottshellhouses.com

- 1 Reno timeframe** On and off for 10 years. The couple spent the first three months cleaning, then they had to remove 22 tons of scrap material before they could start the renovation.
- 2 DIY ingenuity** To save money and add personality to their home, Benjamin custom made or repainted many pieces of furniture. This includes the kitchen, which he created with a mix of Ikea drawers, recycled beams and an antique sideboard.



Cosy kitchen

The family love to hang out in the kitchen, particularly during the winter months when the space is heated by the stove. The metal-framed windows and cast-iron pillar are original features.

YOU NEED A LOT OF IMAGINATION and courage to transform an abandoned industrial building into a warm and functional family home – two attributes photographer Benjamin Krebs has in spades. While walking along a riverbank one day, he came across a large old mill that he knew was meant to belong to himself and his wife, artist Blott Kerr-Wilson. “We were looking for a big house for 18 months and I found this mill by accident,” Benjamin says. He already had experience in renovating ruins and comes from a family of serial renovators, so taking on a project as challenging as this one was inevitable.

The four-storey building had never been lived in. It had only four windows and four gigantic rooms (each floor consisted of one room). The roof was destroyed and basic comforts such as electricity, plumbing, heating and insulation had to be installed. The couple, along with their sons Auguste, 14, and Tanguy, 12, spent several months a year over 10 years on the site, overseeing the project and slowly piecing together their dream home. “We did everything ourselves with the help of local craftsmen,” Benjamin says. “We tried to recycle

as much material as possible and respect the industrial spirit of the place.” First priorities were to put on a new slate roof – the old one was torn off during a storm – insert as many windows as possible to bring in more natural light and partition the spaces to make smaller rooms.

The ground floor is now divided into four rooms: a large open-plan kitchen, dining and living space where the family spend most of their time together. Also on this floor is a smaller living room for watching TV, a guest room and a playroom with a big open staircase leading up to the first floor. The master and children’s bedrooms, bathrooms and Blott’s winter studio are all located on the first floor, while the two storeys above are used as storage space.

Benjamin and Blott have filled their home with furniture that is simple and utilitarian. It’s a blend of vintage finds from local markets and travels abroad, treasured antiques and a few custom-made pieces. Pride of place throughout the home, though, is given to the couple’s art collection, gifts from family and friends, plus Blott’s own artworks. “It’s the perfect place to show off my art,” she says. ➔



Handsome hall

Layered rugs from Ikea add warmth to the hallway, while an old baker’s chest in the corner provides plenty of storage. Benjamin bought the impressive iron and oak staircase and balustrade from an antique dealer. ➔

The ultimate hangout
On the first floor landing, a hammock hung between two pillars is the perfect spot to chill out with a good book.

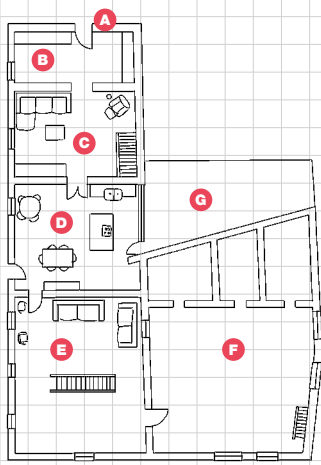


Handmade home
Since he couldn't find exactly what he wanted, Benjamin made the breakfast table and transformed an old shop counter into a colourful sideboard. The artwork is by Blott. →

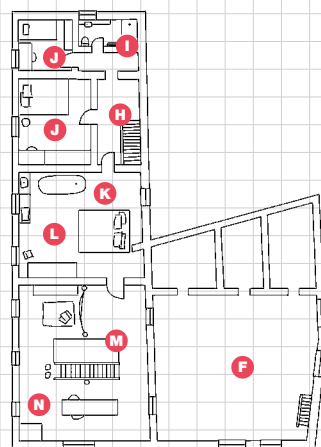
Master retreat

Golden-hued walls create a cocoon-like feel in the master bedroom. The couple decided to integrate their ensuite in the design (see below) with an antique cast-iron bathtub adding to the charm of the space. The artworks are gifts from Benjamin's family. →

GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



KEY

- A** Entrance
- B** Entrance hall
- C** Lounge room
- D** Kitchen / Dining
- E** Living area
- F** Storage space
- G** Patio
- H** Hallway
- I** Bathroom
- J** Bedroom
- K** Bath area
- L** Master bedroom
- M** Mezzanine
- N** Office



Changing rooms
The floorboards existed in the original mill. Benjamin installed partition walls to create more rooms within the vast open spaces.

floorplan alice gleadlow



cool & quirky towel stand

Show & tell

Blott's beautiful shell artworks adorn many walls in the mill, alongside colourful paintings – gifts from family and friends.



PAINTS

CABINET Dulux Wash & Wear 101 Barrier Technology in **Red Clown, Pink Gin, Ogen Melon** and **Flamboyant Orange**, each \$85.95 for 4L.

RED CLOWN

PINK GIN

OGEN MELON

FLAMBOYANT ORANGE

Industrial dryer
Harrison **bottle drying holder**, \$800, Ici Et Là.
1m x 35cm.

Glowing red
Masc 1 Piece C **light pendant** in Red, \$147.60, About Space.

Traditional tub
5'6 Victorian **bath** in White, \$899, Recollections.
1.67m x 71cm x 57cm.

BENJAMIN & BLOTT'S MOODBOARD Rustic & utilitarian furniture with bright colour hits

FINISHES

BENCHTOP Caesarstone in **Raven (A)**, from \$550 a sq m installed. **FLOORING** Euroline Vinyl Planks in **Driftwood (B)**, from \$35 a sq m, Carpet Court. Boral timber hardwood in **New England Oak (C)**, from \$70 a sq m.

Add warmth

Kattrup handwoven **rug** in Red/Multicolour, \$199, Ikea. 2m x 1.4m.

Floor seasons

Lhasa **outdoor rug** in Orange/Violet, \$90, Eco Chic. 2.38m x 1.47m.

The hot seat

Galway **dining chair** in Red, \$159, Dare Gallery. For stockists, see page 176.

Handmade homeware

Indonesian **curry pot** in Black with cane base, \$12.95, Oxfam Shop. 23cm x 18cm x 10cm.

3 green bottles...

FROM LEFT **Milk recycled** glass in Chartreuse and **Tall Botella Barna**, \$29 each, and **Small Botella Barna** in Chartreuse, \$19, Collect Home.