

30. Culture.

ÅLAND

Cover Page

Portraits with Emotion by Marie Sand page 30

» **New exhibition** Galleri Skarpans



Tonight, French artist Marie Sand's first exhibition in Åland opens at Galleri Skarpans. Among other things, she puts on display her emotional horse-portraits – which really are portraits of people she has met. Photo: Robert Jansson

Painting Through the Eye of the Horse

Roughly a year ago, French artist Marie Sand visited Åland along with her husband, who is the French ambassador in Finland. It was a two-day visit, but Marie stayed for a week, fascinated by the Ålandic landscape.

“There are so many pink and emerald green hues here. I mainly use the so-called Italian palette when I paint,” she says.

It is a fairly muffled palette, with ochre-yellow, red venetian, white, and black. She also likes the blue-violet Nordic light, differing from the southern warm, orange light.

“The light is actually quite crazy up here.”

Waiting for the moment

At Galleri Skarpans, she exhibits, among other things, a series of small Ålandic landscape pictures, made outdoors.

“I wait for the right moment, for when something happens to the place.

When the fairies appear and start talking with you, as I like to think,” she says with a smile. That is where the name of the exhibition comes from: Talk a Walk on the Fairy Trail. She wants to work in the border zone, where creativity takes over, and new and unplanned things happen.

“I guess that’s what the creative process is, that you don’t really know what you’re doing.”

Studies of horses

The other half of the exhibition consists of horse studies. But the animals are in fact portraits of people. Marie Sand explains that she finds the horses to be a more true and naked way of depicting people and their feelings.

“When I’m talking with someone, I see inner images that function as a reflection of their personalities. It can, for example, be animals, landscapes, and flowers.”

“If I depict the human as a horse, I go past the surface and the person’s own story about themselves. It’s more unadulterated that way.”

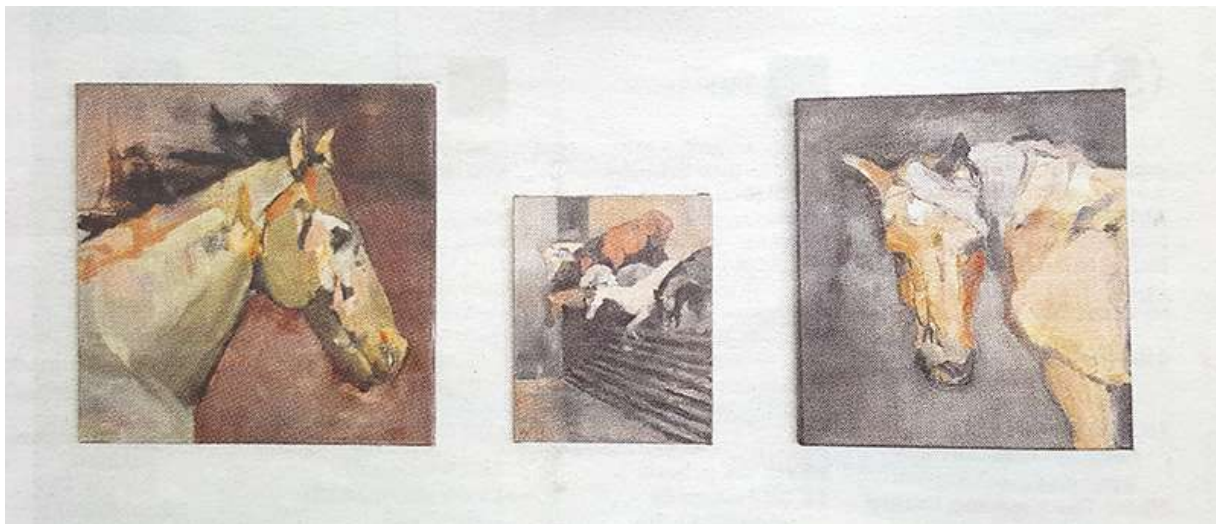
She describes herself as hypersensitive, and she recognises herself in the horses’ constant plumbing of what is happening around them.

“They can seem calm, but if you look at their ears they are constantly moving and taking in their surroundings.”

She grew up with horses, but she had never considered using them artistically until a severe health-crisis in her mid-twenties.

“When I afterwards began to paint again, I suddenly realised how important horses are for me and the way I experience reality. They express themselves with a language of emotions.”

She got involved in environmental questions and started working for the World Wildlife Fund. She started to paint 25 years. She now supports herself full-time as an artist. The exhibition opens tonight at Galleri Skarpans and lasts until June 22.



Marie Sand identifies with the horse’s hypersensitive sense for moods and emotions. She gladly portrays humans by depicting the inner images she gets of them, often in the shape of, indeed, horses. Photo: Robert Jansson

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