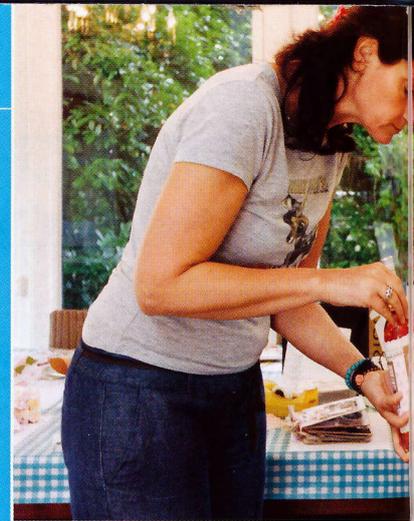


"I love inspiring people"

Next year, 2014, will be a special year for Marianne Design as it celebrates its 20th anniversary. Stéphanie de Geus caught up with Marianne Perlot



Marianne and stylist Arda getting projects ready to be photographed for a new book set for release next year



The team behind Marianne Design

As 2014 draws near, Marianne Perlot, the woman behind the Dutch company Marianne Design, is getting ready to celebrate a very special year. "It's been 25 years since I published my first book and 20 years since I started Marianne Design. Not only that, our magazine, *Marianne Doe Magazine*, is also celebrating its fifth anniversary, so 2014 is going to be a celebratory year. We have a lot of celebration treats for our customers. We also have demonstration boxes that we can send to the Dutch stores containing bunting and balloons to add to the festive mood."

The past 25 years have been a creative rollercoaster for Marianne as she's worked with every creative craft under the sun. "And I still look forward to Monday mornings!" she laughs. "I love having a day job that involves my hobby

and I love inspiring people. If you're in this business, you have to love what you do. I always say to my designers that they have to demonstrate what they love, because they're essentially educating people about their hobby."

Dolls, fabric and felt

For Marianne, who was working as a lawyer 20 years ago, it all started with dolls made from fabric and wire. "At my children's school they were organising a fair to help a school in India. So I made

dolls from fabric and wire for them to sell. One of the teachers loved it and said I should do something with it. So I sent them to a publishing house asking if they were interested. I didn't hear back from them for over a year, but eventually they came back and said they wanted to work together – the book initially sold 150,000 copies! They came back to me asking if I could make more books, and I did! Overall, the 83 books I've written over the years have sold over a million copies."

Marianne didn't stay with the dolls, she tried every craft she could think of and has countless books to her name. "At the time there was no internet – people got their ideas mostly from books and magazines. I even made an entire book containing just stencils. There was just nothing like that on the market. People used to take it to stores to copy and enlarge the stencils they wanted to use. Nowadays, people just print them off from the internet. So much has changed! 20 years ago ideas would just stay within the Netherlands, but now with the internet it spreads across the entire world in a matter of minutes."

"As I started to write more books I came across a problem. Publishers wanted to have the cover done six months in advance, while using the newest products. Nobody worked that far ahead nor was willing to do so. That's when I started to design and develop my own products. I launched Marianne Design in 1994."



Where all the planning and meetings take place



Marianne is closely involved in the process of developing the products and photography of her books and magazines

The dies and collection used for this feature is an exclusive sneak peek for *Simply Cards & Papercraft* readers. The collection will be on sale from January 2014 onwards

Dies and trends

“For years the Netherlands has been a trendsetter on the craft market. A lot of American companies would look to our country to see what the ‘crazy Dutch’ were up to. A few times over the years, I’ve been at a big American show and saw my idea in one of the booths. It is a shame that ideas get copied like that, but I’ve always been a trendsetter and not a follower. In the beginning that was mostly done with techniques, now it’s more a matter of getting people to think creatively and what products they can combine together.”

When Marianne started Marianne Design she began essentially with designing découpage sheets and toppers, as the market grew and changed they added stamps, embossing stencils and piercing templates to the range. Dies came much later. “We’ve seen the trend moving away from découpage and more towards stamping and colouring. Even though it’s a

Marianne’s new book, which is part of a new series set to be released at the end of 2013, is called *Wintertijd* (winter time) and is full of inspiring projects for winter crafting. It’s full of cards, off-the-page projects to decorate your house or to give as gifts and everything involves papercrafting! The book is written in Dutch, but it comes with stunning photos step-by-step instructions and templates.

Wintertijd is the first book in the series Marianne’s Favourites. The second book, *Feest!* (Party time!) will be released in March and the third book will be *Inspired by Christmas*.

Wintertijd is available from www.craftsulove.co.uk at £14.99.*

*Price was correct at the time of print



different technique, you essentially need an image for this. So it was an easy step for us to start including stamps in our range.”

“Die-cutting took a lot longer. Initially we made embossing stencils where you had to emboss everything by hand, but who has time for that nowadays? So we went back to the drawing board and looked into this, and that’s how we started our die range.”

Something that’s really important for Marianne, besides coming up with the new ranges, is combining it with the tools already available. “We love showing ways to combine older dies with our newer ones.

Sometimes it’s the combination that inspires a whole range of ideas that never crossed our mind. Sometimes, even up to two years after its release, we see people using our dies in ways we never even thought of! And that’s half the fun for me, I just love it and it inspires me even more. We really love to encourage people to do this.”

“Because of all this, I still

have ideas to spare! I’m always inspired and ideas are always brewing in my head. And as long as I love what I’m doing and I’m still looking forward to Mondays, I’m going to keep going for a while.” ○

Turn the page to see card inspiration! Go to their website www.mariannedesign.nl



Marianne Perlot



A table full of projects that arrive in the office on a regular basis for our mailings and publications