

## **Jack Lenor Larsen Oral History Project: Interview with Kay Marquez**

**Stephanie Zollinger:** It's Friday, February 19, 2010, and I'm here with Kay Marquez. Kay, before we talk about your involvement with the Larsen studio, can you give us some background information, such as where you grew up, your interests and then how it evolved into working with Larsen?

**Kay Marquez:** Yes. I had a wonderful eccentric aunt, my Auntie Mame. I always was fascinated by going to her house and seeing all the changes that she would make. There was not one safe wall in her home or one color scheme she didn't change. I was born in Baltimore and my aunt would say to my uncle, "I have to go to New York because you can't get the right peach colored towels here." I was fascinated with what she did. She, of course, loved all the *House Beautiful* magazines. At that point Frank Lloyd Wright's disciple was involved with *House Beautiful* so I very much fell in love with that whole natural texture thing. I decided that I wanted to become an interior designer when I grew up. I studied design and I felt, at that point, I wanted to work with the trade. I went to work for Jack.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** I'm going to interrupt for a second.

**Kay Marquez:** Sure.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Where did you go to school?

**Kay Marquez:** I went to New York School of Interior Design. I had studied merchandising thinking that I would go into the buying end of furniture but I discovered that I really wanted to be at the artistic end of the field so I switched to New York School of Interior Design. When I graduated I worked for a paint and wallpaper company, a very large one, called Janovix. I coordinated paint and wallpaper. I worked with clients. It was great sales experience but I wanted to work with more professional people. I decided to work for a trade showroom. I interviewed for Larsen and, as a student, I remembered they were a kind showroom. As a student you sometimes go to showrooms and they take you to the back door and give you the leftover samples. Larsen was not that kind of firm. They were the firm that, if they could help you get samples for projects

that you were working on so that your projects looked more professional, they were always helpful. I thought, "That's the kind of place I want to be." I started in showroom sales. I took a salary cut to go from retail to a trade showroom but I felt it was worth it. I was hired by a gentleman, Frank Huggins, who told me that people who joined Larsen are either there for a short period of time or they're there for the duration, that you either get it or you don't. I got it, because I hung out for thirty years with Jack.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** That is incredible. So you were there from the '70s?

**Kay Marquez:** I was there, yes. I was there actually from the late '60s. At that time it was wonderful. We were located in The Fine Arts Building on 59th Street. We had wonderful high ceilings. The original building housed Bloomingdale's stables where they used to keep their carriage horses. It was different than a little box showroom. You got that feeling when you walked in there that it was a special place because Jack could do wonderful drops of fabric. We were printing on velvet and that was so exciting at the time. We were producing things that nobody else was doing. We did a floral pattern that, instead of a flower having stems and leaves, was a floating flower. It was called *Midsummer*. It was a different way of looking at design. We also did things that were 10 and 12 silk screens so, instead of having two or three colors, you would have a whole color combination. We were also doing things woven from Swaziland, Africa, and from Colombia. Obviously, I fell in love with what we were doing. A couple of years after I started, Jack got involved with designing carpet. He decided to do Wilton weaves because they were more difficult to copy than some of the other types of carpeting being produced. The minute we came out with the new collection there would be people there trying to copy what we were doing. There aren't that many creative people and, unfortunately, there are other people that copy from the creative people. You always have to try and be ahead of the curve. I got involved with Larsen Carpet because I was probably one of the few people not terrorized by math.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** You could calculate?

**Kay Marquez:** I could calculate. I can look at a floor plan and I actually found math fun. I can look at a floor plan and calculate carpeting. At that point I got more involved with the carpeting as well as the textiles. Then,

as my career progressed, I took on more responsibility and had more opportunities. When I left Larsen, at that point I was Jack's Vice President in New York. It was an absolutely wonderful time. I made the decision to leave when Larsen was sold to an English firm and my heart wasn't quite into that. I decided many of the lines that we were representing up to that point. Some of my team and I might make some changes which we did as a group.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** So you left in the late '90s?

**Kay Marquez:** Yes, that would have been the time frame.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Kay, this is exciting because you were with the company so long you really got to see the evolution of the innovations and the evolution of the processes. Can you talk about some of the exciting things that he did in terms of stretch fabrics and some of the window treatments, such as *Interplay*?

**Kay Marquez:** Well, when I joined the firm, the first collection that I witnessed was a stretch collection. We had wonderful furniture in the showroom designed by Pierre Paulin. You had the butterfly chair and you had other shapes and we had our wonderful fabric stretched over those shapes. It was, from a design point of view, I understand, very difficult to produce stretch fabrics because one thing looks great on paper but, if you change the design and move it fifteen degrees in another direction, it's hard. It's very hard to have a design that you don't know what furniture the workroom is going to put it on, to make sure the design is still attractive in its many different movements. I know that we had bold, graphic kinds of designs in the stretch collection. That was part of it because you had to imagine many different ways that people would use it. It was quite exciting. We would also have wonderful showroom events and parties and they were always very creative. I remember one event that we did for the collection of *Kublai Khan*. We sent out the invitations in fortune cookies. We had two different nights that we were going to do the party. I had a client call me hysterically because they had eaten the date they were supposed to come!

**Stephanie Zollinger:** That is great.

**Kay Marquez:** We checked. We said, "You can come either night, it's fine." Another collection we had a fashion show and we used our textiles to create beautiful hats. We had a wonderful hat maker and we had interesting people from the industry that just loved to be models. It was great fun to see them walk the runway in the showroom. Larsen parties were events, they were fun events, and they were creative events.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Getting back to the stretch fabrics, was the inspiration for the fabrics the furniture that was being developed at that time or was Larsen just ahead of the curve?

**Kay Marquez:** Well, we were always ahead of the curve and what happens with that is, sometimes you're ahead of the curve and everybody catches up and says what geniuses you are. Other times you're ahead of the curve and they don't quite know what to do with you. Jack never wanted to follow. We did not sit down and say, "Well, last year America bought 50,000 gold-tone refrigerators and therefore we should do a collection that reflects that." It was more the feeling of what was coming out of the studio. I think what was happening is that the stretch collection also grew out of the fashion industry. In the fashion field all of a sudden there were these knit fabrics that were being shown. There was new furniture being developed and it would be Jack seeing a need for something. It was never, from what I know, an extremely high-selling collection, but it was a collection that was necessary at the time. One of the problems that occurred is that a lot of America's upholsterers didn't know how to upholster some of the new furniture so people that purchased the furniture quite often had to have it sent back to Europe to have things recovered. It was fun. Also, a lot of wonderful showrooms like Stendig and other people had furniture that required that kind of fabric.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Great.

**Kay Marquez:** Yes. We also used it architecturally. I know in the showroom our ceiling was extremely high and we had a very long fabric that almost looked like sails across the ceiling where you had vertical structures in the ceiling. We had a white fabric that was pulled from one area to another area. It helped without that fake drop-ceiling look to lower our ceiling. It helped absorb sound but it also became a very interesting design element. We, in fact, had a room at one point in the showroom

where fabrics were stretched and it created almost a cocoon atmosphere. You could go into a space with fabric and, without a lot of expense, create new interiors and, architecturally, do very creative spaces. Jack also liked experimenting with lighting.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** So it was almost like his lab or a little studio?

**Kay Marquez:** Yes. He was always pushing the envelope and that's what made it exciting. You always felt you were part of a team of people pushing the envelope. I was not on the Design Studio creative end but I worked with clients with the products that we had.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** What would an average work day be like?

**Kay Marquez:** Well, what made it fun is that every day was different. We would have clients that would have specific needs and you would try and find the right product for them. We were also a very honorable firm. You would try, if someone wanted to use something and you felt it was not an appropriate use of the material, to be very honest with them, especially on some of the new materials that people might not have a lot of experience with. Casements like *Interplay* were in the collection when I joined. In the right space they were absolutely wonderful but you needed to suggest workrooms unofficially that could handle some of these fabrics. Not everybody was used to dealing with a fabric that had that kind of yarn and that kind of heading and so you'd try to guide people with what they were doing and what they were using. I think one of the first groups that really appreciated what Jack was doing were the architects. The architects understood the textures and some of the handwoven fabrics that we were importing. I think in many cases the architects had these wonderful clean spaces but they needed something very tactile to warm it up. They connected with our sort of honest use of materials and, instead of a faux leather, we were actually showing something that had a certain character that they related to. Some of the designers I enjoyed working with the most had very close relationships with architects on projects. The designer and the architect would work together so that the space had a unified look and the architects didn't feel that the designers that used our material were fighting with what they were trying to achieve.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** With your interior design background, I'm sure you played a huge role in helping people understand the appropriate use of some of the materials and fabrics and could understand their perspective?

**Kay Marquez:** What we found is that our clients then, as they are now, are extremely busy people. You would try to help them but not everything is for everybody and every project, so you'd try to give them what they needed in a timely fashion. They respected that and were grateful for that and you built up a certain loyalty that way. Clients that were our clients were our clients forever. They were involved with us for long, long periods of time. When they received different projects they would think of us.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Did you spend most of your time down in the showroom or did you eventually work in the Design Studio?

**Kay Marquez:** I spent the majority of my time in the showroom. I would occasionally be asked to go to the Larsen Design Studio because some things were being considered. Since the sales team was on the front line finding out what the clients' needs were, we were sometimes asked, as certain things were being developed, for our opinion. I was also fortunate enough that I sat in on one occasion with Jack and Stanley Marcus and a number of other Larsen employees. We were talking in a pricing session, you have this product, other people have things somewhat similar but not exactly the same, how do you present it so that you are being honest but you are also competitive and are able to maintain a business.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Right. And I think Larsen, and maybe you can correct me on this, was one of the first designers to license his name?

**Kay Marquez:** Yes, probably one of the first. Also I remember, shortly after I had joined the staff, Jack was honored by the Louvre Museum. He was the first living American to be honored by the Louvre Museum. I thought, wonderful, I want to go to France. I was new on board so I got to hold down the fort, but I know that that was a wonderful trip. I think later he was able to work with Dale Chihuly in connection with helping him be recognized by the Louvre Museum.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Larsen was quite the promoter.

**Kay Marquez:** Yes.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Not only was he fabulous and a genius with his weaving but I've come to learn and admire him also as a promoter. He was very strong in promoting his name and getting his logo recognized. Branding, I think, is what you'd call it today.

**Kay Marquez:** Well, he was someone that fortunately not only had the talent to produce what he produced but he was smart in knowing how to get himself recognized. I remember when I first joined the firm we had scrapbooks. We had things that had been put together that were PR items. I think one of the things that impressed me so much is he had produced a collection in South America. In that collection we had a limited budget, we weren't a big firm, we did not come from money, and we did not have extremely wealthy backers, but what Jack had managed to do! I said, "How come we, as a little firm, get so much great PR? We're in this magazine and that?" And they explained to me, the marketing person at the time, Crosby Smith, "Well, Jack took the lady editors from these magazines to South America and he would stand on the side of a mountain and he would unroll the fabric, *Tihuanaco*." Well, of course, everybody's taking pictures and then he would go somewhere else. It was his showmanship as well as his talent because they're looking to have something exciting to write about. They get all kinds of things that come into their offices and, at that time, the market was fairly small, and probably still is, but there were a lot of older lady editors. Jack charmed them and he got incredible PR. When you think in terms of the cost of flying these people to South America! No one would have the time anymore but it was just the times. And doing that, how exciting that had to be for them because they were part of it. They became Larsen groupies and they became part of it. When we had an opening in the showroom we would still be stapling everything on the wings as the press was coming through the door and we would say, "Slow them down with the orange juice, we're still working back here," but we would find that they were so eager. They were eager to come and see what we were doing and what we had because we were doing something other people weren't doing. I'm sure their days got very boring.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** The other piece is, Jack really learned how to be theatrical and I'm sure that he had to continually think of ways to keep the press entertained and all those women editors wanting to write about him.

**Kay Marquez:** Yes. I think we also consistently had new collections. There was always something new. I'm sure from the design point of view it was a tremendous burden to have to keep coming up with a good product. When you think about having to continue to keep doing a good collection all the time and to have something new for the press to get excited about. In many cases you still sold your classic items but you always had to have a show-stopper. You would have a collection and in that collection you have what we call the bread-and-butter of the collection. That's the wonderful things like the silks, and some of the printed velvets, and some of the woven fabrics from South America. You had the bread-and-butter fabrics but you also had to have something that people just said, "Wow, look at that!" Then they would bring their friends in and they'd say, "I have to show you this. I haven't yet worked out where I'm going to use it but, oh my God, isn't it beautiful?"

**Stephanie Zollinger:** I know *Magnum* was quite the showstopper.

**Kay Marquez:** Oh, absolutely.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** I understand you kept it in the lines because it was a showstopper but in reality it was not one of your big sellers?

**Kay Marquez:** Not a big seller, no. But *Magnum* used correctly! It was pricey even its day, but it was so special. It wasn't expensive because we were making a big markup on it, it was just there was a lot of yarn and a lot of intense labor. I had a client at that point do a stainless steel four-poster bed and they used *Magnum* as the headboard. I've also seen *Magnum* used as an art piece where it's stretched and it's just simply hanging. Then I got to see it when we installed it in Atlantic City in a high-roller part of a casino. What we did is put *Magnum* on the top of the walls. So your high-rollers weren't necessarily touching or fingering the fabric but they were able to see it and, of course, it had this glitz glamour, "You have arrived", which was absolutely perfect for a high-roller. Then we also used it as a theater curtain.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Yes, at the Phoenix?

**Kay Marquez:** The Phoenix. We had to design a special mechanism because they couldn't fold it but sometimes you design things just



because they have to be. I think there were a few other things in the line that were like that, that just stood out.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Was *Magnum* developed originally for the Phoenix Opera House and then you kept it in the line or was that not the case?

**Kay Marquez:** I'm not sure how that evolved.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** I see.

**Kay Marquez:** I'm not sure if the chicken or the egg came first. I know that we had it in the line for quite some time and that's a case where you needed to work with a client and find a way to use it because they would literally fall in love with it. Then, of course, there were people that used it for pillows with one side of a pillow with it and that kind of thing. I felt that use for a headboard was a wonderful use of the material.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Yes, and is it true that Johnny Carson bought some and used it as a window treatment?

**Kay Marquez:** Probably, yes. Wouldn't that sound like a Johnny Carson thing?

**Stephanie Zollinger:** It does. How did you interact with the marketing or advertising side or maybe you didn't at all?

**Kay Marquez:** Well, we interacted to a certain degree. We would talk together if we had an opening coming up. We would try to talk about the timing, what else was happening in the market as far as other events that were happening in the industry. You wanted to make sure you weren't interfering with anyone's holiday schedule or with any other major event that people needed to be aware of, so you worked with them as far as timing events. You also talked about who the event would be focused on. Is this an event that's going to be focused more on your architectural design clients? Is this an event that you want everyone to be involved in? We had some wonderful, wonderful, creative people in our Marketing Department over the years, as you can imagine. I think they sometimes

sought information from the front line. I think what was good is that we were able to have some input.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Did the advertising staff work in-house or was it something that mainly was done outside of the studio?

**Kay Marquez:** They worked in-house. They worked with Jack and they worked out of the Design Studio downtown. They were very involved. It was very interconnected. Obviously we would send things out to outside printers but all the creative design ideas came in-house.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** I've been looking at the archive and have been very impressed because some of the advertising pieces are just as creative as the fabrics. The fortune cookies, for example, and I've seen Jack as a playing card advertising something.

**Kay Marquez:** Yes. What people also loved was our Christmas calendars. Our Christmas calendars were before other people were doing that. It wasn't a big advertisement piece but it was a piece that would have a beautiful photograph of a product of ours. I would get people calling me up three months before Christmas, "I'm on the list, aren't I?" We would check and reassure them that they would get the Christmas calendar. That was something that they looked forward to but they didn't feel as if you were advertising to them. They felt it was going to be a fun, creative thing. They would say to me, "You know, we get things from other people," you knew they would get pens and whatever was the going thing at that point, "but this is the only thing we put in the office that we get mailed to us."

**Stephanie Zollinger:** That's interesting.

**Kay Marquez:** People told me they collected them and many people kept them from year to year.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Yes, they were quite stunning.

**Kay Marquez:** Yes, they were fun.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Talk about your interaction with Jack. How did you see his role in the company?

**Kay Marquez:** Well, I was fortunate. Jack was one of those people, when we had a new collection and we were hanging a new collection, who would come and be involved with the creative process. No matter how pressured you were to get the new collection introduced, he never lost his temper. Many creative people, unfortunately, sometimes have a short fuse. That was not Jack. He would look and you might have done something that took several hours and then he would say, in a very nice way, "I think we should try it this way." And we would all try it another way. He was there involved with the process with you and you always knew that he never asked more of you than he was willing to give himself. That enables you, when you manage people, to feel that everyone's involved, from the very top down. Everyone felt they were a part of that and that was greatly helpful. We did not have a lot of interaction on a daily basis but he would, of course, occasionally come to the showroom.

We were involved also when, at one point, we redesigned the showroom space. He came in and decided that he envisioned the space the opposite of what it was. We had introduced carpeting and some furniture on the second floor, connected by a floating staircase, and the textiles were downstairs. We were known for our textiles and we found that people went in the front door, saw the textiles and did not necessarily go upstairs. We realized that they would go upstairs for the textiles so we needed to reverse the floors. There would be projects like that. On those projects I would work with his marketing people, with architects and, of course, with him. I was fortunate that I always felt that when I needed him, he was there. I felt he was extremely busy and that it was up to me to do the best I could without bothering him but, when I did find the need to go to see him, he always welcomed it and he always gave me an honest answer.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** That's good.

**Kay Marquez:** Very good. As we know, there's always politics involved in any situation. Someone told me years ago, when politics are involved, "Just remember the name on the door." I thought, "If I remember that I can't go wrong."

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Good advice. You talked about some of the lines and I know that in each line there was a show-stopper and then he would carry on other pieces from previous lines.

**Kay Marquez:** Yes.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Did you have any involvement in deciding which of those pieces would continue on?

**Kay Marquez:** I think that the sales team in general felt there would be certain things that, if something was being dropped, that personally it was sad to us but we would try and look at it from a business point of view. Were there people still seeking that, were there people still looking at it? Maybe the sales had gone down, maybe it was an industry cycle rather than there was a problem with the product. I know, at one point, we thought in terms of bringing back some of the beautiful printed velvets and we were encouraging that. Then the reality hit of what it would be to print 10 or 12 silk screens and what the cost would be. We, as a team, talked about it and said, "Our heart's there but it doesn't make sense economically to do this." So there would be times that we would consider certain things and then research would be done and it just wasn't practical.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Right.

**Kay Marquez:** You had to balance the creative side and know that you still had to have a sellable product that enabled the company to continue to have the dollars to create. It's a balancing act.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** When I was trying to learn about the collections and which pieces were in the collections, it was confusing to me at first because I would see something that was in the African Collection and then it would reappear in the Color of China Collection. I think I finally worked out that it depended on the colorway as to which collection it belonged to.

**Kay Marquez:** That sometimes happened. Or what would happen is you would introduce an item and you would maybe introduce it as a print in three colorways. You're not going to go out with six colorways. You go

out with three colorways and then you get an idea of what people are responding to. Are they responding to the sort of moody colorway or are they responding to the clean, crisp colorway? From that you would decide the response to the print. You would discuss maybe that the particular print was well received but the colors weren't quite working, or you might say that these two colorways everyone loves or this colorway people don't quite connect with. With that, if it was a print that people liked, then you would develop additional colorways for it. You were ahead of the curve. The colorways you were doing were not the general colorways in the market. But you could not afford to come out, with the cost of sampling and the amount of yardage you have to cut up to do memo samples and cutting some wings and lengths in showrooms, with a huge print color range in the beginning. You get feedback. That's where the front line was involved with the studio more. Jack would ask questions. You would also maybe tell him, I and other salespeople, what's happening in the market. Sometimes outside salespeople on the road would get a much different response. Then you'd get a different response in a different part of the country.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Regionally.

**Kay Marquez:** When we had a national sales meeting we would sit down and say, "How is this working for you?" Brad Bloom might say to me, "My people love it." We might say, "Well, it's not happening for us in New York. What's happening in Chicago?" Because, of course, colors were different in different parts of the country. The designers were different. In some parts of the country they weren't as daring as some of the New York designers or some of the San Francisco designers would be.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** More conservative?

**Kay Marquez:** More conservative and more that it was almost that it would be happening in New York now and maybe two years from now it would be happening somewhere else. You found that sort of time lapse depending on the part of the country and what you were doing.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** That's interesting. Do you think Jack felt pressured always having to keep ahead of the curve or do you think he thought of it as more like a game, "What can I do next?"

**Kay Marquez:** I think he felt that he wouldn't want to be anything less than a leader.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Do you think he was pressured by that idea?

**Kay Marquez:** I don't know, I think it was just part of him. Of course he was pressured about new collections and having to come up with new ideas, but if he felt that kind of pressure it was well hidden. I felt that it was more that he kept challenging himself. Years ago he was working on his house in the country. At that point he had created this wonderful African house. He also had the weave hut and the visitor's hut. Every weekend he would go out there and work on the garden. He'd work on the house. One day he said to me he was going out to the country and, for the first time, he didn't have to work on the house. It was completed. I turned and said, "How wonderful. You will now be able to enjoy the house." He said, "Oh, no, I'm selling it."

**Stephanie Zollinger:** That must have been Round House.

**Kay Marquez:** It was Round House. He had decided that weekend there was nothing for him to do and so he had to sell the house because he had to go on to something else. I even think, at this stage in his life, the last time I saw him, I got the impression that that's the way it's continuing. I think that was the same way in his design application. "I worked out how I can get this from Swaziland, and I can do this theater curtain, and we can do that, but now, what's new? What haven't I done? What do I need to do?" I think that's just his nature.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Yes, and a nature that also he was willing to learn new ways, very curious.

**Kay Marquez:** Oh, absolutely, absolutely.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Just a few questions. If you were given money and could only buy one Larsen fabric, which would it be and why?

**Kay Marquez:** That's a hard question. There's so many that are close to my heart.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Or which couple?

**Kay Marquez:** There are certain collections that you feel particularly proud of. I think the Collection of Kublai Khan that Jack created, the color range in that was just absolutely beautiful. The printed velvets that were introduced in that collection, some of the colors in that. Also our involvement with some of the Chinese silks and the colors that we were introducing that other people weren't doing. I have a house obviously surrounded with some Larsen things but I find particular collections that were more meaningful than others.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Did you travel to China?

**Kay Marquez:** No, I didn't travel to China with Jack. At one point Larsen Carpet took on a partner and it was a firm out of Switzerland. I used to go to their sales conferences in Switzerland. I also did some traveling with textiles in Europe and other places, which was wonderful to get an opportunity. I enjoyed going to the mills and seeing how it happens. Then, of course, here I would travel to see how carpeting was done, and how furniture was done, and that type of thing. I was always fascinated and I think it was very helpful from a sales point of view to understand your product better.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Certainly.

**Kay Marquez:** I think that we as a team took great pride in that we understood our product and that we were able to be helpful to our clients. That was exciting, to be able to see things developing in different areas and maybe then understand why the chair that your client wants to use for a particular project could not be from a certain dye lot. I did have that request once, that someone wanted the chairs to have the wood of a certain color tone, et cetera, et cetera, because that worked with their scheme a little better. I went out to the forest and informed them what they should do for the next few shipments.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Do you have any clients that you'll always remember? I know this is one of them.

**Kay Marquez:** Certainly. I have a number of clients. The majority of my clients were absolutely wonderful and a great, great joy to work with. Several years ago one of my most creative clients passed away but she was incredible. Her name was Marilyn Ruben and she worked and had lived at one point in her life in Chicago. She worked with a number of high-end Chicago architects and she absolutely was very professional and planned ahead, which is always nice from a sales point of view. She used things in such a manner that you always enjoyed them. And there are special projects you enjoy working on. We were involved with all kinds of things, the Rainbow Room, and we did some things for Windows on the World, and some other spaces, and then custom wall covering and things along that line.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Thank you.

**Kay Marquez:** You're welcome.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Just one last question. Could you give us some of your most memorable experiences that you've had while working with Larsen?

**Kay Marquez:** Well, this is from a personal point of view. When Jack heard I was getting remarried a few years ago I couldn't think of a better place to have a reception than the Larsen showroom. He was kind enough to let me use the Larsen showroom. We had people from unborn children present to people way up in their 80s. We had a rock and roll band and it was so comfortable and wonderful that people felt so at home in the space. They were able to enjoy the party. Then, because we had a new collection coming out, he asked where I was going to honeymoon and I said I wasn't going to take a lot of time because we had a new collection coming out. So he offered me the keys to LongHouse and that's where I spent my honeymoon. It was funny, when we arrived Jack was getting ready to leave. He had some groups coming through for tours so I found that, just before my honeymoon started, I got to let people in and out of LongHouse. He told me a story that a gentleman had called and said, "Is there a discount for senior citizens?" and Jack had said, "Well, you know, we're all seniors."

**Stephanie Zollinger:** That's a great story.

**Kay Marquez:** I do try to periodically see him. He's always great fun.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Thank you very much.



**Kay Marquez:** You're welcome.

**Stephanie Zollinger:** Thank you.

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