

Everything Old is New Again

Artist Profile: Trish Biddle

By Mary Forney

The beauty, pageantry, vibrant colors, and thrilling action of horse racing lend themselves naturally to visual art. In fact, sporting art has been an integral part of horse racing for generations. This summer, the work of artist

Her art is also influenced by her sense of design and her love for all things vintage. "I was really inspired by some vintage photos of my grandmother's," said Biddle, who has done paintings from some of those old black and white photographs. "Three Brothers," part of her Minnesota Series and a study in subdued hues and strong family ties, was done from a photograph of the artist's great grandfather and his brothers taken in the 1940s.

"Then I watched the movie Chicago," said Biddle, "and I was so inspired by the Art Deco style, their hairstyles, etc., it just took off for me." Biddle reflects on that time as a turning point in her career. Another turning point came when her husband suggested she paint horse racing scenes. Biddle, the daughter of a dog trainer who enjoyed watching the Triple Crown every year, had no other connection with the world of Thoroughbred racing.

"We found a vintage Churchill Downs photo entitled "Down to the Wire," and I ended up doing posters from that," Biddle explained. "Then Clare Jett with JettStream Productions saw it and contacted me." Jett puts together the "Art of the Kentucky Derby" program and each year commissions a nationally recognized artist to create a signature piece for the event. Biddle was chosen as the



Trish and Brian Biddle

Trish Biddle will be an integral part of the Del Mar race meet, gracing the covers of the programs as well as appearing on other printed media and merchandise. Biddle's Del Mar painting beautifully showcases the historic racetrack with an array of bright colors, an Art Deco feel, and the artist's penchant for portraying "glamorous women in fabulous places."

Biddle has over 40 works published internationally and is collected around the world. Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, she studied at the Dallas Institute of Art and now resides in Dallas with her husband, Brian, and two daughters. Although she began her career in textile design and fashion illustration, these days Biddle's inspiration is drawn from her own imagination. The result is paintings that draw the viewers in, allowing them to imagine the sights, sounds, feelings, and thrill of the action.



Kentucky Derby Official Artist, May 2008

Her art is also influenced by her sense of design and her love for all things vintage. “I was really inspired by some vintage photos of my grandmothers,” said Biddle, who has done paintings from some of those old black and white photographs.

Official Artist of the Kentucky Derby 2008. Her stylized version of America’s greatest horse race – incorporating Thoroughbreds in action, the twin spires of Churchill Downs, and a woman at the rail with a mint julep in hand – was highly regarded and surpassed all previous retail sales marks for a Derby poster.

During Derby week at Churchill Downs, Biddle met jockey Calvin Borel and trainer Carl Nafzger. The trainer of Street Sense had just published his book “Traits of a Winner.” The book made a deep impression on Biddle,



Trainer Carl Nafzger, his wife Wanda, Biddle, and jockey Calvin Borel hold paintings of Street Sense.

who compares the struggles so common in the racing world to those in her own artistic career.

“I draw inspiration from horses, jockeys, and trainers, and use that perspective in my own art career,” Biddle explained. “The struggle of being an artist is similar to being a long shot, or a horse coming from way off the pace. You may be last in line, not getting any recognition, but you persevere anyway. There’s no guarantee; you do it because you love it.”

For more information and to see the artist’s work, visit her website, www.trishbiddle.com.



“Del Mar Thoroughbred Club”