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Licensing
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La Vida Licensing

By Barbara White-Sax

Award-winning designer Debra Valencia has signed a new agreement with Design Design for four boxed sets of stationery. Valencia, who specializes in bold, modern design, trained as a graphic designer and has 15 years of experience creating distinctive branding, packaging and product design for globally recognized companies in a variety of industries, including Esprit Bed and Bath, Playskool, Disney, Universal Studios and MGM Grand Hotels.

Valencia founded her own contemporary stationery company, Vida Valencia, in 2006. "After working on product design for so many years, I was inspired to start my own product line," she says. "The company won industry praise, and Valencia was featured on the cover of *Greetings* magazine. In 2008, Valencia licensed the whole company to Quadringa Art and continues to



work on the line on a licensed basis. Quadringa Art now produces more than 300 products under the Vida Valencia line, including gift bags, home office, general stationery, blank journals, sticky notes and gift card packaging.

"Once the excitement of starting the company was over, I wanted to move away from the sales part of the business and go on creating things," she says. Valencia has since focused on widening her licensing opportunities, adding licenses in non-competitive businesses and

extending her exposure in the market.

She is excited about her recent deal with Design Design. "Design Design's creative directors, Tom Vituj and Susan Birnbaum, are my dream team to work with," she says. "I look up to them as tastemakers in greeting cards, stationery and partyware. Together, they have impeccable taste and trend insight, and the company's contemporary line is a perfect fit with my design style."

Valencia also is working with American Stationery on a line of 200-plus personalized stationery products.

Most recently, Valencia signed an agreement with David Textiles for a line of more than 40 designs of fabric by the yard. "I'm very pleased to be affiliated with David Textiles, a company that works with NASCAR and Thomas Kinkade," she says. "Each design will print a minimum of 3,000 yards and will be available in stores in 2010. I'll be able to make clothes out of my own patterns."

This year, Valencia will be working on adding licenses for partyware, ceramics, tableware, rugs, coasters, picture frames, wedding invitations, gift wrap, greeting cards, scrapbook and embroidery. "I'm very interested in tabletop, picture frames, mugs, pillows and textiles—products that would allow me to create a coordinated home décor collection," she says.

With new licenses signed on and a new Web site under construction, Valencia is poised to bring her fresh, contemporary designs to a wider audience. ©

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