

Renegade I (detail)
Mixed Media 32 x 57 inches

THOMPSON'S
MARYLEBONE

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www.thompsonsgallery.com

JO TAYLOR

Rolling Horses
Mixed Media 30 x 40 inches



JO TAYLOR

LIFTING THE SKIN

An exhibition of new paintings from recent travels to France and Argentina

3rd – 23rd DECEMBER 2008

Private View Tuesday 2nd December 6.00 – 8.00 pm

All paintings are available for sale on receipt of the catalogue. Further works can be viewed on our website from 25th November
www.thompsonsgallery.com

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Monday to Friday: 10am-6pm

Saturday: 11am-5pm

Sunday: 11am-4pm

FOREWORD

From those first tubby chestnuts of the Lascaux cavemen through the caparisoned mounts of medieval knights to Leonardo's rearing battering-rams or Stubbs' equine supermodels, the horse has picked its proud way through our civilisations. Of all our fellow creatures, it has been our most important companion. No wonder that artists across the centuries should have tried to capture it, to speak of its power and its drama, its courage and grace.

Jo Taylor joined a longstanding tradition when, as an art student in Leeds, she first decided to go back to a childhood passion, and take this animal as her main subject. She has been studying it ever since. Like some modern day Stubbs she has attended post-mortem examinations, unpicking the complexities of muscle and ligament and bone. She has sat by freezing northern gallops watching the racehorses thundering by at full stretch. She has crouched for hours in the corners of stables. She has carried her sketchbooks from Cowdray Park through Patagonia to the Subcontinent.

She herself is an accomplished horsewoman, riding out over her native Lancashire fells alone with the wind and the sleet and her following greyhound. As an artist, working always from experience, she translates what she sees and feels and senses onto (often huge) sheets of paper or canvases, her lines unspooling with a streaming fluency, flung upwards like a neck, thrown outwards like a leap. She has captured the patterns and shapes of movement from the tautness of reined back impatience to the flow of an effortless pace. The viewer can sense the engagement she has with her subject. He can feel the relationship between human and horse.

This is a relationship that has long fascinated Taylor and now, in her latest works, it leads her into the bull ring. It is a primal world: a brutal arena that, in twenty minutes, can turn a fabulous, proud creature into a sack of flesh. But in the corrida horse and man come together in a working situation, explains Taylor. Strangely entranced she felt it was like a hypnotic experience.

Now, she takes the bull as her subject as often as the horse. Its huge dark masses become almost a landscape of muscle. And we are made part of its world: we hear the rumble of hooves as it thunders into the ring, feel the bunch of its strength, snort the alien atmosphere, sense the surge of pained anger, the trembling poise of bewilderment.

Taylor captures the shapes and the patterns and the energy of these creatures. Her surfaces - charcoal, chalks, watercolour, acrylics, bitumen and wax - gather a momentum of their own. Sometimes she flings sand or grit at the canvas. She lets wet paint stream and adds collaged pieces to accentuate bulk. Like heavy black tanks, her bulls thunder towards their doom.

Her horses, too, become engines of war. They chuck up their heads and lash out against canvases too small to contain them, or collapse, legs buckling beneath them amid splatters of blood. This is the equine as a frightening, untamable creature. These are less horses than forces running out of control. For Taylor, it feels less like a finale than a fresh start.

Rachel Campbell-Johnston



Renegade I Mixed Media 32 x 57 inches



Fighting Horse I Oil on canvas 44 x 36 inches



Fighting Horse II Oil on canvas 44 x 36 inches

Hard Gaucho Mixed Media 29 x 56 inches





Rejoneador Mixed Media 51 x 31 inches



The Rider I Mixed Media 47 x 31 inches

Vaquero Mixed Media 45 x 32 inches (right)





Silence Mixed Media 37 x 32 inches

Twisted Bull Mixed Media 41 x 57 inches (right)





Fighting Horses I
Mixed Media
61 x 41 inches

Fighting Horses II
Mixed Media
58 x 44 inches (right)





Fallen Horse I Mixed Media 44 x 59 inches



Fallen Horse II Mixed Media 44 x 59 inches



Fallen Horse III Mixed Media 44 x 59 inches



Closer Mixed Media 32 x 57 inches (left)

Thinking Bull Mixed Media 38 x 59 inches



Pale Bull Mixed Media 31 x 56 inches



Renegade II Mixed Media 32 x 57 inches

Quiet Horse (Study 1) Mixed Media 30 x 28 inches (right)





Luis' Horse Mixed Media 33 x 60 inches



Manifesto Mixed Media 33 x 60 inches

Glistening Horse II Mixed Media 31 x 29 inches (left)



Phantom Oil on canvas 61 x 84 inches

3 Spiders Eggs Mixed Media 32 x 57 inches (left)



Crow I Charcoal 21 x 29 inches

The Rider (study) Sepia Ink 7 x 13 inches



Breaking the Roan Mixed Media 33 x 52 inches



Plain Criollo Oil on canvas 44 x 36 inches

Fearless Horse Mixed Media 25 x 31 inches (right)



JO TAYLOR

1969 Born Lancashire
1988–91 Leeds Metropolitan University
Honorary Fellow, University of Liverpool
2003 Artist in Residence, Faculty of Veterinary Science
University of Liverpool

Solo Exhibitions

2008 Thompson's Gallery, London
2007 Campden Gallery, Gloucestershire
2006 Thompson's Gallery, London
2005 Campden Gallery, Gloucestershire
2004 The City Gallery, London
2003 The City Gallery, London
2001 The City Gallery, London
1999 Thompson's Gallery, Stow on the Wold
1999 The Schoolhouse Gallery, Norfolk
1997 The National Horseracing Museum, Newmarket

Notable Collections & Commissions.

The Duke & Duchess of Westminster
The Duke & Duchess of Bedford
The Earl Cadogan
Nicky Henderson
Mrs D. Nicholson
Lord & Lady Oaksey
Liverpool University

Reviews & Publications.

2006 Rachel Campbell-Johnston, December 3rd
2004 Jane Wheatley, The Times, 30th October
Emma Collings, Horse & Hound, 28th October
2003 Rachel Campbell-Johnston, The Times, April 5th
Jane Wheatley, The Times, March 29th
2002 Clare Stewart, The Times
Emma Collings, Pacemaker & Thoroughbred Breeder
Mark Hedges, Horse & Hound
2001 Rachel Campbell-Johnston, The Times
Clare Stewart, The Times
Tony Paley, The Observer
1997 Channel 4 Racing
Sylvia Loch, The Classical Rider

