

# ARUSHA

GALLERY



**Suzy Spence**

**2 Racers, 2023**

Flashe and acrylic paint on panel

40.5 x 50.8 cm

## ***For the Roses***

Suzy Spence

Opening 29.04 14:00-18:00

29.04.23 - 28.05.23

Arusha Gallery at The Old Silk Barn, Quaperlake Street, Bruton, BA10 0HB.

Arusha Gallery is delighted to present *For the Roses*, a new body of work by Suzy Spence, created on residency in Bruton, opening on Saturday 29th April 2023 from 2 - 6pm in the Old Silk Barn, Bruton.

## **ARTIST STATEMENT:**

“My paintings have always been a fantasy space for me, only loosely based in truth. I spend time observing nature like a plein air painter would, however I return to the studio not to record what I’ve seen, but to indulge my imagination. My core sensibility loves urban camp, dandyism and all things sartorial. I’m fascinated with personal presentation and theatricality, and it seems to linger in my figures. But I like to think my paintings possess their own logic, their own truth, and that each one preserves space for individual interpretation much like a poem does.” -SUZY SPENCE

## **FOR THE ROSES:**

Suzy Spence is an American Artist based in Vermont and New York City. Her figurative paintings represent a contemporary extension of the classical genre of sporting art, imbuing her subjects with a compelling sense of power and vulnerability.

In Suzy Spence’s exhibition “For the Roses” she explores the idea of beauty, fragility, and resilience in her recent works about jockeys and horse racing. “For the Roses” is also the title of Joni Mitchell’s album of 1973, which explored themes of love, loss, and artistic integrity. The title track offered a glimpse into the challenges faced by artists who strive to create something beautiful while also navigating the dangers of the music industry, with specific reference to the Kentucky Derby.

Spence’s paintings speak to the complex interplay between nature, strength, and fragility. Spence considers athleticism and risk-taking, exploring the interplay between the sport’s elegance, power, and control, and equates horse racing, an activity that requires immense physical strength, balance, and skill, with painting itself.

Spence incorporates elements of equestrian culture into her works, creating paintings that feature women on horses or in equestrian attire while subverting their traditional roles or meanings. She often explores the complex interplay between the traditional and the contemporary, incorporating a wide range of allusions to pop culture, historical painting, and feminist art. Through Spence’s handling of paint, her highly charged cultural references are at home within a unique, immediate, and vibrant visual world, building an artistic experience that is both deeply personal and necessarily political.

## **FULL NARRATIVE BIOGRAPHY:**

The first solo exhibition of Suzy Spence's work took place in 1998 at Colin De Land's gallery American Fine Arts, Co., 22 Wooster Street, New York City, and earned her a review in The New York Times, written by Grace Glueck. Other solo presentations of the artist's work have taken place at The Grazer Kunstverein, Austria, (1999); Kunsthaus Glarus, Switzerland (1999); NeueHouse, Madison Square New York (2019), Cathouse Proper, Brooklyn (2019); The Current, Stowe Vermont (2019), Tayloe Piggott Gallery, Jackson Hole, Wyoming (2020, 2022), Sears Peyton Gallery, New York (2018, 2022), and Arusha Gallery, Bruton Somerset, England (2023).

Noteworthy group exhibitions include Matthew Marks and Pat Hearn's Painting Now and Forever Part 1 (1998); and Accelerator, a traveling museum exhibition through the U.K. to the Arnolfini, Southampton City Art Gallery, and Gallery Oldham (1999). Spence's work first received critical attention for a group of drawings presented at The Chateau Marmont in Los Angeles (1997) by American Fine Arts, Co; Paper magazine who covered the show went on to feature Spence in their pages on multiple other occasions. Reviews of her work have appeared in The New York Times, The New Yorker, Frieze, Artcritical, The Brooklyn Rail, Two Coats of Paint and other publications.

Spence lives and works in New York City and Vermont. She grew up on the coast of Maine and after studying at Smith College and Parsons School of Design in New York and Paris, the artist attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 1996 and received an MFA from The School of Visual Arts in New York City in 1998. She is represented by Sears Peyton Gallery in New York and L.A., and Tayloe Piggott Gallery in Jackson Hole, WY. She is a frequent exhibitor with David Dixon's Cathouse Proper, Brooklyn. A new exhibition of her work will be featured at Arusha Gallery in Bruton, England, April 2023.

Her works are held public and private collections throughout the world, including The Zillman Art Museum, University of Maine; The Archives of Colin De Land American Fine Arts Gallery, held at The Smithsonian Archives of American Art and Bard College Library; The New York Foundation for the Arts, New York City; M HKA Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen, Antwerp; The Grazer Kunstverein, Graz Austria; Glarner Kunstverein, Glarus, Switzerland

**ENDS/**

For further information including review, interview and images requests please contact [info@arushagallery.com](mailto:info@arushagallery.com) / 0131 557 1412

Press images: by email

Exhibition dates: 29th April - 28th May 2023

Exhibition opening hours: Thursday to Sunday, 11am - 6pm, or by appointment.

### **Arusha Gallery**

Arusha Gallery is a contemporary art gallery with its main premises in Edinburgh's historic New Town, a satellite space in Bruton, Somerset and a new gallery in London opening in Summer 2023. Established in 2013, Arusha runs an annual programme of exhibitions, events and fairs, both nationally and internationally, with regular collaborations with guest artists, curators, festivals and institutions.