

## History of Tyler Poncho Toys

Kaeti Lindquist began making Double Bears in February of 2008. She was living in a 300 square foot studio with her fiancé, and needed something to help prevent stir craziness. Kaeti was attending Madison Area Technical College, at this time she was taking painting and 3d fundamentals classes at the downtown campus. She completed Tyler in May of 2008--her completely open, self-directed final project for 3d design. Since she had returned to her love of sewing earlier that year, she focused on textiles for many of her sculptures in that class.

She continued sewing animals and selling online through the summer. She and her husband Jon, married on August 8th, 2008. In the fall of that year she joined the Graphic Design and Illustration program at Madison Area Technical College. The skills she would learn here would help her business grow, although at this point it was merely a hobby. Her first consignment shop Queen of Hearts, in Providence, RI, started selling her toys this fall. They've developed many Tyler Poncho lovers out there! Wholly Craft, in Columbus, Ohio, reached out to her wanting to sell plushies too.

Moderate amounts of sewing continued. In 2009, Kaeti and Jon bought their first house, an adorable one hundred year old fixer-upper. Kaeti focused most of her time on school, fixing up the house, and sending the toys she did have time to make to her consignment shops. In August of 2009 she got her workroom organized and could start production of toys again. That fall, she made her first appearance at a craft fair, Madison's Holiday Craftacular. Pictures of her booth were featured in the local paper.

The beginning of 2010 was her last semester at MATC. She was preparing her portfolio--with a heavy focus on Tyler Poncho. In February of 2010 she was asked to join Kooky, a co-op of designers in Chicago. Their store was located at 520 North Michigan Avenue. It was a lot of exciting work for Kaeti, and would take her business to a new level. She sewed, prepared fixtures, traveled, tagged, set up and explored Michigan Avenue. Kooky Children's Shop was bright and colorful with big windows, across

from Sanrio and Lego in the Nordstrom's Mall--a perfect place.

Kaeti graduated in May with high honors and a Portfolio of Merit. She formed her company, Tyler Poncho Toys, LLC, and began serious work towards her goals. She's completed many long awaited projects, including Stuffed Animal World, Joseph Petticoat, and Tyler Poncho's Amalgamated Menagerie. She's been able to streamline her workflow from buying supplies directly from manufacturers to sewing in an assembly-line style. She attended the Conference of Creative Entrepreneurs in August in Seattle, Washington, an excellent resource, learning and networking event. She was awarded a free year membership to Meylah.com a new online marketplace that implements social media.

In September, a representative from Sears visited Kooky and asked Kaeti to sell her wares on Sears.com. Locally, people can order their toys for immediate pick-up at Kooky, or request home delivery. Kaeti visited Seattle again this October, to see the great Plush You! annual designer toy show at Schmancy Toys. Her pieces were accepted into the show along with many other amazing crafters. They also participated in "Soft Serve" a plush show at OhNoDoom! gallery in Chicago. This holiday season, with a lineup of an increasing amount of shows, Tyler and Kaeti will be very busy.

Following the busy holiday season of 2010, Kaeti started the year off participating in a gallery show, Candyland, organized by Plush Team. Immediately following that show she started to distribute her toys with DKE Toys in California. DKE is a major distributor in the designer toy industry who runs a large booth at San Diego's Comic Con. With these developments, Kaeti and Tyler decided to bring her handmade wares closer to the designer toy market. They prototyped a manufactured Double Bear and are planning the production phase.

After a brief hiatus from a cross-country move, (due to Kaeti's husband's new job offer from Epic Games.) Tyler Poncho Toys is back up and running, beginning a new phase of their development. Kaeti will be attending San Diego Comic Con in July. Their toys will be seen at the DKE Toys booth, while some of Kaeti's paintings from Amalgamated Menagerie, Volume One will be part of the Art Show, a silent auction. Kaeti and Tyler have also been nominated for three awards at the Designer Toy

Awards, Best Plush Design, Best Toy from a Comic, and Break Through Artist of the Year.