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### Trish Biddle A Sure Bet

By: by Linda S. Hopkins



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Until Trish Biddle was named Official Artist of the 2008 Kentucky Derby, she didn't think much about horse racing. But today, more than ever, she knows that all of life is like one long "Run for the Roses." After reading the book, *Traits of a Winner*, by racehorse trainer, Carl Nafzger, Trish is certain that getting ahead is largely a matter of perseverance. She compares her quest for success to the stretch win of Street Sense at Churchill Downs in 2007.

"There is a lot of symbolism to me and to anybody trying to be successful in life. That horse was way in the distance until the very end. He flies through all the other horses. He's covered in mud," said Trish. "When you're trying to reach your goal, sometimes you get covered in mud," she continued. "And they [the horses] wear blinders. When you're about to run a race, you can't look at the other competitors and compare yourself. That really applies to my life. I've had to train myself to focus on my goal."

#### Out of the gate

Trish's interest in art began at age four, with crayons and construction paper. In second grade, she won a Wizard of Oz poster contest. Her prize was a \$2 gift certificate to Dairy Queen, but the real reward was an early shot of confidence. Her mother, also artistically inclined, enrolled her in art classes and encouraged her to develop her skills. "I got the creative thing from my mom. Dad taught me to be competitive and really strive," said Trish. "I always came in second, which just made me try harder. Now that I'm older, I can see how that gave me the drive."

Studying commercial art through a vo-tech program in her high school, Trish

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went on to earn her art degree at the Dallas Institute of Art. “Of course, you have unrealistic expectations right out of school. I wanted to be hired by Neiman Marcus as their fashion illustrator—pie in the sky,” she said. “I went to their headquarters in Dallas, went up in the elevator with my little portfolio, waiting for the guy to flip through it, which took all of two minutes.”

Starting at Dillard’s on the retail rung of the ladder, she was later hired at a small art studio where she trained to do textile design. From there, she spent two years as a textile designer for JC Penny. “The textile design took me on a different turn. I was single till I was 30, so I had to learn to diversify to support myself,” she explained. “I did textile design continually to supplement the fine art. I kept seeing people on TV or on biography shows saying that if you really are doing what you love and don’t give up, everything will fall in place. So I just kept believing that.”

### **The race is on**

Although published internationally and steadily making a name for herself, Trish felt that her career was at a crossroads. She needed a big break. She got it last June when she received a call from Clare Jett of JettStream Productions. “Totally out of the blue, this woman called and asked if I had heard of the Kentucky Derby. I had no idea what she meant or who she was,” said Trish, whose two equestrian pieces on her Web site attracted Jett’s attention. After a couple of months on pins and needles, she was commissioned to create the Derby art.

Given some guidelines, with a generous degree of creative freedom, Trish produced two paintings which can also be combined as one. Mingling her retro style and flair for fashion and incorporating every critical element—Thoroughbreds in full flight, the historic Twin Spires of Churchill Downs and a woman with a mint julep in hand and an unfurling red rose on her classic Kentucky Derby hat—her works capture the sophistication and excitement of a day at the races. Since the unveiling in November, 2007, it’s been a whirlwind, said Trish.

In a sense, she has won the Derby and it’s time to move on to the next stretch. Wherever life takes her, you can bet on Trish Biddle to have a successful run. Encouraging others to follow their hearts, she said, “It’s a hard race for everybody. Lose your bag of excuses. Find something you really love and pursue it. Persevere.”

*“Art of the Kentucky Derby” series prints, posters and other officially licensed merchandise can be purchased on the Internet at [www.kentuckyderby.com](http://www.kentuckyderby.com) or at [www.derbyartgifts.com](http://www.derbyartgifts.com). See and purchase more of Trish’s work at*

[www.trishbiddle.com](http://www.trishbiddle.com).



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