

'We want to seduce you...'

The petite lady from Brazil with those striking green eyes is bubbling over with energy. And her eyes just sparkle when she talks about her job. Andrea da Silva is Manager Design with Mitsubishi Motors R&D Europe, Colour & Trim, in Trebur, Germany. Together with her team, she is responsible for many things that make driving a car an experience for all the senses.

You have been working as a designer with Mitsubishi for more than eight years now – and you seem to just love your job.

"In parallel to our exterior and interior designer colleagues developing the structures of a new car model, we at Colour & Trim are looking at the choice of colours and materials – everything you see, touch and smell. Our job is to create an ambience that engages your senses. That's exciting. After all, we have to seduce people..."

In an earlier stage of your career, you were a successful designer of children's clothes. And now you're working for one of the world's most prominent car manufacturers. How did that come about?

"I studied fashion design and enjoyed working in the industry. The reason I started working for Mitsubishi is simple: I loved the challenge. The automotive world is multi-layered and very demanding. Working in the car business means entering a world of complex processes – and that's right up my street. We are an international team and all of us get on extremely well. We enjoy a lot of freedom. We can live our creativity. Yes, it's just great working here."

There must be many things to consider when working on interior design. Does the environment figure in that?

"Of course! That goes for the

design of products, their interior and also for marketing. Just look at the i MiEV. In this city car, Mitsubishi is planning to use recyclable green plastic – a great step in the right direction."

Where do you get your inspiration?

"Ideas really grow everywhere. Our society develops fast. For us, it's important to keep pace, to know and understand the lifestyle of our customers and design emotional qualities that attract people who buy Mitsubishi cars."

And, I guess, spirited Latin music while you're working?

"Absolutely! I adore Brazilian music – Bossa Nova, the modern Música popular Brasileira... It makes you understand how my people tick. But I also love strong female voices like those of Cassandra Wilson or Aretha Franklin."

Sounds good, but there must be challenges from time to time...

"Sure. When we start on a new project, it can be rather demanding for all involved to combine areas like technical processes, design and safety – and then fine-tune them to achieve a fitting ensemble. After all, cars must have a sensual quality. They have to appeal to all aspects of human nature. Emotions, colours, scent – a car just has to be enticing for all senses." ■

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