

Kira Krümm

MARCO INSPIRED

Interior designer channels inner strength and family support into successful career

By **BERNADETTE LA PAGLIA**
Eagle Correspondent

There are interior designers — and then there's Kira Krümm. Recently, the acclaimed artist and entrepreneur sat down with Marco Eagle to discuss her unabashed passion for the Marco Island, her life, her work, her marriage — and her newly minted motherhood. On Dec. 23, 2010, Krümm and husband, Juan Munera, welcomed baby boy Marco Tazewell into the world!

"We thought of so many names but we kept coming back to 'Marco,'" Krümm explains. "It honors Juan's family heritage, but I think it also speaks to just how much Marco Island means to me — both of us, really. I've been coming to this beautiful Island to visit my father since I was a child — and it's also where Juan and I met."

Although she considers herself 'practically a native,' Krümm (rhymes with room) relocated to Southwest Florida in 2001 from Virginia where she and her younger sister,



Kira Krümm with her son Marco. She will give a presentation at Miromar Design Center on Tuesday, May 15.
Bernadette La Paglia/Eagle Correspondent (2)

Kristianna, were raised by their mother. For as long as memory serves, Krümm — with her little sis in tow — would spend summers and holidays on Marco Island (or in the mountains of Massachusetts) visiting their father, abstract expressionist painter, professor, filmmaker and architect, Terry Krümm.

Perhaps it was during those early periods of travel and separation that Krümm's "aura of invincibility" was forged. Her mother, Kathleen Hendrix, an accomplished artist and educator, can attest. "Often-times Kira would be comforting my tears of farewell through hers. She'd say, 'Mommy, I'm going to take care of you' — and she has, in so many ways."

Krümm's parents met when her mother was an art student at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond and her father a professor at The School of the Arts. Hendrix recalls that during her pregnancy she was reading Ayn Rand's novel, "We the Living," and decided to name her first born after the novel's heroine, Kira. The name has proven to be somewhat prophetic in light of the leadership that has characterized Krümm since early childhood.

"At a very young age Kira began demonstrating her innate talent to teach and reach out to others with her nurturing spirit," said Hendrix. "Even in kindergarten, she was teaching the other children how to draw."

But her mother is quick to remind that Krümm also has a competitive side. "In high school, she was a star at anything she undertook. In the arts as well as athletics, she continued to win accolades and awards. Her scrapbook was always bulging.

"When she was a cheerleader, as soon as the junior varsity game was over, she would change into her basketball uniform just in time to join the girl's game and make



Kira Krümm and her mother, Kathleen Hendrix on Marco Island. Krümm has a close relationship with her mother, and considers Hendrix as her inspiration.

attending Virginia Commonwealth University — the very school where her parents met — Krümm continued to garner coveted scholarships in the arts as well as in marketing, transporting her to London, Paris and Florence. "I got hooked at seeing the world and developing my own aesthetic," she admits. "It continues to serve me well."

Fast forward to today where you'll find Krümm happily embracing her Southwest Florida lifestyle with characteristic zeal, both personally and professionally. In addition to her affiliations with many national and international trade organizations, Krümm is involved with several local and regional fine arts and civic organizations. She is a member of the Marco Island Chamber of Commerce and formerly served as vice president and visual arts chairman for the Marco Island Foundation for the Arts. Additionally, she chaired the selection committee for Art Quest, the first public sculpture exhibition on the Island.

Krümm considers her appointment by the Marco Island City Council to the City Arts Advisory Committee a special honor. Most recently, she was invited by the Marco

IF YOU GO

Coastal Design Inspiration with Kira Krümm

When: 11 a.m., Tuesday, May 15

Where: Miromar Design Center, 10800 Corkscrew Road, Estero

Cost: Free

Information: (239) 390-8207

the highest score," Hendrix said. "But somehow all this achievement never went to her head. Kira has always been kind to everyone — and she cares deeply about her clients."

As for the accolades and accomplishments, they didn't end in high school. Throughout her college days while

Island Advance Learning Academy to join a select panel of community leaders who comprise the National Advisory Board for 2011-12.

As for her business operations, Kira Krümm International Design is headquartered at the Miromar Design Center in Estero. Along with her award-winning design team, it is here that she accommodates the discriminating tastes of luxury homeowners throughout Southwest Florida — and now China where she partners with internationally renowned furniture designer and master craftsman Xiaojie Zhu.

"We met in 2006 when I was invited to attend a trade show in Shanghai and we just clicked," Krümm explains. "I am deeply inspired by Xiaojie's (pronounced Shee-ow Jay) artistic genius. Currently, we are collaborating on a number of interior design projects, and I am designing a line of luxury linens for his furniture collection."

So how does one maintain the scope of outreach and achieve the seamless success that exemplifies the Kira Krümm signature? "I can accomplish what I do because I have an incredibly talented team," she explains. "My right arm is Laurie Andersen, my studio manager who is in charge of operations; and my left (arm) is my marketing administrator and youngest sister Elizabeth Hendrix. Together they make it happen every day.

"But it really all begins with my mother," Krümm asserts. "It is her constant support and encouragement that enables me to uphold balance in my business, in my work and in my life."

At the end of the day, perhaps it is the ebb and flow of Island life that provides a perfect metaphor for the virtuoso, Kira Krümm.