



Bright colours, strong lines the forte of Kanata designer

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KOURIER-STANDARD

Eighteen months after becoming a victim of the high-tech downturn, Kanata resident Delfina Falcao has a new career right in her own home.

The loss of her job meant Falcao had time on her hands, and she started working on some decorating projects inside her house. Walls received bright, colourful coats of paint. She designed a mural for one bathroom. A couch got a snazzy new cover.

"I wanted to change my house and couldn't find what I wanted," she says, adding that it eventually struck her that she

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• Delfina Falcao

was doing something she loved. "I realized that this could be a business."

Falcao now paints murals or creates them from glass, makes mosaics on glass, mirrors or in carpets, and creates works of art from lampshades by applying paint and glass.

"I love colours, different shapes and the creation – the transformation from one thing to another," she says.

The now full-time artist says she seeks out experimental techniques and materials to create the one-of-a-kind items that will often end up as the focal point of a room. In her basement-turned-studio she has containers of glass and mirror fragments, carpet samples, and tiles she has made herself.

"I really enjoy the research part and the experiments," she says of the search for new ingredients. She fuses pieces of glass and other materials to form the beads, tiles and other bits and pieces that are then

Delfina Falcao in her studio. Falcao has designed a new career for herself, creating one-of-a-kind artworks from glass, mirror, paint and carpet that have caught the eye of Ottawa's interior design community.

attached to mirrors, lamps and windows.

Falcao's early creations caught eye of some members of Ottawa's interior design community, and now when they have contracts to upgrade a client's space, they turn to Falcao to brighten up the project. It might be a glass wall with coloured accents, a made-to-measure area rug, or a special pillow to match an interior design scheme.

Along with some completed works, she has photos of pieces she has sold, including a carpet specially ordered by a husband for a wife who collects items with a mermaid motif.

"It was a challenge because my style is more abstract," Falcao says.

The photos show a colourful mermaid surrounded by fish, seaweed and starfish – each item a separate carpet insert within the larger rug – floating in a blue and white ocean with irregular, wavy edges.

"They say Ottawa is conservative," she says as she seeks a way explain why her work may stand out.

The "do it your own way" bug has bitten Falcao's 18-year-old daughter too, and she started her study of fashion design at a university in Toronto earlier this month.

Before high-tech, Falcao was a professor of industrial design in Britain, and once designed set of surgical instruments. Based on how happy she is with her work today, it's likely the medical profession is on its own.

"I'm really enjoying this time," Falcao says. "There are no meetings, and more freedom to create things my way."

Falcao can be reached at 599-9540.