

**NEWS RELEASE**

**BEATING THE COMPUTER ... WITH A PENCIL**

Multi-million computer software tools are beginning to lose out ... to a humble lead pencil.

For when it comes to designing interiors, people are starting to prefer traditional hand drawn artists' impressions to photo realistic computer generated impressions.

"Computer artwork has become so good, nowadays, that it's hard to tell a CGI from the real thing," says interior designer Andy McCluskey. "But the pendulum is swinging back and more clients these days, are asking for old-school hand drawn visuals.

"CGIs have their place, of course, but there's no doubt that a hand drawn illustration is far more personal and has more creative spontaneity - something not possible on a computer.

"I've even seen my illustrations end up framed and hanging on clients' office and living room walls.

"It's like going back to the way things used to be done years ago."

The resurgence comes after CAD software – computer aided design – started to grab the design market in the 80's and 90's and swung away from hand drawings. Since then, CGI - computer generated imagery – has improved the technique in the last decade to such a realistic level that future projects can be shown as if they already exist.

But, along the way, it also got a little impersonal and lacking passion, says Andy McCluskey.

"Hand drawn sketch visuals will always offer a more personal creative and less sterile feel that allows clients to view them as art and, hence, hang them on walls," says the director of Darwen-based APM Design who was taught to draw by iconic Salford artist Harold Riley.

For two years Andy was in a selected group of schoolchildren who learned art from the acclaimed portrait painter and onetime pal of LS Lowry.

"He taught us several disciplines from landscape painting to sketching animals - anything that inspired him," says Andy, "and in the long run that can't have done any harm to the illustration skills I was developing."

Andy went on to study interior design at Salford University and his APM Design business now celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary later this year.

The business has delivered a range of design contracts from bars, restaurants, hotels, health spas, colleges and retail outlets to luxury hospitality suites for football stadia and high end residential projects in the UK and abroad.

"Designing something from concept to completion is one thing," he says, "but then seeing the original artist's impressions hung on a wall as a piece of art, gives a genuine sense of value.

"That's real icing on the cake for me."