

THE ARABIAN RACEHORSE



DIAR Prep Races

Ton Up for Steve Harrison at Hereford

HUBERT DE WATRIGANT

A PASSION FOR HORSES



'Rouge'

They say you should never meet your heroes, but I've been lucky enough to meet two of mine, both at the Osborne Studio Gallery in the heart of Belgravia in London. Last year it was the great race caller and

racing journalist Sir Peter O'Sullivan, who is also an honorary chairman of the gallery. A week ago, it was the internationally renowned French equestrian artist, Hubert de Watrigant. Neither disappointed.



Above: 'Peloton' (The Pack). Below: 'White Horse'

If you love racing and Arabians in particular, but know little about equestrian art, the name will be familiar as de Watrigant is uncle to Nicholas and Damien. Born in 1954 in Landes, to a family immersed in racing for generations, he is self-taught, exhibiting his work since 1976. A year later he won a drawing prize in Rome and began to show his work in earnest. He first exhibited at the Osborne in 1996 and is the most important artist to be represented by this gallery, a leader in the field of Sporting Art.

He has exhibited worldwide and private collectors include Her Majesty the Queen, HM the King of Morocco, HH Sheikh Mohammed al Thani, Mr & Mrs John Magnier and the Wildenstein and Niarchos families.

His style is figurative, but his experimental techniques in a variety of mediums



have been described as 'impressionist'. In addition to his paintings and drawings, he worked with Hermès for a number of years producing designs for their scarves, including 'Horse Ballet', 'Jump', 'Racetrack Sketch' and 'Plaza de Toros'.



In the catalogue foreword, Sir Peter O'Sullivan describes him as “an artist of truly outstanding talent.”

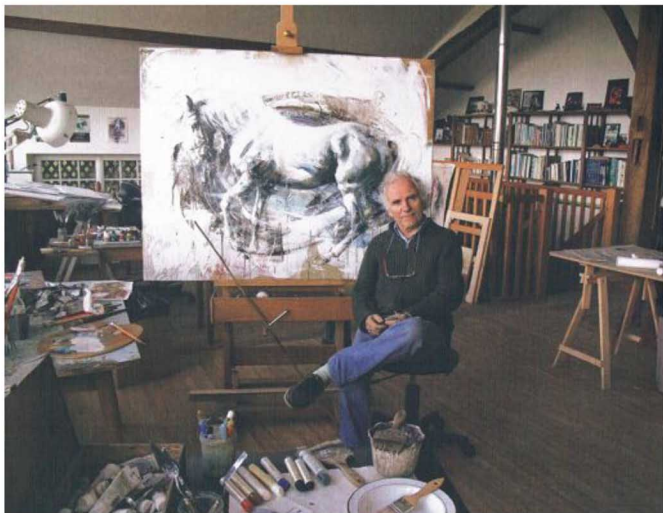
He continues. “An early passion for studying horses in his father’s stables developed into a lifelong obsession. Heading to Paris from the family home in South West France, Hubert supported himself in a variety of occupations before being able to devote himself entirely to his dream of painting full time.

“Oil, gouache, watercolour, acrylic and ink, on surfaces ranging from canvas to racecards, help him create the fervour and excitement of his subjects. Each painting speaks of de Watrigant’s deep appreciation and knowledge of his métier, and yet they are fearless, passionate and unexpected.”



Above: 'Arabian'

Below: 'Couvertures Bleues'



Of his work de Watrigant says "I don't focus on the main events and principal actions, I prefer to linger on details. At the racecourse, I am more interested in the jockey adjusting a stirrup or the lad waiting with his horse. I have a tendency to pick up my binoculars when others put them down."

The exhibition of 50 paintings and drawings, was timed to coincide with Royal Ascot and runs until the 10th July.

The Osborne Studio Gallery,
2 Motcomb Street,
London,
SW1X 8JU

www.osg.uk.com



Above: Hubert de Watrigant in his studio

Below: 'Après Le Poteau'
(After the Finishing Post)