

Astrid Harrisson

In this issue we feature the wonderful studies of polo ponies taken by Astrid Harrisson – her passion of the quintessence of all things horse are expressed through her camera's lens.

From Pegasus, winged horse of Zeus, to the Centaurs of Ancient Mythology and the Assyrian cavalry of Mesopotamia, the mythic quality of the horse has never failed to seize the imagination of generations down the ages; none more so than Astrid, whose mind's eye has been held captive by the spirit of the horse. Happiest with camera and on horseback, Astrid seeks to capture a spectrum of equine freedom – her passion for horses, but also her creativity. From the foothills of the Andes in Argentina to the Mustangs of America's Wild West and the rugged territories of Cuba's Pinar del Rio region, Astrid has tracked the scent of the horse through the open pampas, the terrain of the gaucho and the field of battle of the polo players alike.

A note from Astrid:

"The truth about what I do is underpinned by the fact I shy away from rules. I guess I am an experimenter, a dreamer and an adventurer – and those traits are enabling me to distinguish myself from other equine artists and to develop a signature style. Each project I undertake is different from the next and my services thus entirely bespoke. Ultimately, my work is about an animal that so many people love and admire; an animal that never ceases to inspire and amaze, and one that is deeply integrated into societies the world over. Herein lies my fascination. Nothing beats the moment I look through my lens at an elegant, toned, spirited beast with pumped-up veins, sharp eyes and attentive ears... and a little bit of attitude. I am a behind-the-scenes kind of girl, a voyeur of sorts but one that also likes to get noticed; I will sit for hours if need be, until I get the attention of my subject. Contrastingly, I'll happily sit unnoticed at the sidelines of a polo match, capturing the speed and effervescence of a game (whilst my competitive spirit twinges and I ache to be aboard one of the beautiful ponies partaking in the match).

A forthcoming move to Cirencester should provide opportunity aplenty for me to get both behind the lens, under girth and over saddle. I understand that the local equine community has heard I am coming and they are already gathering gate-side, tousling manes and polishing hooves...."

Recent commissions have taken Astrid to polo and racing events throughout the UK. Working visits to Iceland, Andalusia and Menorca occupied much of her time throughout 2009.

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