



Each Jacqui Chazen Designs ribbon watch is an original, like these Pucci-inspired prints.



Jacqui Chazen

'In' Time

Jacqui Chazen's watches have hit the big time.

BY LYNNE KONSTANTIN

Inspired one day last year by a favorite Hermes silk Twilly scarf, Jacqui Chazen threaded it through the loops of a watchface she purchased in Italy, wrapped it around her wrist and went on her way.

Although many passersby on the streets of Beverly Hills, Calif., admired Chazen's creation, it wasn't until the celebrity- and music-publicist wore it to a Dave Matthews concert that a fellow concert-goer really got to her.

"He said, 'If you don't start a business with that in the next 28 days, then I will,'" Chazen explains. "I was challenged."

Her parents bought her a sewing machine; she learned how to use it, and the Bloomfield Hills native and Congregation Shaarey Zedek Hebrew High School graduate began making use of her high-profile contacts to shop her colorful, whimsical, yet practical confections to the likes of Dreamworks and the William Morris Agency.

At the same time, a similarly styled ribbon watch made by Movado was featured as one of Oprah Winfrey's "Favorite Things" segments, a boon to Chazen's pieces, which are a fraction of the price.

Now, less than a year later, Chazen has opened her own company, Jacqui Chazen Designs, which includes doggie clothes, computer bags and lingerie bags. She is about to intro-



duce her fall line of leather and silk watches and has just sealed a deal with T.J. Maxx.

She also has the admiration (proven on their wrists) of Hollywood A-listers such as Jessica Simpson (who has four of Chazen's watches), Eva Mendes, Marcia Gross and Mike Myers, who was so overwhelmed by the luscious choices at the 2005 People's Choice Awards in L.A. that he began snapping pictures with his cell-phone camera to send to his wife so she could choose for herself.

Chazen is a bit in awe of the company's success, but she takes it in stride. "I didn't re-invent the wheel," she says. "I just made it cuter."

For the spirited Chazen, though, it's also about a fresh start. After the loss of her father and a sister and suffering an illness at an early age, which required her to relearn how to walk just months before her bat

mitzvah, Chazen feels extremely fortunate to have had "things turn around the way they have."

"I feel really lucky," she said. "This has renewed my life. And I feel like my father and sister are behind it all."

Today, Chazen's mom, stepfather and their "Brady Bunch family," she says, are extremely supportive. "They spend hours playing with the watches, changing bands and changing faces. Of course, they get the family discount." □

For information on purchasing ribbon watches and other items by Jacqui Chazen Designs, visit her Web site, www.jacquichazendesigns.com.



Chazen's computer bags are 100 percent silk and can be custom made in three sizes and any color.