

Karyl Pierce Paxton Differentiation Essay

As a little girl Karyl Pierce Paxton never questioned what she would do when she grew up. Karyl knew she wanted to be a designer. At age five, Karyl says her mother taught her how to paint, sew and “make things”. After receiving a bachelor’s degree in graphic design, a passion for fashion took Karyl to New York’s Parsons School of Design. Upon finishing, she went home for the summer to earn money with hopes of returning to New York to begin a fashion design career. Ironically, a temporary summer job led to a career in Interiors. Karyl had inadvertently landed an opportunity-laden job as a display designer and buyer for an ambitious young furniture chain. She traveled with that company to Jackson, Miss., eventually opening her own interior design firm – Pierce Paxton Design Studio. Frustrated with her inability to find the perfect home furnishings for her clients, Karyl created her own line of furniture and lighting, using techniques she had learned from her lifelong study of 18th Century decorative painting. Karyl’s pieces became popular among discriminating interior designers who began hiring her to create furniture and lighting for their clients. From that point, she never looked back. She had become a product designer.

Over the years, Karyl has had the opportunity to design at the highest and most modest ends of the home furnishings industry. Her ability to design equally well at both ends is one of the things that distinguishes her. In fact, Karyl believes one of her strengths is her ability to design moderately-priced products with the same sense of style, quality and beauty that are found in her highest-end products. The Builder Collection that she designed for Savoy House is an excellent example of this.

Karyl is also unique in the industry because of her expertise in decorative finishes, which she brings to all her products. Her experience in multiple fields of design, including fabricating the products herself, further distinguishes her. Her fashion design background begat couture drapery and appointments. Her decorative painting experience allowed her to not only design products but also to create finishes.

Today, Karyl is still designing and “making things.” She has recently created a new, 2006 lighting collection for Savoy House. Karyl is currently developing designs for other home furnishing products and is renovating a Sidehall Victorian house in historic Uptown New Orleans.