

Marilyn Rose Creates the

By Dagmar Fors Karppi

Interior Designer Marilyn Rose is a "user friendly" decorator. She is a fascinating multi-dimensional woman with lots of interests and a reserve of information that makes her perfect for her job of interacting with design clients. Her goal is to create the interior space you want, sparked with her resources.

The words "user friendly" is also a nod to the world of the Internet, which she uses to full advantage. Her Internet site MarilynRose.com shows pictures of recent design projects that illustrate that she works with her clients to give them what they want: their vision using her expertise in finding the "right stuff."

The important thing, she said, is to reflect that client. "I don't work in a vacuum. Even if they think they don't know what they want. Each job is a reflection of the client."

She often asks clients to look through magazines and tear out what they like. "I put the items together and I see what they are gravitating toward. I don't go out and just purchase things. A lot of preliminary work goes into it," she said.

The only theme running through her work is an attention to detail and elegance. "Even if it is a Tuscan Villa it can be elegant," said Marilyn. "Each design project is different. It is not just another string on my bow. The results come from listening to the client."

One of her clients in search of comfort sat in each chair and laid on each couch they were looking at to be sure they were comfortable. "In



Home Her Clients Desire



that house every room has a large TV set," so there was reason to test the furniture that way, she explained.

Marilyn Rose has done all manner of jobs – big is no problem, nor is small. She is willing to work on just one room, as long as there is a realistic budget. But remember, as a decorator, she has access to the wholesale market so your money will go further and bring you great quality. That is something she wants to provide, a finished project of quality. She has been working with a client over a period of six or seven years. "They are doing the house step by step, room by room," getting just what they want.

Interestingly she said if there was a choice between which room to spend the least amount of money on between the living room and the family room the one to choose is the latter, the living room she called an occasional room. It is not where the family lives.

Working Relationships

One of the lynchpins of Marilyn Rose's business is that she achieves quality through her great working relationships with her suppliers and craftspeople that guarantees that she and they stand behind the work. As she said recently chatting with Angela

Kitchen: The perfect setting for any gathering. The soft honey cabinets along with the custom tile mural of the New York Skyline create a warm and inviting atmosphere. The window treatments add just the right touch of color to make this kitchen a place for a family to enjoy.



Living Room: Glamorous living room with faux finished walls. This area rug was custom designed to enhance the overall pastels of the room.

Anton in her Locust Valley store, "Quality is what is important and in the long run the most economical way to go."

The shop on Birch Hill Road at the crossroads of Locust Valley is an extension of her design work. It houses her accessory business and is filled with the objects that are the finishing touches on a design project. She has often helped clients finish off a room done by another designer. The store is filled with eye candy. "I let people live [for a few days] with the accessories to see if they are right

for them," she explained.

Sitting in her cozy Locust Valley store, Marilyn's Yorkshire terrier Annabelle greeted us. "People often ask how I pick fabrics. I jokingly say, 'I throw them on the floor and when Annabelle sits on them - that is what I choose!'" [But remember the fabrics she has assembled are already a choice group equal in desirability for the project at hand.]

"You like animals," says Angela Susan Anton, seeing horse paintings on the walls. "Bring me the pictures of my baby," says Marilyn. [We think for a

moment that her Yorkie has had a litter. Wrong!] Her assistant Carol comes up with several choices: a sheaf of material from the Internet from the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust where Marilyn is picking out a baby elephant to "adopt" and a picture of her 8-month-old granddaughter, Coco Francesca Rose Coates at two weeks old, the baby of her daughter Marlene, a glass sculptor. "I've always wanted to be a veterinarian," said Marilyn, proving that she brings a great many interests to her job.

FYI: The baby elephants are orphans. The DSWT nurtures them and works to form a new "herd" for them, to release at a preserve and to ultimately live wild. Adopting an orphaned elephant costs \$50 a year in American dollars. "Someday I'll go there and see their work," added Marilyn.

That is ultra possible since Marilyn Rose already travels to Europe on buying trips to auctions, vendors and antique markets, as seen on her website.

"I have price points all over the place, just as clients have different budgets. I buy from vendors I have used over the years and can depend on the quality they provide." They



Bathroom: What better place than to end your day in this beautifully appointed bathroom to relax and let the bubbles take your troubles away!



Cocktail Room: An inviting area as an adjunct to a living room that is the perfect place to sit and relax and enjoy a cocktail. The carpeting was custom designed for the space as well as the furnishings.

appreciate her business she explained and they make sure she gets the quality she expects.

Marilyn Rose doesn't walk away from problems when they do happen. "I go to the mat to make sure the client gets what they want. We track everything we do for each client to make it happen. I have a nucleus of people I work with and cherish because they care. They show up!"

She said, "In today's world it is definitely more than just choosing a piece of furniture. It is successfully completing the job to the client's satisfaction which becomes more and more difficult in today's world. Therefore it is necessary to have a good nucleus of tradespeople with the same point of view."

Exactly on target, the door to the boutique opened and a man walked in, her wallpaper hanger, Steve. He was on his way to work on a card room she is decorating for a showcase at Caumsett that opens on April 21. "I chose to do a study that has a contemporary look, which might be a surprise to some people. They are used to seeing my more traditional look. Sometimes they think of me as only doing antiques and traditional projects.

She said she looks forward to becoming friends with her clients and added that what's important is that the decorator and client are a good match with mutual

respect: a good meld of personalities.

Marilyn herself worked as a commercial artist and then went back to school to study interior design. Her knowledge of art and art history made the change of focus easy. She said, "This is my passion. That is very special when someone works at their passion."

Angela Anton asked what she hopes for her clients.

"My hope for my clients, is that even if they are not sure of what their dream is, ultimately they come home to a completed project which is what they had hoped for and love it. I try to do all the work with their input so that the client can ultimately relax knowing a professional is helping them. If they chose to, they go to the showrooms, but I try to narrow down the confusion by picking the right vendors. In the end we make friends and that transcends the job and you leave with a good feeling."

She wants for her clients what she herself cherishes. "When I go home to my house - to me it's my retreat, my sanctuary, my place to recover from life during the day. I want it to be warm and inviting. Even in a showhouse, people say of my work, 'It's warm and inviting.' There is not a mental velvet rope across it. That is what I want to create."