

Brushstrokes of Majesty

Magali Laurent

and her Passion for Horses



The artist and one of her sculptures

■ *by Judith Wenning*

Painting, sculpting, photography, saddlery, breeding ... Magali Laurent's passion for horses knows no boundaries. Her paintings are easily recognizable: vivid colors, lively, powerful scenes, often horses in motion, always elegant and noble. The art of Magali Laurent is a kind of insider tip. Her works don't look modern, but seem to reminiscent the "good old times" of horse art in the 19th century.

"Together with my husband Alain, I live in the central-east of France in the countryside, in Nièvre not far from the famous Loire River with our three Andalusian stallions, which are kept at our home", Magali Laurent relates. "The stalls are just five meters from the house. I love the countryside."

Then she continues: "This is my typical day: I get up around 7:00 or 7:30 a.m. and immediately go to feed hay to my pure Spanish stallion Zarkam in his stall, then I take care of my cat and have breakfast. I get dressed and



Dévi



Almost free



Dry pastels, without title

go outside about an hour later, where I feed Zarkam grain and muck out his stall. Then I go to work in my studio until around 12:30 p.m. I have lunch around 1:30 p.m. and then at 3 p.m. I go back to my studio. Around 5 p.m. in winter and 7 p.m. in summer, I go out to work with my horse, muck out his stall again, and give him his hay for the night.”

Asked when she first encountered Arabian horses, Magali Laurent explains: “I first encountered Arabian Horses at the World Championships in Paris many years ago, and what impressed me most was the fineness of their coats,

their features, and the lightness of their gaits. Before, I liked to paint them for their beauty; today, I try to depict them in their natural environment, in full spirit. The expression in their eyes and nostrils is very important, so I emphasize that and try to be as accurate as possible.”

When asked about her favorite artists, Magali Laurent responds quickly: “Théodore Géricault and Alfred de Dreux. I love Géricault for the power of his paintings and the expressions of his horses, his boldness, his originality. And regarding Alfred de Dreux, I admire the anecdotes present in each painting, the richness of the tones and



Houria, or Freedom



The oriental horses



Without title

their nuances, the sheen of the horses. I also like Alfred Munnings for his play of light, Rosa Bonheur for the simplicity of her scenes of everyday life and her superb horse painting of a market – such a famous artwork!”

Magali Laurent finds her inspiration everything. Colors, attitudes, an atmosphere, a coat, an expression might find their way in her artwork. Her favorite techniques are almost everything available – oil, pastels, watercolors, pens, charcoal. She uses all techniques except acrylic. In sculpture, she loves plaster, plasticine or clay.



Sketch of a white stallion



The stop at the edge of the woods



Arabian rising his leg



Sketch of a grey stallion



Inappropriate hackling

When asked about the most difficult part in her artwork, Magali Laurent responds quickly: "Finding the right shades! Putting the light in the right place; knowing when to stop painting so I don't go too far. I'd also like to add fewer details and have a stronger touch. Sometimes I manage it, but it's rare." With a smile she continues: "Art isn't work for me, it's a vital need. I need it, it's as necessary as eating and drinking. A day without creating is a wasted day for me."

Magali Laurent has everything she needs at her place. When asked about future projects she remarks: "Maybe I go back to Spain to do some photo shoots. Some

immediate projects are to see Frédéric Jager again, the sculptor I admire enormously and who inspired me to sculpt. And to paint a large three-meter canvas with six horses pulling a chariot. Another project that is very close to my heart is to finish my bronze sculpture of three horses called "Les Racailles". It's a fairly large piece that has been sent for casting but is on hold due to a lack of funds."

Asked about her dreams for the future, Magali Laurent smiles: "Peace, tranquility, and the health I need to continue painting, sculpting, and taking care of my horse." □