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HUBERT DE WATRIGANT SOLO SHOW AT LONDON'S OSBORNE STUDIO GALLERY

6th – 29th November 2018 at Osborne Studio Gallery, www.osg.uk.com

This will be the eighth solo show for Hubert de Watrigant at the Osborne Studio Gallery, where he has been exhibiting since 1991.

In his own words, Watrigant describes his struggles for perfection, his experiments with media, and his constant search for new subjects. Extraordinary natural gifts (he is self-taught) have brought him international success. He has exhibited regularly in France, Spain, America, the Emirates and Japan. Private collectors include HM The Queen, HM The King of Morocco, HH Sheikh Mohammed al-Thani, and many other connoisseurs of equestrian art including Baron Guy de Rothschild, the Wildenstein and Niarchos families.

The late Sir Peter o'Sullivan, former Chairman of the Osborne Studio Gallery, 'The Voice of Racing', connoisseur and communicator, wrote: 'this artist continually displays glorious examples of a lively imagination interpreted with breath taking flair.' He can seize a fleeting moment, and capture the transient effects of light.

This exhibition, comprising some fifty new works, reveals new sources of inspiration, extending his reach beyond the racecourse and its world. The eternal 'femme magnifique', classic Muse since art began brings the beauty of the human form into focus. Another new theme is the blazing colour of Africa Watrigant enjoyed on recent travels, as in 'Touareg' and 'Senegal.'. And the rustic plumage of farm birds (Poules and Oies de Guinee) competes with the polished coats of Arabian thoroughbreds. .

Hubert de Watrigant was born in 1954 in the South West of France. He comes from a noble family immersed in thoroughbred horseracing for many generations. His father was a breeder, his uncle a



Impressions, Ink and Gouache on paper, 66x100cm



Le Long de la Barrière, Gouache and pastel, 29x46cm



La Couverture Rayée, Mixed media on canvas, 54x65cm



Cyrano Abandonné collage on canvas, oil and acrylic

trainer and Watrigant himself spent his early post-school years working for stud farms, as well as alongside bloodstock agents.

Nephews Nicolas and Damien, and cousin Antoine are all well known in the racing world, as bloodstock agents and trainers. .

He talks about how his art evolved. He started sketching in his father's stables. 'At school I drew ceaselessly in the margins of my notebooks. It was a very natural thing for me to do. I did not go to art school. I have tried to find my way, to move. I specialised in the horse which seemed easier than landscapes', he remembers. 'At the beginning I was doing portraits of horses, to find commissions and earn some money. If you want to work, you need to live, you need to earn money, and you need to sell paintings.'

He describes his own creative progress. For a restless artist, there is never an easy route. 'I did a lot of portraits for 15 years. It got a little boring. I was doing a few exhibitions too, but not every year and was spending more time doing portraits than exhibitions'. He continues: 'The thing with portraits you

always know what is going to happen at the end, you don't get surprise. So, in the middle of the 1980s, I stopped most of the commissions to concentrate on exhibition work' 'I wanted to find my passion, my style, tried to find some new expression.' 'He was also enough of a realist to keep a watchful eye on the market. He kept his transition of style a gradual development.

'I moved slowly, 'he continues, 'if you move too fast people are disappointed they want to know what has happened to him and his style? What's gone wrong?' 'I needed to find new things for my work so I put some collage on paper, worked on board and wood, and I like to mix mediums.' Watrigant uses a wide variety of materials, including charcoal, pastel, watercolour and oils, and works on many different surfaces. Influences from the past include Delacroix, master of horses and wild animals, Gericault who also loved sketching in the stables as a boy, and Rene Princeteau, the first teacher of Toulouse Lautrec, another artist of noble family, with a 'passion cheval.'

Watrigant has a distinctly impressionist approach to the world of racing, allowing us freedom to interpret his vision.



Hermine, collage on canvas, then acrylic and oil with charcoal