

The Arabian Magazine Horse in Art Winner 2014

# Terence Gilbert SEA

For the second year, *The Arabian Magazine* supported the Society of Equestrian Artists with a prize for the best Arabian horse in any medium including sculpture. There was a great range of entries this year, but Terence Gilbert's *The Arabian* stood out as the clear winner. In this special edition, we find out more about Terence and his work, including his admiration for the Arabian horse.

Interview by Samantha Mattocks - Artwork by Terence Gilbert SEA



This page (right): Terence with Al Mesdan, taken at the Fern Hill Stables in 2000 when the artist painted him; below: Terence's winning portrait - 'The Arabian' oil and gold leaf.

Opposite page (from top): *Arabian Blue & Gold*; *A Desert Herd* and *Exercising in the Sea*.





Art has always been a big part of Terence's life; his father, John, worked at The National Gallery so art was always important. When he was just 12 years old, Terence won the *Daily Mirror Children's Art Competition*. The painting he did was of his back yard, as seen from the window of his parents London flat.

"The horses weren't far behind my win in this competition," says Terence. "My father was a real racing enthusiast, so I went all over the country with him to race meetings; you could say that racing was in my blood! I was just 14 years old when I started to paint horses and they are a subject that has continued to fascinate me."

Terence's early training started at the Camberwell School of Art in London and then at The National Gallery in London where his father worked. "I would sit and copy the Old Masters as training for myself in the techniques that they used," he tells me. "It was a very formative time in my life."

"As for my career, I firstly started in advertising, illustrating film posters, book covers and magazines. My style developed in this time and, combined with the work I had done at The National Gallery, it evolved into what you see today. "Early in my illustration career, I developed many montage techniques, painting on various surfaces. Lately on race cards, gold and silver was a natural progression, and that is what you saw on my winning painting at the Horse in Art Exhibition."

"I have painted horses all my working life, notably Thoroughbreds, Quarter Horses and Shires, as well as rare breeds," says Terence. "And, of course, I have been painting Arabians."

"Apart from the horse, I was given the chance to paint a variety of wildlife in the desert including gazelles, falcons, Ibexes, desert foxes and the very rare Arabian leopard, an animal that I have only seen at the Oman Zoo."

Terence's connection with the Middle East is strong, having been painting Middle Eastern subjects since 1975. "My first commission in the Middle East and it was for the Emir of Sharjah to paint traditional scenes from his Emirate. This was followed by a commission to paint a portrait of the late HH Sheikh Zayed of Abu Dhabi. Since then, I have visited Dubai, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman in the Gulf States, as well as Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco in North Africa."

It was on one of these trips to the United Arab Emirates that Terence fell for the charms of the Arabian horse. He had been commissioned to go to The Royal Stables in Abu Dhabi, owned







This page (clockwise from top):  
A pair of Arabians on Gold; Desert Storm;  
HRH The Emir of Bahrain and Arabian Profiles.



by the late HH Sheikh Zayed, to paint the Arabian horse in its natural environment. "The Arabian has a unique profile that gives an artist a wonderful opportunity to paint the horses in many poses, all of which give a most elegant image. The time I spent in Abu Dhabi painting the Arabian horse invoked something in me that remains to this day."

Asking Terence about his favourite work, he replies

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that "every painting on my easel at that moment is my favourite." When asked about unfulfilled dreams, he says: "My dream is to have an entire exhibition devoted to the Arabian horse. To my knowledge, there has never been a solo exhibition devoted to the Arabian horse and I think that the breed deserves one. Also, my ultimate ambition is to own an Arabian horse – there really is something about them."

Terence is linked to the Mathaf Gallery, London, who arranges his commissions in the Middle East, as well as the Osborne Studio Gallery, who sell his Thoroughbred Racing paintings. 🐾