

# LONDON'S LEADING GALLERY FOR SPORTING ART

OSBORNE STUDIO GALLERY CELEBRATES THE HORSE IN ART

BY THEO WOODHAM SMITH

WITH AN ALL STAR EXHIBITION, "CELEBRATING THE TURF"  
COINCIDING WITH ROYAL ASCOT

GEOFFREY HUGHES, DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER OF OSBORNE STUDIO GALLERY, IS A LOVER OF HORSE RACING AND THE RACING WORLD. FOR AT LEAST TWENTY FIVE YEARS HE HAS HELD AN ANNUAL SHOW OF CONTEMPORARY EQUESTRIAN ART DURING ASCOT WEEK, FIVE DAYS OF THE BEST RACING IN THE WORLD, FROM JUNE 19<sup>TH</sup> UNTIL JUNE 23<sup>RD</sup> 2018.



Royal Ascot, despite press concentration on its extravagant fashion parade, is one of the world's greatest sporting events. It is the highlight of the British flat racing season, a favorite with the British Royal family.

When James I set eyes on the village of New Market in 1605, he knew it was destined for equestrian greatness. Since then it's been known as the home of horseracing in England.

Ascot followed a little over a hundred years later, founded in 1711 by Queen Anne, a fanatical follower of the hunt. She discovered the open heath, an ideal racecourse, one day while out riding near Windsor Castle. The opening race of Royal Ascot commemorates her find with the Queen Anne Stakes.

Osborne Studio Gallery has been established since 1986, at its present address in Belgravia (near Harrods, grand private mansions and embassies) since 2006. It is London's leading gallery for contemporary equestrian painting and sculpture, with a particular focus on the racing world.

Geoffrey Hughes grew up listening to the late Sir Peter O'Sullivan's racing commentaries on the BBC. As a boy it transported him to 'a much bigger, more interesting world'. 'At six or seven years old', he says: 'my twin brother and I would race around the school playground pretending to be jockeys.'





the heart of English racing country, with her four children, and her husband, racehorse trainer and former champion jump jockey, Jamie Osborne. Her work is in the collections of the Duke of Edinburgh, the Earl and Countess of Derby, and too long a list of important owners, breeders, nobility, gentry and assorted celebrities to list here.

**ALISTAIR LITTLE** began his artistic career as a model maker, but moved on to become a commercial illustrator. He reveres the work of Norman Rockwell, 20<sup>th</sup> century master of depicting small town America. His own work reflects his love of 50's and 60's Hollywood films. His pictures engage the attention through his gift for unfolding a story. He was encouraged by a collector to unravel the world of racing by painting its characters behind the scenes.

**FREDDY PASKE**, a former soldier, is now a professional artist working in London and Hampshire. He started painting in childhood, and developed his talent throughout his previous career with the British army. In 2014 he

exhibited and sold all his sketches from his operational tour in Afghanistan. In 2017 Freddy established residencies with the Household Cavalry, Tattersalls auctioneers, and the Jockey Club to create a body of work celebrating the horse.

**MICHELLE MCCULLAGH** lives and works in Dorset. She graduated from Falmouth College of Art with a Fine Art degree in 2008. Equestrian painting is her first interest and favorite subject.

There have been five solo exhibitions of her work in London and Dorset, since winning first prize for Best Painting at her first show at the Mall Galleries. Among notable collectors of her work are the Duke of Roxburghe, Jilly Cooper (the popular novelist who writes about the world of racing and polo) Sheikh Fahad Al-Thani and the Guards Polo Club. Her first book, 'Racing' was published last year, featuring life drawings which show her dedication to capturing the horse in movement.

The 'Voice of Racing', Sir Peter O'Sullivan, became a close friend, and on his retirement, Chairman of Osborne Studio Gallery. When Sir Peter died in 2015, Geoffrey took charge of his vast collection of memorabilia, even living in his flat to organize the mountains of paper. The gallery put on an exhibition of Sir Peter's favorite artwork and personal ephemera, including letters from HM The Queen and HRH The Queen Mother, even race cards, scribbled with eloquent asides.

Geoffrey has assembled a galaxy of front runners for this important show; most have sold their work to leading owners and breeders in the Middle East.

### THE ARTISTS IN BRIEF - EIGHT OF THE MOST GIFTED BRITISH CONTEMPORARY EQUESTRIAN ARTISTS REPRESENTED AT THE SHOW

**SUSAN CRAWFORD** is, according to Geoffrey Hughes, 'doyenne of British sporting painters.' She studied classical drawing in Florence. She is known for her 'convincing portraits of stars of the turf' including twenty two Derby winners, and commissions for the Royal family, headed by HM The Queen, the Queen Mother and HRH Prince of Wales. Her work has been exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery, the Queens Gallery, the Royal Academy and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

**NICHOLA EDDERY** is an equestrian princess, born into a horse racing dynasty. Her father, Pat, was eleven times champion jockey. Nichola is dedicated to the techniques of Old Master drawing and painting. She was commissioned to paint a portrait of Frankel, the Wonder Horse, for the Newmarket Museum, inspired by a racecourse scene by George Stubbs. Her work is in the private collections of HRH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Thani, three Saudi Royal princes, and the Spanish Duchess of Durcal.

**CHARLIE LANGTON** is a painter and sculptor in bronze dedicated to the thoroughbred. In his own words, 'In particular it is the difference in attitude, character and physicality that sets the champion racehorse apart.' The owners of Yeats, the only horse to win the Ascot Gold Cup four times in succession, call his sculpture of the superstar 'magnificent.'

**MAO WEN BIAO** was born in Beijing, moved to London in 1984, studied at the Royal College of Art. Over the past thirty years he has gained an international reputation for monumental paintings and murals. He has an extraordinary ability to capture the dynamism of the race horse, becoming a world leader in sporting art.

**KATIE O'SULLIVAN** has been described as 'outstanding equestrian painter in the British Isles'. She was brought up steeped in horses in rural Ireland and studied contemporary art at the Chelsea School of Art. She works in Lambourn,

