

Karlynn Keyes & Valor Lee

THE MOTHER-DAUGHTER DUO, BEST KNOWN FOR THEIR DESIGNS FOR THE TRAIL OF PAINTED PONIES, ARE NOW BRANCHING OUT

IN THE STUDIO BY SUSAN K. ELLIOTT



"Rhinestone Cowgirl" by Karlynn Keyes and Valor Lee, The Trail of Painted Ponies, Item 4040977, resin, 2014

TREASURES

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Mother and daughter designers Karlynn Keyes and Valor Lee understand the power of creativity. They have created many items for The Trail of Painted Ponies (trailofpaintedponies.com) collection and now have partnered to create Double Star Studio, a design studio that creates products just for girls. Keyes was president of The Trail of Painted Ponies for 10 years. Lee, her daughter, is a recent graduate of the University of Southern California. They call themselves artistic entrepreneurs.

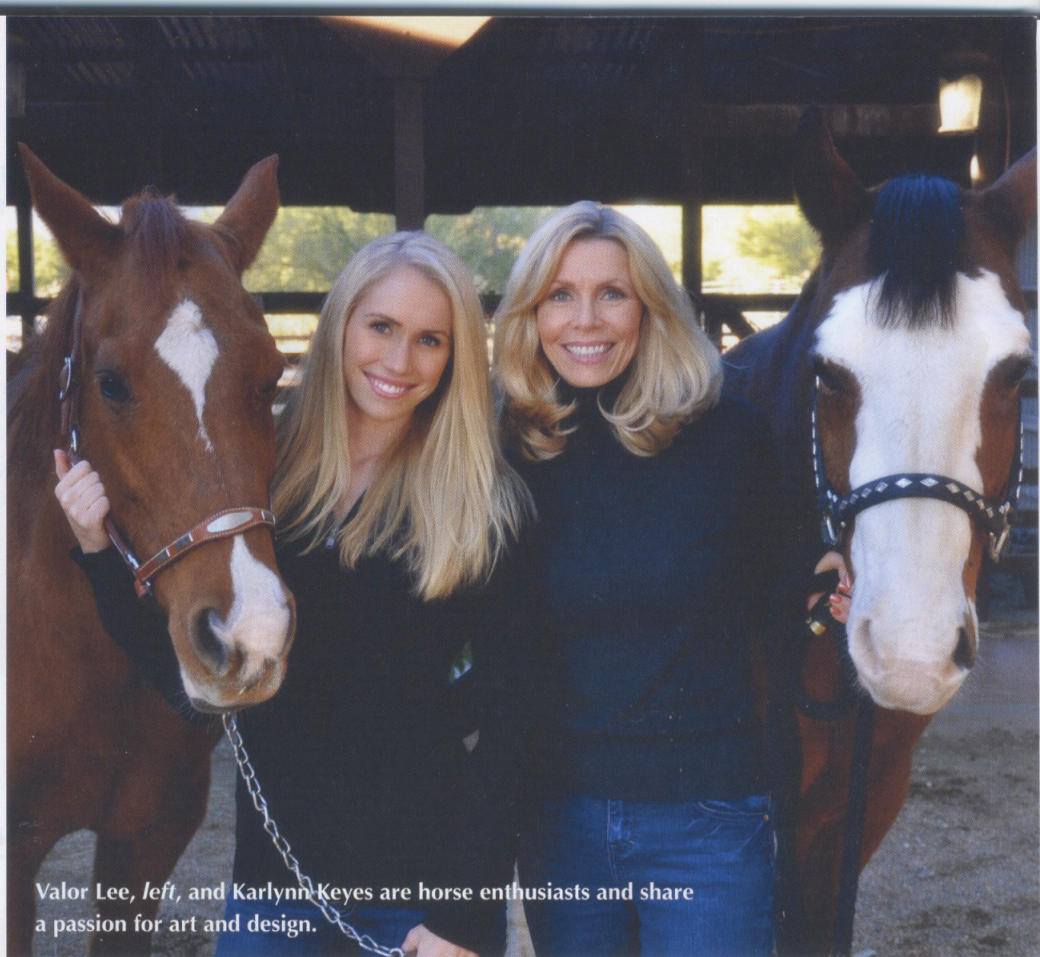
The Trail of Painted Ponies began as a public art project on display in New Mexico. It quickly evolved into a wide-ranging collection of figurines, ornaments, and other items, including horses painted by celebrities such as Barbara Eden, Ali McGraw, and Tony Curtis. Talented painters from around the United States also have become official Trail of Painted Ponies artists.

Even though Keyes and Lee live in different cities, they work together each day from studios in Arizona and California. "Technology makes it effortless to log on and design together all day," Lee says. "It is like we are in the same studio."

"We hope to inspire other women to develop their creativity and share it with the world," Lee says.

"Women are incredibly talented," Keyes adds, "and we would like to encourage every woman to discover her inner artist and unleash her creativity. As women, we all have the opportunity to make an impact with our talents, and we can do this, one creative business at a time."

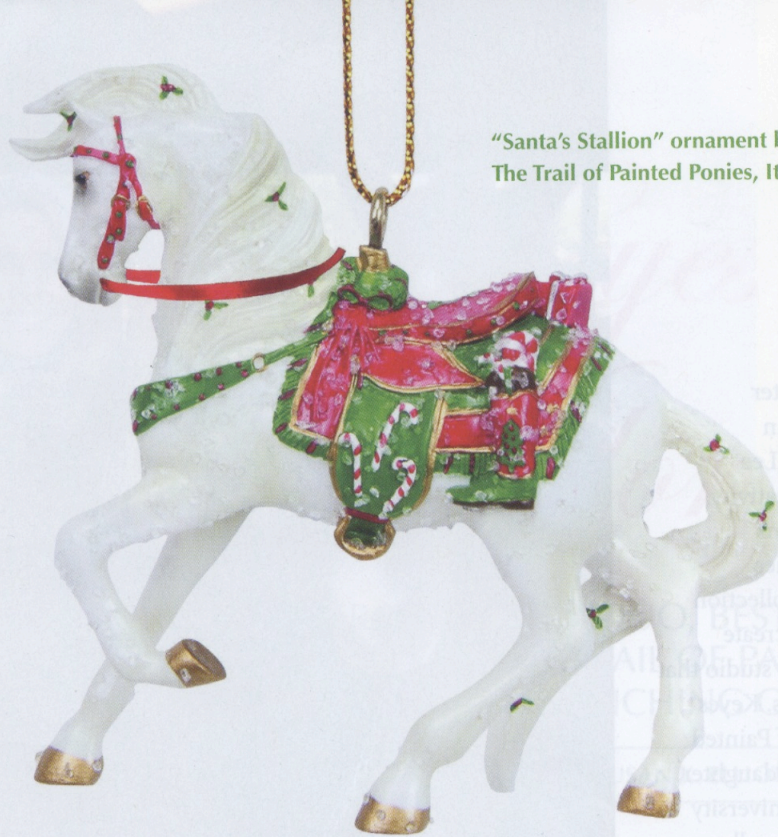
In a recent interview with *Treasures*, Keyes described their working style:



Valor Lee, left, and Karlynn Keyes are horse enthusiasts and share a passion for art and design.



"King of Hearts" by Karlynn Keyes, The Trail of Painted Ponies, Item 4024357, resin, 2011.



"Santa's Stallion" ornament by Karlynn Keyes, The Trail of Painted Ponies, Item 4034506, resin, 2013.

What projects are you working on right now?

We love merging creativity and commerce to create brands that women and girls will adore. We are currently creating two new ponies for The Trail of Painted Ponies. We have also just launched our own jewelry collection, Rocslide (rocslide.com) and have also designed a companion jewelry collection for The Trail of Painted Ponies, featuring charms, bracelets, necklaces, and earrings.

What kind of art do you create in your studio?

We sketch, paint, write, and research all of our designs in our studios. Like many girls, we love fashion, jewelry, and, of course, horses, and we are focused on bringing sensational new brands to the marketplace.

How would you describe your studio spaces?

We have two studios. One is located on our ranch in Scottsdale, Ariz. We have a wonderful, large office and studio with beautiful views of the desert. Our dogs and cats wander through the studio all day, and our horses can be

heard calling us from the barn, down by the orchard and garden. Valor also has a studio in Newport Beach, Calif., that is very neat and organized, and it reflects the beauty and simplicity of the beach. She leaves the door open so that the beach breezes blow through as she listens to the top 40 on iTunes. Our studios are very much like the art that we create—comfortable with a dash of European elegance.

What's the best part of being able to work and create in these environments?

Our studios are super creative spaces filled with natural light and large surfaces to lay out our designs. We also surround ourselves with great art and antiques for inspiration.

Could you describe your process of creating a new product?

We believe in doing our homework. We discuss and research concepts before we begin the design process. Then we start by sketching and laying out our ideas and moving all of the pieces around like a puzzle. Great design requires not only creativity but patience. You cannot get frustrated when things don't come

together right away. Designing is all about redesigning until you get it right.

What inspires your work?

We are great students of pop culture and current fashions and trends. We look around to see what people love, and we then go and create something that they need that doesn't exist.

What will the next year bring?

We are excited about the new Trail of Painted Ponies that we are creating, as well as the new Painted Ponies jewelry collection that we have designed.

What is the best part of your life right now?

Working together in an amazingly creative business!

What do you consider your greatest accomplishment in life?

It sounds like such a cliché, however it is so true: My two children are my greatest accomplishment, and I love working together in a family business. It is wonderful to work together in creative industries where we can make our marks and make the world a better and more beautiful place. ♦

"Cowgirl Cadillac" by Karlynn Keyes, The Trail of Painted Ponies, Item 4020476, resin, 2010.



"Black Jack" by Karlynn Keyes, The Trail of Painted Ponies, Item 4034630, resin, 2013