



COLOUR VISION

While her Notting Hill vintage shop looks like a theatrical boudoir, Mary Moore's elegant town house is

'I may be doing a vampire sex film,' announces Mary Moore with characteristic enthusiasm. On closer discussion, it transpires she may be doing the costumes rather than appearing as a sex-crazed vampire. Neither of us is an expert on this film genre, but looking around her Notting Hill shop, with its vintage finds in rich Italian yellows, silvery chevrons, midnight-blue Forties velvet and Pucci prints, it all looks a bit too cheery for vampires.

Still, vintage is nothing if not versatile, and Mary Moore, the only daughter of artist Henry Moore, should know. She has been buying and wearing vintage since her youth, both pre- and

post-art school, when she enjoyed hanging out on America's West Coast, part of a crowd of 'music scene' people.

Since last spring, she had been ensconced in her charming shop, in Notting Hill's Clarendon Cross, near Cath Kidston and other fittingly vintage-inspired emporia. The shop was, in part, a space solution. The owner of 1,000-plus dresses, she basically ran out of room at home.

Then there's the fact that Mary Moore loves having a shop. 'I think of clothes a bit like theatre and so a theatrical setting is an enabler,' she says. 'Vintage is a bit like dressing up. You have to try on characters. We need about an

hour and a half when people come in, so it's fantastic to have a good space.'

Certainly, she's made it work, and it's hard to believe that this theatrical boudoir was ever an estate agent's office. The Fifties English wallpaper, from the famed archive of Cole & Son, must take a big slice of the credit for setting exactly the right tone. 'It was the density of colour and the scale, exactly what I was looking for,' Moore confirms. 'I hate beige shops.'

Luckily, for someone selling off their own clothes, Moore is not remotely possessive about her dresses. 'I often think things will look better on other people than

me, and it's amazing to send a dress out with a whole new life ahead of it. Over the years,' she confirms, 'I've already given away most of the Ossie Clark-type labels I owned.'

In fact, Moore has never been particularly interested in labels. For her it's all about colour and shape, obsessions she can trace back to her first visit to Italy at the age of 12 with her father Henry, and her Russian mother, Irina.

'Compared to what you were seeing

Costume drama: (from left) Mary in her shop - 'I hate beige shops'; her kitchen, showing vintage wine with labels designed by Henry Moore and Warhol; paintings adorn the walls of the dining room and the sitting room



complete antithesis. **Lucy Siegle** meets the daughter of artist Henry Moore. Photographs **Rebecca Duke**

in England at the time, you saw women looking like a million dollars. They actually looked like Gina Lollobrigida. You saw Pucci prints for the first time. English colour palettes have changed thanks to Italian design. If you are looking at designers who changed the world, then Pucci changed how we view colour.' By way of further explanation, she produces a floor-length Pucci-a-like dress from one of the rails.

Not that her father's fashion influence was confined to foreign holidays. She reminds me that he also designed textiles during his career, notably silk prints for the Czechoslovakian design couple, Zika and Lida Ascher,

extraordinary combinations of 'black with yellows that nobody else was doing then'.

Mary's home, just a quarter of a mile away, remains an elegant town house, cool, calm and the complete antithesis of the Clarendon Cross shop. 'I have the ability to do a crazy home,' she says, 'but I don't know if I'd ever pull out the stops that much in a place I live in. Isn't that funny?' Colour is mainly confined to the kitchen, where a gothic Farrow & Ball green, pleasingly called Arsenic, provides a backdrop for shelves containing crockery and a selection of Chateau Mouton Rothschild bottles. The labels were designed by Henry Moore, Warhol

and Cézanne, among others.

There's a Terry Frost hanging in the library, a Peter Blake in the study, but pride of place goes to a Roland Penrose. Moore remembers him and his wife, photographer Lee Miller, from when she was a child. The art is another reason for the simplicity. 'I think because my parents' house had white walls, had art in it, that I attach importance to having a contemplative space which is

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slightly less invasive,' she says of Hoglands, the timber-framed farmhouse where her father lived and worked from 1940 until his death in 1986. In fact, her next project, the thing she dreams of, is 'working with a really fantastic architect and creating a totally minimal, modern house in Dorset'.

For now, though, there's the shop and vintage. 'Really what I would like to do for summer is change the floors, the walls, the whole damned thing. It would be a bit like the Sistine Chapel when I've finished it. I know it would look fantastic'. **OM**

Mary Moore's vintage clothing shop is at 5 Clarendon Cross, London W11 (020 7229 5678)