on their own.

Mary Ross ▶ Late Sailing

Artist Ken Done

I went to Australia when I was 30. My mother had died and I was a bit depressed, so I took two months out. It was the first big travelling thing I'd done, and it was such an uplifting time. I did things I never thought I'd do – I climbed Ayers Rock, went diving, rafting. It changed my outlook. I decided from then on I had to work to live, not live to work. I liked the Australian attitude. And, for me, Australia meant Ken Done. I had to come back to London, but his artwork, those visual reminders, kept Australia close.

I love bright colours. That's true of the art I collect on the whole. Ken Done typifies Australia with his brightness and beach scenes. When you think of him, you think of the harbour bridge and the opera house. He loves Australia, though he's not recognised as an artist in his own country. I don't think they've got his pictures in the national gallery, but I personally believe he is a brilliant artist. He can do a little drawing in seconds, a few strokes of the pen.

The boat on water, Late Sailing, is a nice blue painting. It wasn't the first one I bought, but I was rather pleased when it showed up in one of his calendars. It's one of his plainer works. The boat's there but it's not detailed. It floats peacefully on the sea. I have beach scenes in the sitting room, including bright prints in yellowy gold with figures on a beach. My niece lives with me and Late Sailing hangs in her room. It'll never go down in price and I don't think it will increase hugely in value, though perhaps in 20 years there may be a change. I didn't buy it as an investment and certainly wouldn't sell it.

I grew up in quite a big house and it was full of paintings reminiscent of Constable. I don't want art like that. I'm a great fan of the Welsh painter Kyffin Williams who worked in dark greens and dark colours with a thick palette stroke, painting stormy Welsh hills. I can admire his work, but I would never buy. It's like Lucian Freud – I wouldn't be able to live with it.

Ken I can live with. I wear his T-shirts. I use his bed linen, his tablecloths. I love it. He is very commercial, but there's nothing wrong with that. Perhaps it appeals more to people who are not in Australia, people who have memories of the place. »