

# Karen Kasper

## INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED ARTIST & DEVOTEE OF EGYPTIAN ARABIANS

One might say Karen Kasper was born with an artist's brush in one hand and a toy horse in the other. By age 3 she was drawing horses, and progressed to painting them during her school years. From this providential beginning, Karen has gone on to dedicate her life to art that encompasses the ethereal beauty of the horse through painting and sculpting. Furthermore, her talents have been generously shared with the Pyramid Society through stunning imagery, relief and sculptures, embodying the timeless beauty and grace of the Egyptian Arabian.

Karen's first opportunity to see Arabians close up came during sixth grade when a vice principal invited Karen to visit her farm. "Once in the barn," Karen recalled, "my world changed forever. The way Arabians interact with humans, their intelligence and beauty, their gracefulness and harmony of form, elevated them above other breeds I had experienced." There, Karen saw pedigrees of part-Egyptians, and she knew somehow she would have them in her life.

After her marriage to Ray Kasper, the couple settled on a farm in Wisconsin and acquired several horses. Karen began painting more and, with Ray's full support and encouragement, Karen Kasper



Studio was established in 1981 – the same year Ray surprised Karen with a trip to the very first Egyptian Event in Kentucky.

Karen began sculpting in 1984 after recurring dreams in which she saw her hands using clay to form an Arabian horse head. She had read an article on the EAO's famous broodmare Moniet

El Nefous in an Arabian magazine and, in 1986, this mare became the subject of the first Egyptian Arabian portrait sculpture Karen created. Painting and sculpting filled her days at their equine art studio and her work garnered high praise. The Arabian community took note, leading to sculptures by Karen now found in public and private collections in 28 countries.

Karen's portraits of many of the world's most influential Straight Egyptians made her an international ambassador through her art. To date, Karen has created 101 Straight Egyptian portrait sculptures, including 78 from life studies and 23 from historical resources. A mere handful of examples include studies of the mare RDM Maar Hala and the mare Bint Magidaa with her filly at side, and the stallions \*Ansata Ibn Halima, \*Morafic (7 times!), Al Adeed Al Shaqab, and the late actor Patrick Swayze's Tammen.

When Karen starts a project her focus is extraordinary. "I erase from my mind all I know about horses, and zero in on what is unique about my subject's individuality. Once the basics are complete, I let go and allow the creation to come through me, as the work flows through my hands, forming the piece to its completion."

Ray and Karen's support of the Pyramid Society has known no bounds. As nearby Lexington residents, they have often stepped forward to assist the Society in innumerable ways, from helping with certain office tasks to the donation of original works to the annual Egyptian Event art auctions. Indeed, the Trustee Award

presented to so many other illustrious members was designed and created many years ago by Karen herself.

"Receiving this award means so much to me. I never imagined I would get it myself," Karen said. "When I found out I was surprised but happy; I'll display it with pride. To be included with others who have made enduring contributions to these horses is so meaningful. I'm truly grateful."

Karen is adamant about one thing. "This isn't my award alone," she added. "Few in life are blessed to have a partner like my husband. Ray is the Kasper in Karen Kasper; I'm just plain Karen without him. Together, we are Karen Kasper Studio."

Currently, Karen has a special exhibit "My Journey with the Arabian Horse" in the Al-Marah Arabian Horse Galleries in the International Museum of the Horse at the Kentucky Horse Park near Lexington. The story of the Kaspers' journey together through art and life is truly inspiring.

*The Board of Trustees is honored to present the 2023 Trustees Award to Karen Kasper for her awe-inspiring depictions of Egyptian Arabian horses and for her generous contributions to the Pyramid Society and its members. Her bronzes and paintings have brought attention to Egyptian Arabians in settings that encircle the globe, while helping to bring together, into a special community, people who admire these beautiful horses.*