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style

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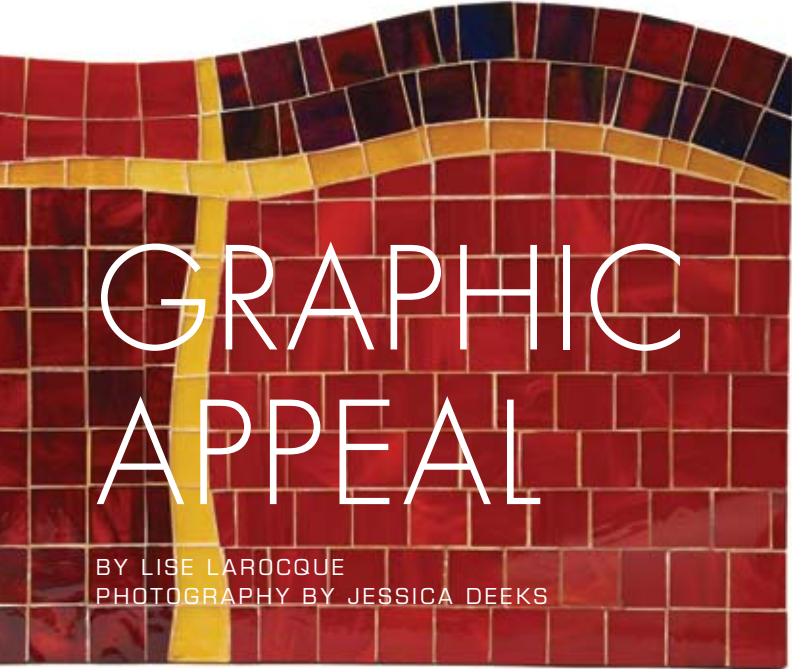
DESIGNER
SECRETS

2 INSPIRING HOMES

BACKYARD
OASIS &

BUNGALOW
MAKEOVER

plus
GETTING TOP DOLLAR
FOR YOUR HOME



GRAPHIC APPEAL

BY LISE LAROCQUE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JESSICA DEEKS



There is a label to describe someone like Delfina Falcao. Artist. It is a label she never would have imagined being affixed to her name years ago.

“I was always creative as a child, but to be an artist wasn’t encouraged,” says Delfina, who grew up during a time when the vocation of “artist” would have been equated with struggle and failure. Today, it is a label she embraces. Not only has she found a way to let her creative juices flow, she has found professional success in doing so.

“People commission me more when they want something different,” she says. “Sculptures, rugs, anything. I give them suggestions or sometimes they ask me for something specific.”

Much of Delfina’s past experience comes into play in her art. She holds a bachelor’s degree in industrial design, a master’s degree in product engineering and a PhD in architecture. For more than 16 years she has worked teaching others the concepts of industrial design. Throughout those years, she has worked on a slew of specialized projects from the creation of ergonomic surgical tools to developing interface design solutions for tele-communication applications.

“The most frustrating thing was realizing a good concept but not seeing it being manufactured,” says Delfina in reference to the surgical tools. “The surgeons loved the product prototypes but the budget wasn’t there for the manufacturing,” she says, recounting her disappointment. Today, the manufacturing of her design concepts literally lies within the palms of her hands. When it comes to creating, she shies away from nothing and strives to make pieces that are not only appealing but also practical and durable. One of her first projects involved the creation of a colourful area rug she still uses in her home. Made from carpet remnants after a basement renovation project, the end result is stylishly stunning. *Continued on page 58*

people



“At the time, I couldn’t find the right colours that I liked,” she says. “So I started dying the carpets, then cut and joined them piece by piece.” She kept creating her unique stylings and eventually presented her portfolio to local designers who not only liked what they saw but had customers in mind for her. Eventually Delfina branched-out to glass, designing jewelry, platters, original backsplashes and large glass murals. “I don’t like repetition, I love unique,” she says. “My challenge is to always create something different.” Her creations have a graphic appeal. Some incorporate touches of the unexpected, including some of her area rugs, which have little inlays of glass tile. “People worry sometimes when they see the glass on the rugs,” she says. “They stop and say ‘oh.’ But I tell them go ahead, it is meant to walk on; it is meant to be durable.”

Delfina is quick to credit her husband for his support of her artistic profession. “He was very good at encouraging me,” says Delfina who

recounts the day she had cut a hole in the kitchen drywall to house one of her decorative glass panels. “I called him at work and asked, do you mind if I cut the wall to do something there? He said, ‘No, go ahead,’” she laughs. “I did all sorts of things imaginable.”

Delfina’s imagination is mostly set free inside her home studio. To a visiting eye the workshop appears to be a hub of frenzied activity. She is surrounded by a wide assortment of materials in various colours and textures, some neatly placed, others strewn across the work table like the ingredients for a well thought out stew. She says she is often at odds with herself, one moment craving organization and the next succumbing to a fury of creativity. Letting herself relax and create isn’t something that came easily to her. “At first, I felt guilty,” she says. “It felt like, I’m not working, I’m playing,” she smiles. “But this is not just playing, this is my profession.” Indeed, the label has stuck. **OH**

