

SUSAN LEYLAND - Gallery Tornabuoni May 2008 Exhibition FROM DRAWING TO SCULPTURE

A British national, Susan Leyland has been living and working in Italy for many years.

When she was only four years old her grandfather gave her a pony, which has been, needless to say, the most formative gift of her life. Her fascination with horses, both their physical and psychological constitution only grew over the years, and ten years ago she began to combine this passion with her love of art.

Her first exhibition of sculpture and drawings was inaugurated in 1998 and was received with much acclaim by both horse lovers and art collectors alike. Susan strives for simplicity and balance in her work. She aspires to be able to suggest in one gesture, or one line of pencil that which could be conveyed in two, limiting the material detail to what is necessary in order to capture a sense of the subject in question, and allowing the viewer to conjure the rest from his or her imagination. This is an ongoing investigation for Susan, who through a combination of careful study and trial-and-error, continues to develop and progress as an artist.

Her sculptures and drawings capture, with a sensitive yet assured touch both the magnificence and the fragility of these mystical creatures. The depth of representation in Susan's work is achieved through a detailed knowledge and understanding of horses, both in terms of their form and musculature and the expression of their psychological character, particularly when interacting with each other and the world around them. Susan Leyland's horses manifest a level of emotion that almost personifies them, while at the same time becoming an expression of the artist's psychological condition during the creative process. Because of this each drawing and sculpture is unique, carrying with it a piece of Susan's spirit and passion.

Susan Leyland's celebrated horse sculptures are presented today beside the preparatory drawings and sketches that inspired them. These, which at the same time as being artworks in their own right, demonstrate Susan's creative process first hand.

Jessie Shane