

## *Fabio and Sara Deponte*

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Sara and Fabio Deponte share a passion for horses and a passion for painting them, as evident in their exhibit this month at SAC, "Two artists, One Passion". Drawing upon their life in Petersham, MA with their two horses and miles of trails as well as life on the road at yearly equine events across the country, the pair have always connected their interests to their art; Sara in the medium of watercolor and Fabio with oils and acrylics. Being a creative couple has the benefit of knowing just how to support each other and how to critique each others work. "There is no competition, we really enjoy each other's work. This situation has really worked for us."

Sara and Fabio met while working for the same design firm in Boston. Sara went to Parsons School of Design in NYC and worked for two agencies there before relocating to New England. Eventually the pair formed their own design agency. As their pursuit of painting became paramount, they stopped seeking new clients and concentrated on their passion. Sara took on conservation framing as a change of pace and specializes in unusual framing jobs.

Highly detailed portraits of horses by Fabio reveal powerful muscles rippling beneath the skin of these amazing creatures. Fabio sees "Human and Horse, connected through need through history. For travel, communication, sport, and war. I marvel at the grace, the challenge of the anatomy in motion. To strive to visually communicate the poetry and body language is what gives me personal satisfaction." Sara's watercolor scenes also capture the special relationship between horses and their humans.

While both artists have built their own individual styles and creative language that comes from 30 years of working and living with horses, other areas of interest also find their way onto canvas. One of Sara's blooming iris watercolors brighten a wall of their studio/framery/gallery space, and on Fabio's easel is a work-in-progress of two doves and a cactus inspired by a recent trip to Arizona.

Sara advises emerging artists to play when approaching watercolor for the first time. "Don't try to be your teacher. Forget about throwing salt on it for the big Wow effects--that'll come later. Learn the paints, play with the paints." Is it any wonder that their twins Matthew and Nicole are professional artists as well? Both are fashion designers: Nicole produces the Lilian Asterfield line of accessories, and Matthew's designs are "Crisiswear". As the names suggest, there is a great stylistic difference between the two bold and original fashion designers.

Recently, the Deponte's were included in the Mystery Main Street tour on WCVB's popular Chronicle TV show. Viewers are invited to guess the name of the town featured in each of these episodes, and in February, Petersham was the location. The Deponte's and their "White Picket Studio" appeared at the very end of the show. According to Sara, the exposure has led to at least one commission, and has put them in touch with a few people they had lost touch with, including someone from the agency where they met 40 years ago.