

Golden Stallion

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My theme of horses began with observational studies of the horse to understand motion, proportion, and personality of the breed. I got familiar with my topic by getting up close and personal with my subject. I focused on specific features to understand the subtle nuances of a line contoured and angle. If I don't observe or adhere to that I get a rubbery stick horse. It's all about the subtlety. This led me to examine and inquire the different mythological horse legends. Drawn to distinct features of Olidon Redon's Pegasus with his majestic feathery wings I began to think about where you might see such a mystical being. I imagined the places he existed I wondered what colours and scenery would appear. I experimented with various coloured horses and styles where I simplified certain features like the narrowing of the legs and muzzle to the more curved attributes of the rump. I explored different patterns to create different horses, they are bright, different, unusual extravagant because of its intense bold saturated colours. The muscular stallion is accentuated by a halo of golden light. Illuminated every feature muscle tension is evident and prominent so that his aura that cannot be missed. I struggled with the shift between solid and transparent as I mapped out his features. An initial assessment led me to create a simple outline that held its own and was subtly toned to build form. What emerged was a tightly cropped head bust from a merry-go-round. It was the determined power of the pose which caught my attention.

Carnival 60x76cm, acrylic on canvas represents the excitement of a carousel ride and features a proud stallion closely framed headshot frozen in time. The perspective dramatises his strength and scale as he stares you down. The flowing colourful mane is simply tamed by the emerald green and dark blue, crimson red decorative bridal and yellow rosette. Carnival's strength and vitality holds similarities to Marcia Baldwin's muscular qualities created through precise tonal blending of paint, which is further enhanced by the contrasting golden background whose metallic values contrasts to the muscle tension adding to the plastic surface. The shiny coat, the eye's catchlight and open mouth all reveal the stallion's alertness and wild nature. The subtle observe contours and tonal details are reminiscent of horse painters Suzanne Garnier and Debbie Dunbar's illuminations. This is reinforced in the stallion's three-dimensional form as he appears ready to break free from the carousel and gallop away at any moment.

Working with tonal values I appreciated Franz Marc's blue horses, which began my exploration of monochromatic horse series culminating in my second major painting Golden Stallion 76x60c, acrylic on canvas. Golden Stallion romanticizes the power of the stallion using light. This energises the outline as the horse remains part transparent against a backdrop of wide yellow vertical stripes. This is contrasted to the twist of the head angle expressing the stallion's wild spirit. The delicate transparent effect adds to the spirit as you imagine the stallion galloping towards you filling the canvas. There is no fear just pure energy as the mix of sketched lines and painted strokes combine effectively to create a physical truth much like Desire Doecette horse observations. The dominating brown mid tones to black shading successfully sculpts the stallion's masculine power. The bolder tones are marked at the front of the body while softer tones are applied to the back end. The line pressure lightens effectively changing the perspective creating distance pushed further into the foreground with bolder lines.

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Kin to artist Tarallo Baun realism each angle of my golden horse has been carefully applied to create a striking realism and natural movement. The overall success is in the foundation of golden light which holds an angelic luminous quality of a Debbie Richmond's They Run Wild painting.

Preferring a surreal fantasy direction as an alternate vision for my theme I sculpted Rainbow Dreams, (60x70x65cm), with aerosols, packing foam, wood, and cotton.

Rainbow Dreams is about the fantasies of ombre coloured horses frolicking in a dreamland. A small herd magically appear from the misty glowing hills. These hills frame and form valleys leading you towards the winding road. You follow the trail with the horses leading you into a magical scene of subtle gradient crescent. Their iridescent colours suggest an untouched pure utopia where nothing touches, and nothing takes over where the wild brumby run free. With windswept manes and thick unbrushed tails they gather as one. The shimmering clouds drift seamlessly amongst the glistening light rain showing the underlying beauty of this rugged land. Successfully utilising the colour perspective control of artist Elana Shived ensured the landscape receded. Nick Gustafson sculpted colour gradients are built in Rainbow Dreams' model horses with similar harmonious values and matching tints that contour from head to tail.

I have a better understanding of the use of colour its value and its saturation points. This means I have more confidence in the ability to contrast and manipulate acrylic paint to achieve a meaningful story. Using a singular colour palette, I have achieved true depth and movement in my subjects which has made me appreciate the atmospheric dialogue with my painting. The strength of colour to contour and enrich the form, is about knowing how to do this. I have been able to give weight to my subject, so they come alive leaping off the canvas.

I realise this natural world preserves the links between people, land, time, and place. My successful paintings have given nature a voice, suggesting the power of light to and line to fill this world. Art is talking about experiences and showing a journey that challenges and makes respectful connections to culture and staying strong.

Personally, art means the freedom and passion to explore ideas and reflect the past in contemporary terms so it can be easily understood by my generation. It helps me telling stories from my perspective and interests to make the world a more informed place.