

Linda Aldridge

Designing the Face of Marathon



by Kelly Kitchel

If you have met Marathon's new exterior paint designer, you would certainly remember Linda Aldridge. Her personality is as kind and funny as her laugh, and her excitement for life expresses itself in the beautiful designs she creates.

Linda has had a passion for art since she was a child. She grew up in Klamath Falls, Oregon with her parents, brother, and sister. She began artistically expressing herself as a sculptress and was drawn to the incredible work created in Portland and exhibits at the Portland Art Museum. Linda attended Pacific Northwest College of Art in Portland and moved to Los Angeles to work in a photography lab. She has also worked as a production manager in an advertising agency. It was her close relationship to her family, though, that drew her back to Oregon.

Linda's parents moved to the United States from England with very little money or educa-

tion. "My parents have done remarkable things in their lives. My father is an amazing man who taught himself much of what he knows—he worked very hard to support us. My parents have shown me that you can achieve great things if you work hard."

Linda's first design position in Eugene was not with Marathon; however, her sights never wavered from the company. "I watched the incredible work Marathon produced and I knew it was the best of the best. I wanted to be a part of that so I pursued it with everything I had. And 13 years later, here I am!" In her 14 years of experience, Linda has designed the exteriors of more than 500 Prevosts.

In her free time Linda likes to experience the outdoors. Last year she bought a pontoon fishing boat and more recently has become interested in kayaking. "I like discovering new activities that are both fun and healthy," she said. Linda also cherishes her close friends and spends much of her free time with them. "My family and friends inspire me and drive me in all that I do."

Linda's artwork takes its cue from many different inspirations. Her favorite and most influential artists include Michelangelo, Salvador Dali, and Georgia O'Keefe. "I really admire the lifestyle of artists," she said. "I dream of retiring and living like Georgia O'Keefe: painting and sculpting in my own desert studio." Linda is also a magazine junky and loves to watch trends in every industry. "Marathon has taught me to look at everything differently; there is art everywhere in life. I love to sneak off to 7-Eleven and flip through magazines. Trends from every industry and market flow onto others, and they constantly give me new design ideas."

A recently completed project of Linda's is coach #1082, the "Echo." This coach features a unique, dual exterior design with mirroring



Coach #1091

Coach #1077



schemes on each side. "It started as just a fun idea, but the people at Marathon allowed the design to evolve into something real and amazing. I am constantly inspired and motivated by the people who surround me at Marathon."

Linda's exquisite work and personality are not easily missed by her clients. Coach owner Lowell Milton and his vivacious wife Sharon thoroughly enjoyed going through the exterior design process with Linda. "She has a real gift, and she's easy to work with," said Lowell. "When the three of us designed our current bus, we would give her just a little idea, and she would make it shine in a matter of minutes. Linda is a pleasant person who's loaded with talent. We're so glad that she is with the company."

Linda is constantly looking for new ideas and setting goals. She loves the contemporary cre-

ative atmosphere at Marathon and the freedom she is given to follow through with her ideas. "One goal I have is to work more closely with our interior designers to integrate the exterior coach designs with the interior. I don't necessarily want to match exact colors or patterns, but I want to translate the feel of the interior onto the exterior."

Linda enjoys the entire process of design and production at Marathon and particularly likes the focus on client satisfaction. "We wouldn't be doing this without our clients. We are here to produce something they love." Linda's greatest enjoyment and inspiration comes from working with clients. "There is nothing more fun than creating a design with a client, and seeing that design through to the end. I love showing clients the finished work—what we created together—and seeing them as happy as I am." •