

DONNA BERNSTEIN

URBAN EQUINES

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Creating my art is a bit of a bareback ride; I combine mediums in new and regenerative ways that evoke movement, energy and life. Many of my works are large or life-sized urban equestrian paintings, "Urban Equines". By that I mean the energy, beauty, and classic equine form expressed in purely contemporary terms. What gives my work its

edge is a deep personal familiarity with the physical horse... and an expansive sense that the movement is bigger than what you see.

My approach combines a passion for the anatomical horse with a love both of classic gestural drawing and the element of surprise. Having been inspired by them at a young age I would sit entire days and watch, noticing every ripple in a muscle;

how they would flick the flies with their ears as they grazed, how they would jump for joy when the feeling arose. I studied their physiology, their bones, their illnesses and cures. I still have those many notebooks I wrote, as a student of the horse. I would then sketch from memory – never when I sat with them. But my memory, my imagination, my energetic connection to horses became stylized in my art.

Now I understand: It is not horses that I paint; I paint how they make me feel.

There is more to a horse than just a "picture" of him; there is a mythology, a symbolism; an ancient connection we can trace, all of which expresses for us a deep aliveness when we see him in all of his endeavours.

My process is infused with this mythology, this spirit, and a sense of the uplifting. Intuitive and athletic I move about large canvases placed strategically on the floor and allow these white spaces to co-create with me. With a focused attention to correctness in the attitude of the

horse, I paint in quick, concentrated actions, much as the horse moves, mixing mediums in a freshly layered spontaneity. Through a final series of wildly contained drips and splashes each horse's unique personality, conformation and place in the overall composition is revealed.

I believe that no matter how our culture moves beyond the speed of the horse, his true horsepower lies in his ability to inspire.

As my art continues to mature I blend the persistent complexities of power and vulnerability. I paint purely abstract pieces as well; these are full of bold lines and dynamic

colours, sparked by the element of the formless. I am seduced by such subtle nuances of feeling to abstraction.

I also co-create with designers and clients regularly on site-specific commissioned works. Elegant and sophisticated, my paintings articulate a simplicity of what is beautiful, and are at home in both formal collections as well as the large-scale spaces of modern design. 

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