

HABITS OF HORSES EXHIBITION

11 Aug - 10 Sept 2017

Mundaring Arts Centre presents *Habits of Horses*, a community arts project celebrating the historical and cultural significance of the relationship between humans and horses. The project brings curated exhibitions with works by international and nationally recognised artists together with community artists. These run alongside workshops, events and a community Open Day. At the centre of the project are two exhibitions at the Mundaring Arts Centre: in Gallery 1, a group show of 12 prominent WA-based artists responding to the role horses played in the countries of their forefathers. In Gallery 2 a community art exhibition, *Horse Tales*, will display artworks created in a series of workshops run by professional artists in the lead up to the project launch.

The *Habits of Horses: Serious Horsing Around* exhibition showcased in the Mundaring Arts Centre's Gallery 1 will bring together some of WA's most exciting contemporary artists from 11 August until 10 September 2017: Madeleine Clear, Marcia Espinosa, Indra Geidans, Jan Griffiths, Tony Jones, Paul Kaptein, Theo Koning, Matt McVeigh, Andrew Nicholls, Anna Louise Richardson, Sue Starcken and Yuko Takahashi. Presenting diverse interpretations ranging between sculptural, life-sized and two-dimensional artworks, the group show collects personal histories and cultural insights, marrying the historical with the contemporary.

Chilean Australian contemporary visual artist Marcia Espinosa traces her Latino influences in her works through rich colours, energy and a touch of humour. Her work *The Protector* was inspired by childhood memories of a traditional Chilean celebration performed on the first Sunday after Easter, the Quasimodo; "a religious festivity where the local Priest would leave the church to go out and give communion to those that were sick or unable to go to Mass on Easter Sunday. The Priest in his journey is protected by hundreds of men on horses, forming a large procession of strong religious faith," she explains.

British Australian artist Andrew Nicholls' practice engages with historically-marginalised aesthetics and traces the historical recurrence of motifs. Of his works for *Habits of Horses*, Nicholls writes: "My recent practice explores the symbolic position the Roman Empire occupies in the Western psyche, and how this has been reflected in aesthetics, historically." Developed on residency in Italy, his works depict two iconic hybrid horses from Greco-Roman mythology: the winged horse Pegasus and the half-man/half-horse centaur.

When Yuko Takahashi was a child in Japan, her mother taught her to make paper horses using origami, which became her favourite childhood pastime. Takahashi's works depicting Pegasus harmonize an aspect of her own Japanese culture with her current home in Australia. Albany artist Indra Geidans works will depict Ūsinš, a sky deity of Latvian mythology that drives the solar chariot. "He ensures the wellbeing of livestock and transports the sun from dawn to till dusk with the assistance of his grey sun horses," she says.

The *Horse Tales* community exhibition will run concurrently in the adjacent gallery and will include a 'paddock' of sculpted hay horses; a wall-mounted mob of wild brumbies made from found objects; small sculptures, rosettes and jewellery incorporating horse hair, created by school children, teenagers and adults.

HABITS OF HORSES DISPLAYS & EVENTS

Habits of Horses culminates in a community Open Day in Mundaring and its surrounds on Sunday 20 August. The Open Day invites all members of the community to take part in a broad range of events in the Mundaring Sculpture Park, Mundaring Arts Centre, Mundaring

District Museum and other venues. A range of horse-related arts activities will be on offer from 10am–4pm, including hobby horse jumping, saddling competitions, live ponies, horse petting, food vans, book sales, whip cracking and more.

The Sculpture Park will also host large-scale sculptures by some of Perth's most renowned sculptors to coincide with the exhibitions and as part of the broader project. Launching on the Open Day, the *Sculpture Park Horse-in-Stall* will be on display in the Mundaring Sculpture Park as part of a temporary installation depicting horses from 20 August to 10 September.

In addition to the exhibitions in Mundaring, the Midland Junction Arts Centre will host *Horse Drawn*, an exhibition celebrating the equine form through traditional drawing skills and contemporary digital drawing methods; and *Vahana: Vehicle of the Gods*, in which celebrated Bangalore-based photographer Clare Arni presents a series of photographs detailing the making of terracotta horses and Hindu votive offerings for the Ayyanar festival in India, on display from 27 August to 24 September. The Midland Junction Arts Centre will come alive with Tamil dancing and food on Sunday 10 September for the unveiling of the community Totemic Horses and a large-scale terracotta horse created by artist in residence, Indian potter Subbaiah Kasirajan.

Mundaring Arts Centre has partnered with the Mundaring Camera Club to present an exhibition at the KSP Library in Boya, the *Habits of Horses Photographic Exhibition*, which will run from 1 August to 30 September, displaying a selection of photographs of horse scenes throughout Perth, capturing the essence of horse industries.

In partnership with the Mundaring Historical Centre *Hoofprints in the Hills – Historical Exhibition* will run from 20 August 2017 to 22 February 2018. This exhibition celebrates the horse and the varied ways humans have interacted with these animals. Whether used for ploughing, warfare, transportation, entertainment or therapy, horses have been integral in shaping and enriching the Shire of Mundaring's past and present.

For more details and a full project overview and event dates please visit the Mundaring Arts Centre website *Habits of Horses* project page:

<http://www.mundaringartscentre.com.au/habits-of-horses/>



Images (L to R): *Pegasus* by Yuko Takahashi; *The Protector* by Marcia Espinosa; *Ūsinš* by Indra Geidans