



showcased on her website (www.andreamaflin.co.uk). Andrea's original take on textile art hasn't stopped there, it's also opened a door into the world of publishing. After creating a range of decorative accessories, she was approached by a publisher to produce a project-based book on the same idea. Since then, she has written four more titles, including her latest volume, *Children's Rooms* (Cico Books, £16.99), which is a wonderful mix of modern ideas, vintage-look designs and retro fabrics. It demonstrates what she does best; transforming a simple space into a magical wonderland.

Bright Ideas

Combining a career as an author with a successful interior design business, one would assume it could be difficult to keep thinking up fresh and innovative ideas. For Andrea, this isn't the case. "I take inspiration from many different sources. If you're naturally a creative individual, everything around you will shape or effect the decision making process in

Queen Of Arts



We caught up with designer, **Andrea Maflin** to find out about her big breaks and crafty mistakes

"Don't be put off by any set-backs, the creative business is competitive so you have to be determined with an enormous amount of self-belief"

It hasn't been the easiest journey for Andrea Maflin. Today, she might be an established designer with four craft titles under her belt, but after failing her O-Levels as a teenager it could have been very different. Diagnosed with Dyslexia at 17, Andrea found herself lacking the qualifications required for the Winchester School of Art, but forged ahead and gained a place on the back of her work alone – later graduating with a BA in Textile Design.

Rising Star

"I believe that because my journey hasn't been an easy one, it's made me more determined to succeed. Even now my fellow students don't know of my struggle to interpret the written word. Despite this, I absolutely loved my training and

revelled in it," she explains. This determined streak has pushed the feisty brunette to the top of the creative industry, but her passion for the craft has a lot to answer for too. "Design is in my blood, I really couldn't imagine any other career," she says. "As a child I was completely absorbed with drawing and painting. I had chronic asthma, which meant that running around with other children was out of the question. My father always believed that my talent would lead me naturally to design – it was one activity that held no limitations. My imagination was, and still is, constantly in overdrive." Andrea has since carved out a distinctive style which is evident in all her work, especially the stunning gallery of interior design projects





some way. When it comes to working with a client, I can be inspired by one of their possessions or even their personality. It's very much an organic process as my aim is to achieve something that utterly suits that person."

Despite enjoying a fruitful career, Andrea readily admits that she still has the occasional crafty disaster, something our readers will no doubt find very reassuring!

"I'm a very impatient person. Although I don't wear a watch, I feel that time is precious. I also can't bear to do anything twice, so having a disaster is particularly painful! I've made many mistakes, but as long as you learn from them, they're not wasted. Besides, what might initially appear to be a mistake can often be the start of a whole new idea so don't give up," she explains.

Anyone who talks to the savvy designer will see just how passionate she is, as Andrea clearly thrives on her work and finds it immensely fulfilling. There have been some real high points for her along the way, including a stint on ITV. "It was my absolute pleasure to be part of a prestigious panel who judged craft projects on This Morning. My fellow judges were my dear friends Frank Whitford and Mark Speight, a supremely multi-talented man who is dearly missed."

Design Diva

There are many crafters reading who will find Andrea's tale one of the most inspiring, and she has some pearls of wisdom for those keen to follow in her footsteps. "Planning is everything. Drawing your design or idea out and researching it thoroughly will help tremendously, no matter what craft appeals to you most. Don't be put off by any set-backs, the creative business is competitive so you have to be determined with an enormous amount of self-belief. Being stubborn to the point of bloody-mindedness also helps!"

So, what's next for the talented designer? Andrea's working on a collection of rugs for children at the moment, and there are some impressive large scale artworks coming up. Aside from that, like she says herself, who knows what the next phone call will bring?



Reader offer

To order your copy of *Children's Rooms By Andrea Maflin* (Cico Books, £16.99) for the special price of £14.99 (including free p&g) call 01256 302699, quoting Y86.

