

On The Surface

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FROM WHERE I STAND



WHAT INSPIRES YOU?
SURTEX VP Penny Sikalis

By Penny Sikalis, SURTEX Vice President

Artists and designers: here's a question I'll bet you're often asked:

"Where do you get your inspiration?"

Where, indeed? Ask *me*, and I have a ready answer: *from the weather!* Seeing green after so many long months of brown (and white) has shifted my imagination into high gear. Spring has given me a totally fresh outlook. It's inspired me to get out my summer clothes -- and sandals. No more socks and boots! It's time to liberate my feet!

It's also SURTEX time! Talk about inspiration! I can just imagine how it feels for artists and designers, coming out of your studios after a winter of close, hard, focused work into the lights, action, and energy of a multi-faceted trade event! Into the fun and fellowship of other artists, designers, customers and key players in the business of surface design.

The professional networking alone is well-worth the trip to the west side of Manhattan. Face-to-face beats Facebook all hollow, as well as waiting for folks to visit you. Plan to take full advantage of all the creativity under one roof as well as all the networking opportunities we've built into the SURTEX schedule. Join the discussions at the Conference Program. Meet the experts who will be laying out the latest news in the Trend Theatre everyday. Join the merry-makers on board Sunday night's yacht cruise through the New York harbor. Exhibitors, raise a glass of wine with your fellow exhibitors at Happy Hour on Monday evening.

Then there's the mother lode of inspiration, *New York City itself*. Come early, stay later or just go out (if you're a city slicker like me): see the City and let it fire your imagination, as it's so famously inspired all manner of creatives' down through the years. Mine the museums-- there are 2,000 art, history, science and children's museums, historic houses, zoos, and botanical gardens in New York. Be inspired by Broadway, the Opera, the ballet, by restaurants, and the astonishing shopping....

Finally, there's my personal favorite form of entertainment: the City's street scene. It's fun, informative, and yours, free for the watching. The new ideas you'll take home are the best New York souvenirs of all.

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EXCITEMENT IN THE AISLES

Debra Valencia, Malibu, CA: Lifestyle designer Debra Valencia and her U.S. licensing agent, The Brand Liaison, are expanding the Debra Valencia lifestyle brand to include home décor collections, as well as women's apparel and personal accessories. Already her decorative patterns are licensed by more than two dozen manufacturers for products in stationery, fabrics, cosmetics, bath/body products and select home accents and personal accessories.

Known as a fashion-forward woman with a passion for world travel, artisan traditions and popular genres, Debra is celebrated for her inherent understanding of women's lifestyles. She is also authoring two sewing books for the DIY crafter, to be published by Fox Chapel Publishing in 2015. Featuring her patterns, each project is designed to make a fashion statement, combining three or more fabrics, and offering clear, step-by-step instructions and pattern diagrams.



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