picture perfect

Tanya Wolfkamp Design Director

Oil paints, watercolours, collage, bleach, printmaking and even house paints are all in a day's work for design director Tanya Wolfkamp.

As part of the team at Codi Design – the commercial offspring of Maurice Kain's in-house textile studio – Tanya uses many different materials and techniques to create new fabric designs for drapes and homeware. And despite all the technical processes involved in generating new textiles, each design starts out as an original artwork created on paper.

"There's really no such thing as a typical day for me, but most days involve drawing, painting and using colour – all the things that I love," says Tanya.

Tanya's job also takes her offshore every year, scouting for new textile trends and inspiration.

"Looking at what is on offer overseas helps with colour and trend forecasting for the local market, but it also provides a sense of our own design personality," she says. "Feminine, floral prints that have a real market in the UK just wouldn't sell here. Part of that is about the size of our market, but it's also because our tastes here tend to run to a more beachy, simple, masculine look."

The Resene The Range Whites and Neutrals is a collection of 300 whites, neutrals and blacks to make creating a tonal scheme easy. View the fandeck and swatches at your Resene ColorShop.

This year, Tanya observed a marked return to saturated colour in international ranges, but she doesn't expect local buyers to follow suit just yet.

"Traditionally, New Zealanders always loved saturated colour, but at the moment we're enjoying our taupes and beiges, and you can see that with popular paint collections like the Resene The Range Whites & Neutrals. Anticipating the change in demand and when it will happen – and coming up with new designs that will appeal to buyers – is a real challenge, but that's part of the fun."

Tanya's daily creative outpouring does have its drawbacks.

"By the time I get home, I've pretty much exhausted my artistic energies, so my own house gets less attention than it might."

Describing her Waiheke Island home as "a real bach", Tanya says the location, combined with the rough-edged planking and her collection of old furniture, all add to the holiday home feel of the house.

"I did have plans to do something about the planking, but now I love that relaxed feel," she says. "I decorate my home in other ways, like with the quirky objects I collect. I have a big Mexican skeleton, with a carved wooden head and leather ribs. He's been a bit damaged in his travels but there's something about him."

Tanya also has a few of her own paintings on the wall, but as her own harshest critic, not many make the cut.

"I've given most of my paintings away or sold them. You tend to paint with a quest to do the perfect painting and, with that as my goal, there's really only a few I feel I could live with."

A newly built weatherboard studio at the back of the house was meant to help Tanya's pursuit for the perfect painting, but work commitments mean it may have to wait a bit longer.

After initially focusing on Maurice Kain, this year Codi Design is opening its design skills to the rest of the market.

"We're not a huge team, but we've got talented artists and we have a range of skills across textile and graphic design and marketing," says Tanya. "No matter how sophisticated the technology gets, the key is still great artistic talent. If you can't draw and you can't use colour, the computer won't fill in the gaps."

Codi Design offers textile design services, graphic design and branding, colour forecasting, colour consultancy, and commissioned art pieces – all of which should give Tanya plenty of scope to indulge her love of painting and colour. H

To contact Tanya, visit the Codi Design website at www.codidesign.com.

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