



— AT HOME WITH —

REBECCA HOSSACK

GALLERY OWNER

Rebecca Hossack is a collector.

To call her a hoarder would be to do the gallery owner an injustice – the Fitzrovia home she shares with biographer husband Matthew Sturgis is hardly cluttered – but let’s say it’s borderline. “I’m an obsessive collector,” she admits. “It’s ridiculous. I can’t stop. But everything in the house is really special to me. That’s a 19th-century Aboriginal ceremonial hat made from human hair”, she explains, pointing to one of the many treasures that happen to be in sight. “That’s an early Papua New Guinea carving; that’s a 1930s ice bucket from Scandinavia... They’re my friends. I just love little things.”

I don’t even need to step inside the front door, adorned, as it is, with gilded Chinese symbols, to understand that travel features highly in Rebecca’s life. In fact, I’m lucky to catch her at all – she’s only in London for a two-day turnaround, having just landed from Naples, where she’s been busy researching Oscar Wilde’s former beachfront abode with Matthew. She

jets off to Singapore tomorrow. “I love travelling and working with artists from other countries,” she tells me. “Every weekend for the last six weeks I’ve been in a different capital city. It really is non-stop, and the irony is, although I do all this travelling – because, if you have a contemporary art gallery now, you have to, the art world’s so big and global – I really am a homebody and I love to be at home in my little world that I’ve made.”

That little world is bursting with colour. The house boasts a truly eclectic interiors style that brings together Rebecca’s many relics from around the globe: her junk shop finds, penchant for the mid-century modern and, of course, one enviable art collection. With one of her three eponymous gallery spaces tucked around the corner on Conway Street, she’s constantly surrounded by art and artists. The pair proudly possess thousands of books, too, and had quite a job – albeit a pleasant one – merging their collection when they first moved in together. “My husband and I are

voracious readers. And I do worry – because the house goes across the mews – in case the weight of the books causes it to collapse.”

The Georgian terrace is very much a spiritual place for Rebecca, its very purchase, I discover, hinging precariously on a chance occurrence. “I found it when there was a comet going over about 15 years ago, and I went and stood out in the mews and I thought to myself, ‘If I see the comet, I’ll get the house.’” I ask Rebecca what else she might look for in a property, passing celestial bodies aside. “Soul,” she replies, without taking a breath.

Every inch brimming with individuality, the five-storey home is a true Aladdin’s cave – from each plate and cup, handmade by the late Hampstead potter Ann Stokes, to the museum piece made up of woven Japanese fishing nets, to the French 1950s writing desk... “Everything in the house makes me happy,” Rebecca enthuses. “And everything I look at has a story.” (rebeccahossack.com)

REBECCA BARKER

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Clockwise from top left: Rebecca's Aboriginal morning star pole, Orkney chair and prized wool rug, which reminds her of a

Rothko; white walls act as a blank canvas for colourful collectibles; pops of colour and mid-century statement pieces give the home a

fresh feel; relics brought back from Rebecca's travels. **Opposite page:** the gallerist's enviable art collection. No wall is left unadorned.