

HELSINGIN SANOMAT

Art : The painter Marie Sand is interested in the sensitivity of horses and has started to draw them.

« Horses speak the language of emotions »

Marie Sand will teach to « Draw a live horse » in Pannuhalli at the Cable Factory this Saturday.



The French painter Marie Sand likes how horses are sensitive and expressive. The horse Santtu is four years old and often a model for her art. **By Elina Rimaila HS**

Fear. She was scared of horses. The painter Marie Sand was only eight years old but she couldn't help going back to the stables for her horse riding lessons. She was falling off the horse quite often.

« I was afraid to fall off horses », tells Sand.

Her parents have tried to tell her that she didn't have to ride, and that she could do other activities but for Marie Sand it wasn't that simple.

« I love horses. I have always loved horses », says Marie Sand.

Love and fear are strong and physical feelings.

« Horses speak the language of emotions. They use all their senses, more specially the sense of touch », says Marie Sand.

« I have never liked to compete, in fact I only wanted to be with them and to feel their warmth ».

It is later that horses have become part of Marie Sand's career. She has been a full time painter since 2014. On Saturday, she will facilitate a drawing workshop "Draw a live horse" in the Cable Factory [ex-Nokia factory] in Helsinki where it will be possible to draw a live horse. The horse Santtu and the pony Mimi of Annalan stables will model in front of participants (adults and young adults only).

Marie Sand teaches to paint and draw with what people feel. She believes sensations come before techniques when one creates.

« I want students to focus on what they feel rather than solely rely on what they see ».

This requires, according to Marie Sand, that we let the horse guide us. It sometimes means that the pose changes every second. As a live model, horses are very different from human models. They move freely and this can be very frustrating.

Marie Sand creates also custom-tailored art pieces called emotion portraits™. She paints and draws the portrait of clients not based on how they look like but based on the memories and sensations of their relationship with horses. She uses horses or nature as a mirror to translate what they feel.

A number of clients who commission her are also men. They come from the business and legal world where there isn't much space for feelings. It's a world where everything needs to be planned, anticipated. There is indeed in the horse world a magical part where spontaneity rules and smoothen the thickest skins.

« It's very simple. You just have to go back to your memories and feelings for the horse. It flows quite naturally ».

Marie Sand is impressed by what we can feel in a stable. In fact she isn't the only one as millions of people are the same. We can tell what we feel to a horse, talk about our griefs and get comfort from touching and being with the horse. This is why we use horses in therapy with disabled for example.

« Horses are sensitive beings. They mirror our emotions ».

Marie Sand is also very interested in the sensitivity of the horse. She always talks about how important it is to listen to them. But what can we learn from horses? To listen. To leave the analytical brain on the side and to listen to the body.

« Horses pay attention to their senses, much more than us, because their life depends on it ».

Horse is a prey. Their legs react before they think about the situation because their defense system is to escape. This is why they can teach us to listen to our senses and emotions. Marie Sand draws on this strength of the horse to approach drawing.

Marie Sand talks about being a sensitive child in an environment that discourages the expression of emotions. This is why she kept them for herself, deep down.

Later, Marie Sand has worked as an environmentalist while studying art. It is with art that horses came back in her life. She found out that she was expressing her own feelings when she was drawing horses. People found that her drawing of horses were very expressive.

Marie Sand regrets that some horses lose their sensitivity in certain human worlds.

« For some people, a horse is a recreational object like a tennis racket. It is very sad ».

When horses are treated like an object they learn to hide their sensitivity. They resigned themselves. They protect themselves.

There are a lot of similarities with humans.

Who ?

Marie Sand

- Painter from Normandy and Auvergne in France – grew up in Paris
- Has studied in Washington DC and Paris
- Has worked for the World Wildlife Fund
- Came in Finland with her husband in May 2017
- Winter is her favorite season because of the beautiful light.

Article also published in the web version of Helsingin Sanomat, January 18, 2018

<https://www.hs.fi/kaupunki/art-2000005529019.html>