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Famed Jewelry Designer Tarina Tarantino Announces "Sparkle Factory" to locate on Broadway

Project features a 3,000 square-foot Los Angeles flagship retail store, complete design and production center for worldwide distribution, an art gallery, and upper floor use

LOS ANGELES (February 1, 2012) – One of the Historic Broadway Theatre District's diamonds in the rough will soon shine again as world renowned jewelry designer Tarina Tarantino brings her talents to Broadway.

Councilmember José Huizar's Bringing Back Broadway initiative welcomes Tarantino's "Sparkle Factory," a multi-use space that will house an innovative retail concept including a TARINA TARANTINO jewelry boutique, design headquarters and production studio. The project, which Tarantino is creating along with her business partner and husband, Alfonso Campos, will activate the long vacant historic L.L. Burns' Western Costume Building at 908 S. Broadway and create 60 full-time jobs.

"Tarina and Alfonso have a great vision for this wonderful historic building, for their company and for the revitalization of Downtown," said Councilmember José Huizar, whose Bringing Back Broadway revitalization initiative recently celebrated the fourth anniversary of its 10-year plan. "This will be yet another example on Broadway of the impact that visionary building owners, investors and entrepreneurs can have on revitalization, and we know even more will follow this example."

TARINA TARANTINO Designs, named for its founder, was established in 1995 and has grown into an international brand with stores in New York, Los Angeles and Milan, with in-store boutiques in Milan, Tokyo and Osaka. In addition, hundreds of stores around the globe sell Tarantino's brand.

The 3,000 square-foot Broadway concept retail boutique will be located on the ground floor of the Sparkle Factory, along the Broadway street front.

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It will offer limited edition for-Broadway-only merchandise, making this flagship location truly unique from its Melrose Avenue, New York City and Milan sister shops.

An art gallery/photo studio will occupy the second floor, where Tarantino will curate art from her favorite, world-renowned artists and work with galleries from outside the area that desire an exhibition venue in Downtown L.A.

Some floors in the upper stories of the building will be occupied by TARINA TARANTINO Designs' marketing and production division, "Fuchsia Revolution." All of the designer's jewelry and handbag collections sold worldwide will now be designed and produced here.

The remaining upper floor spaces of the building will be designed and renovated to provide creative office and flex-space for other firms. Upon completion, the Sparkle Factory project will immediately bring more than 60 permanent full-time jobs to Broadway.

Once fully leased, the building will be able to sustain over 90 additional creative industry jobs.

This portion of Broadway is located at the intersection of the Fashion District and the Historic Core and falls within the boundaries of the L.A. Fashion Business Improvement District. About 40 percent of all Los Angeles County fashion wholesalers are located in L.A.'s Downtown Fashion District, which produces \$4 billion in business revenue annually and supports more than 50,000 jobs. Tarantino has a showcase in the New-Mart Building and L.A. Fashion District Executive Director Kent Smith is thrilled to welcome a greater presence for the company.

"Tarina Tarantino is one of the best examples of fashion and design talent in the City of Los Angeles," said Kent Smith. "Locating the company's worldwide headquarters atop a brand new boutique is a phenomenal vote of confidence for Broadway, and reinforces the LA Fashion District as the place for innovation, creativity and fashion design worldwide."

Tarantino is famous for jewelry featuring sparkling Swarovski Crystal, Lucite, metal and Op-Art color combinations. Tarantino has collaborated with the likes of Paul Mitchell, Hello Kitty (Sanrio), Barbie (Mattel), Wizard of Oz (Warner Bros.) and Kidrobot, amongst others.

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The building's endearingly weathered façade, topped with a relief reminiscent of a tiara seemed to Tarantino the fairy-tale perfect location for this project, a long-time dream. After years of admiring the building for its charm and potential, Tarantino and Campos purchased the property in 2007, but the economic collapse delayed plans until now. Faced with a lack of availability of construction loans from traditional lenders, the designer looked to the Valley Economic Development Center (VEDC) for help and was able to secure a small loan to get the project off the ground – the first of its kind on Broadway.

“Broadway was a critically important commercial center in its day but today it feels somewhat undiscovered by creative industries, so we feel a new era is upon it with Bringing Back Broadway,” said Tarantino. “Broadway will undoubtedly become a destination and showcase for some of the best Los Angeles has to offer and we are glad to be pioneers.”

The 23,800-square-foot, seven-story historic building was built in 1914, designed by Meyer and Holler, the architects responsible for such Los Angeles gems as Grauman's Chinese and Egyptian Theatres. The building originally belonged to L.L. Burns' Western Costume Company, one of the most prominent outfitters for the stage and screen during Hollywood's Golden Age. Ghost images of an early century painted wall sign for the company can still be seen on the back of the building.

With notable Downtown architect and interior designer Karin Liljegen of Omgivning onboard along with project manager Rob McRitchie, designs are nearly final and construction is scheduled to begin in the coming months.

Tarantino hopes to open the boutique and her Sparkle Factory headquarter operations later this summer.

This latest announcement comes on the heels of several others regarding new projects and services coming to Broadway under Councilmember Huizar's Bringing Back Broadway initiative, including the purchase of the United Artists Theatre by Ace Hotel, Ross Department store coming to the historic Woolworth's building and several restaurants and night-life venues announcing new operations on Broadway.

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