

Snyder, Genevieve,
Hilltoppers, 24 x 18 in.



WHEN AN ARTIST SEES A HORSE

Three emerging artists find lifelong inspiration in horses and foxhunting.

BY JOSH WALKER

MAYBE FAMED CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHOR DR. SEUSS SAID IT BEST: "Art is when an artist looks at something, like a horse for instance, and they see something in that horse that excites them. So, they do something about it. They tell you about it in any number of ways."

When some artists look at a horse, they see a million things. Equestrians know how horses shape their lives and foxhunting is a special case in and of itself. We all feel it and that's part of what we love about it. But recording that feeling on canvas takes a special eye and a delicate hand.

These three artists all grew up with an adoration for art and horses and foxhunting. They all saw something that excited them, and they all did something about it.

Genevieve Snyder grew up riding in Chester County, Pennsylvania. She loved horses, and found just as much joy in drawing and painting them as in riding. After a 20-year hiatus, “I had just begun to ride again,” she says. “with the thought that I might hunt.” Unfortunately, a car accident shattered her leg before she could get into the field. Instead, she took to following Radnor Hunt in a car and snapping the photos from which she paints. “Some things may be for the best,” she says. “The angle from the ground, while not as fun as [on a] horse, makes for better paintings.”

“The red coats were a siren’s song to my artist eye,” she continues. “Originally, I was drawn to that pop of color. As I followed the hunt more, I began to really see the relationship between man and animal. How they need and rely on each other is impressive. That is my inspiration now.”

Snyder lives with her husband, Eric, near Radnor’s territory. She began her art career in television set design but shifted her focus solely to painting in 2005. She works mostly in oil because of the medium’s forgiving nature, but also, “I feel like oils, unlike acrylic and watercolor, is the only medium that can give me the depth of color I am looking for,” she says.

She loves a backlit look and enjoys the challenge that technique creates on a canvas. To compliment the ethereal serenity of some of her hunt scenes, she also captures the dynamic movement and playfulness of hounds as they roll in the grass and toss their legs in the air. Her muse is a hound she adopted from Radnor.



As a supporter of land conservation, she donated 50 percent of the sales from her first solo show last December at the Rushton Conservation Center to the Willistown Conservation Trust. Located in Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, the Willistown Conservation Trust is a nonprofit that aims to manage and preserve the land, character, recreational, historic, agricultural and natural resources of the Willistown area and nearby communities. Its Rushton Conservation Center, a rustic timber-frame gathering space, features a variety of events each year that help engage the public and illustrate the Trust’s mission.

“I was humbled by the turnout,” Snyder says. “It has also been an honor for my work to be used for posters, calendars, and featured in magazines.”



THE RED COATS WERE A GENEVIEVE



Opposite page top: Snyder, Genevieve, *Adoration*, oil on board, 20 x 16 in. Opposite page bottom: Snyder, Genevieve, *Portrait of a Radnor Hound*, 12 x 9 in. Left: Snyder, Genevieve, *On Alert*, 18 x 24 in.

SIREN'S SONG

SNYDER

“ As I followed the hunt more, I began to really see the relationship between man and animal. That is my inspiration now.

One of Lauren Fanning's earliest memories is sitting at the end of the bar at her parent's restaurant drawing horses on the waitresses' notepads. She had always loved horses and took riding lessons through high school. Though she also continued pursuing art and took drawing lessons, she opted for a less financially risky route in college and studied aerospace engineering at Penn State University. She worked in the field for twelve years and it wasn't until one of her customers invited her to hunt with Green Spring Valley Hounds as a guest that she fell in love with the sport. After that, it didn't take long to weave it into her art and lifestyle. "That first chase over gorgeous territory had me completely hooked," she says.

Fanning and her husband, Matthew, had just started their family when she was laid off from that job. It compelled her to consider a more flexible way to make a living while raising two children. "Suddenly I was left with a one-year-old, another on the way, and the flexibility to consider a new career," she says.

"One of my biggest inspirations when I started was Lisa of Lachri Fine Art," she continues. "Her excellent colored pencil tutorials gave me the technical skills to bring photo realistic portraits to life and that in turn gave me the confidence to pursue a career in art. My daughter was twelve months old when I transitioned to full-time stay-at-home mom. I unpacked my old colored pencils because it was a medium that was safe to use at the table with her and also one that I could quickly and easily set aside during her frequent interruptions."

She started crafting from photographed experiences to build a body of work. She generated income by taking commissions to paint horse and pet portraits. She most enjoys working with oil paints. "The challenge of trying to capture a horse's strength and expression in a painting will keep me occupied for a lifetime," she says. "It's also important for me to have a deep understanding of the three-dimensional forms that a photograph can't convey. But luckily, I have four live models at home that I can run my hands over and study," she adds referring to her three hunt horses and kids' miniature horse, Peewee.

Her favorite piece is called *Snarky Fox*. In the portrait of a sitting fox, Fanning strives to capture the complex and charismatic personality of the creature in his wry expression and clever eyes. "He has so much expression in his tiny eyes. The whole painting is only eight inches wide and his face is about the size of a quarter, but his disdain for being interrupted is palpable from across the room," she says.

She continues taking commissions and photos, and still hunts with Green Spring Valley Hounds in Reisterstown, Maryland. She says she ends each outing mentally refreshed and grinning from ear to ear. Her now 5-year-old daughter, Evie, often rides Peewee around their property. Likewise, Ryan, 3, cheers, "Trot, Peewee, trot!" as he bounces along.



“ He has so much expression in his tiny eyes ... his disdain for being interrupted is palpable from across the room.

SO MUCH EXPRESSION

LAUREN



Opposite page top:
Fanning, Lauren, *Emmy
aka Absolute Empress*,
pastel and colored
pencil on sanded
panel, 12 x 16 in.
Opposite page bottom:
Fanning, Lauren,
Sapphire, oil paint on
hard board, 11 x 14 in.
Left: Fanning, Lauren,
Snarky Fox, oil paint on
aluminium composite
panel, 8 x 10 in.

FANNING

When Anne Stoeber was 12, she won a two-week riding camp experience as an award for work she displayed at an art show. Her early passion for art connected her to horses and it eventually drew her back to the saddle at the age of 55. Now 59, she enjoys taking lessons, and though she doesn't hunt or show, she finds inspiration in the details and unexpected colors of the foxhunting and equestrian lifestyles.

Stoeber lives with her husband, Ralph, in Succasunna, New Jersey. She always enjoyed drawing and painting horses, even though her participation with them in sport has been minimal. "I love bringing an animal to life on the canvas," she says. She studied art at The Newark School of Fine and Industrial Art and gained some experience as a graphic artist after graduation. Ultimately, though, she returned to the canvas to do commissioned pet portraits and bring quiet moments with animals to life with oil paint.

"The quality of the animals and the environment in which foxhunting takes place is what drew me to the sport as an artistic subject," she says. Her piece, *Ready and Waiting*, doesn't come from any specific hunt but is a composite of reference material. "Having grown up in northern New Jersey and having access to beautiful horses and rolling countryside my entire life, I was inspired to put together an ideal hunt scene from photographs to paint." She says these types of scenes combine every artistic and compositional element she loves to work with, and she hopes to produce more.

All three artists profiled here are members of the American Academy of Equine Art, whose mission is to nurture, advise, educate, and promote those artists interested in the classical representation of the equine subject. Visit AAEA.net for more information.

"I look for quiet spaces within vibrant environments," she says. "I always look for the contrast of bright light and shadow. The subject matter alone is not what compels me. It is the addition of sharply defined patterns and shapes created by this light, and the intensity of color contained within. I want to document it, make it solid and crisp, paying attention to unnoticed details and making them interesting."

Stoeber presented her first solo show in 2018 at Studio 7 Art Gallery in Bernardsville, New Jersey. Her work has been featured in juried exhibits throughout the state and includes a Best in Show honor at the Tewksbury Juried Art Exhibit in 2017. 🍎

Josh Walker is a regular contributor to many equestrian publications. He currently resides in Charleston, South Carolina.

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QUIET SPACES WITHIN ANNE



VIBRANT ENVIRONMENTS

STOEBER

Opposite page:
Stoeber, Anne, *Ready
and Waiting*, 20 x 30
in. Above: Stoeber,
Anne, *Horse in Stable*,
30 x 30 in.