

MATCH MAKERS

When Florence Broadhurst met Kate Spade, the result was a fairytale collaboration.



IT WAS KISMET, really. When an email from the team at New York fashion label Kate Spade landed in Helen Lennie's inbox in Sydney, mooted the idea of a collaboration between the label and Lennie's company Signature Prints – the custodians of the distinctive designs of Florence Broadhurst – she was, in fact, decked out in Kate Spade.

“I was sitting at my desk wearing my Kate Spade – because I love Kate Spade – and I read the email and I ran from one end of our print studio to the other to find David [Lennie, husband and business partner], just screaming with excitement.”

Led by Deborah Lloyd, president and chief creative officer of Kate Spade (who first discovered Florence Broadhurst after seeing Helen O'Neill's definitive biography on Broadhurst's extraordinary life and death “on a coffee table across a crowded room”), the creative team thought that Broadhurst's striking prints alongside Kate Spade's renowned use of colour would be a match made in design heaven.

“I loved the aesthetic of the prints,” enthuses Lloyd. “Florence Broadhurst described her range as vibrant prints for modern living, and we think a Kate Spade girl is very modern, she's very eclectic, she's interested,” says Lloyd, who's since wallpapered her own kitchen, covered her cushions, and renovated her bathroom in Broadhurst prints. She says the experience of working alongside the team at Signature Prints has been exhilarating. >



Helen and David Lennie of Signature Prints with Kate Spade president Deborah Lloyd, **centre**, at the New York launch. Items for the tabletop, **top**, in 'Japanese Floral', one of the 12 exclusive prints used in the Kate Spade collection. **Right**: A silk scarf in the 'Octagonal' design sports the Kate Spade label's exuberant palette.





Lennie and Lloyd, **above**, leaf through Broadhurst patterns at the Signature Prints showroom in Sydney. A Kate Spade dress, **left**, in the 'Floral 300' print from the launch collection presented in New York, on sale in February in the US. Among the collection are accessories, including an enamel bangle, a clutch bag and shoes, **left**.



< “They’re just fun, crazy people, and their aesthetic really matched with ours,” says Lloyd. “This has been a wonderful collaboration and they’ve allowed us to do a lot of fun things.”

Indeed, Signature Prints gave Kate Spade exclusive use of 12 prints, which will be used across all categories, from apparel, soft accessories (such as scarves and tights), shoes, eyewear, bedding, tabletop (vases, serving platters, and five-piece place settings), luggage, handbags, small leather goods (wallets, coin purses, stationery), tech accessories (iPod and iPad cases), and even a Vespa motorcycle.

When we meet, the Lennies have travelled to New York to witness the launch of the range for themselves. It’s a lavish affair, held in a vast Chelsea gallery. Seeing the collaboration come to fruition is “a fairytale”; both have shed a few tears.

“We just felt in very safe hands with Deborah and the creative team,” says Helen. “Kate Spade has done everything that we’re unable to realise, and one of the things we’re passionate about is that Broadhurst be exposed to a bigger environment than just ‘Helen and David Lennie’s world of wallpapers and fabrics’.”

The range, which goes on sale in the US in February (there’s currently no date set for an Australian launch), will be carried throughout the year and, aside from the range on shelves, each and every Kate Spade store around the world will feature Broadhurst prints – on walls, rugs and furniture.

“When you play with Florence, the most amazing things happen. Everything starts very small and it grows. And this started as a very small, simple project and look at it today,” muses David Lennie, looking around. “Tonight, there are people wearing it, standing on it and eating off it. It’s just amazing. It’s overwhelming for us, and you wonder what Florence would be thinking right now... I’m sure she’d be thrilled. We certainly are.”

TIFFANY BAKKER

PHOTOGRAPHER: GARY HEERY PRODUCERS: ALEXANDRA GORDON FIONA MCCARTHY TEXT: TIFFANY BAKKER