

ELISABETH FRINK

Lying Down Horse

1977

Dame Elisabeth Frink's 1993 Times obituary revealed three recurring themes in her prints and sculptures: the nature of man, the divine in human form, and the 'horseness' of horses. Brought up in rural Suffolk, Frink learned to ride when she was just 3 years old, and her affinity with horses clearly stayed with her throughout her life. The relationship between man and horse was something that the artist explored many times, and perhaps the best-known example is the majestic 1974 bronze sculpture *Horse and Rider*. Created in Frink's unmistakable naturalistic style, this powerful study was described by her as 'an ageless symbol of man and horse'. Cast in an edition of three, the edition that resides on Dover Street in Mayfair was given Grade II listed status by English Heritage in 2015, ensuring that Frink's legacy will live on.

MARC CHAGALL

Horsewoman on a Red Horse

1966

A red horse usually signifies the imminent arrival of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse; however, this friendly-looking chap (who appears in a number of Chagall's magical, dream-like paintings) is presiding over a much more peaceful scene. Based in Paris, as a Russian Jew, Chagall was forced to flee to the United States in 1941. The Nazis had begun their campaign against all forms of modernist art, declaring Chagall's work to be 'degenerate' and consisting of 'green, purple, and red Jews shooting out of the earth, fiddling on violins, flying through the air ... representing [an] assault on Western civilization'. Chagall returned to live in France after the war – by then his work had become hugely popular, and in 1963 he was commissioned to paint the new ceiling for the Paris Opéra. While there was some rivalry between Chagall and his Côte d'Azur neighbour Picasso, the latter generously remarked that 'When Matisse dies, Chagall will be the only painter left who understands what colour really is.'





ABOVE: Karen Bezuidenhout, *Blue Horses*, 2011
 OPPOSITE: Karen Bezuidenhout, *Horse Trio*, 2011

A MAN ON A HORSE IS

SPIRITUALLY

AS WELL AS
PHYSICALLY

BIGGER

THAN A MAN
ON FOOT

John Steinbeck

Frank Dicksee, *The Two Crowns*, 1900





ABOVE: Joe Coffey, *Grey Gelding*, 2017
OPPOSITE: Joe Coffey, *Distant Voices*, 2013





PABLO PICASSO

Boy Leading a Horse

1905–6

A great controversy surrounded this early painting by Picasso – but this was not due to the fact that the horse in question is being led by a naked prepubescent boy. Created during Picasso's so-called Rose Period (a welcome relief after his miserable Blue Period), in the 1930s the painting (which some say is influenced by Andrea Mantegna's *Parnassus*) belonged to Jewish collector Paul von Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. Sold to an art dealer in Nazi Germany in 1935, subsequent generations of the family argued that the painting had been sold under duress. It was eventually purchased in Switzerland by the chairman of MoMA, William S. Paley, who then bequeathed the painting (then worth \$100m) to the museum. In 2009, two lawsuits followed, the first by descendants of the Mendelssohn-Bartholdy family, who were then counter-sued by MoMA. Only the lawyers are party to what happened, but the painting remains in the museum's collection.



THERE IS NO
secret so close

AS BETWEEN A
RIDER
AND HIS
HORSE

R.S. Surtees



IF YOU HAVE SEEN
NOTHING BUT THE BEAUTY OF
THEIR MARKINGS AND LIMBS,

THEIR
true beauty
IS HIDDEN FROM YOU.

Anonymous

IN POLITE SOCIETY,
IT'S CONSIDERED

GOOD MANNERS

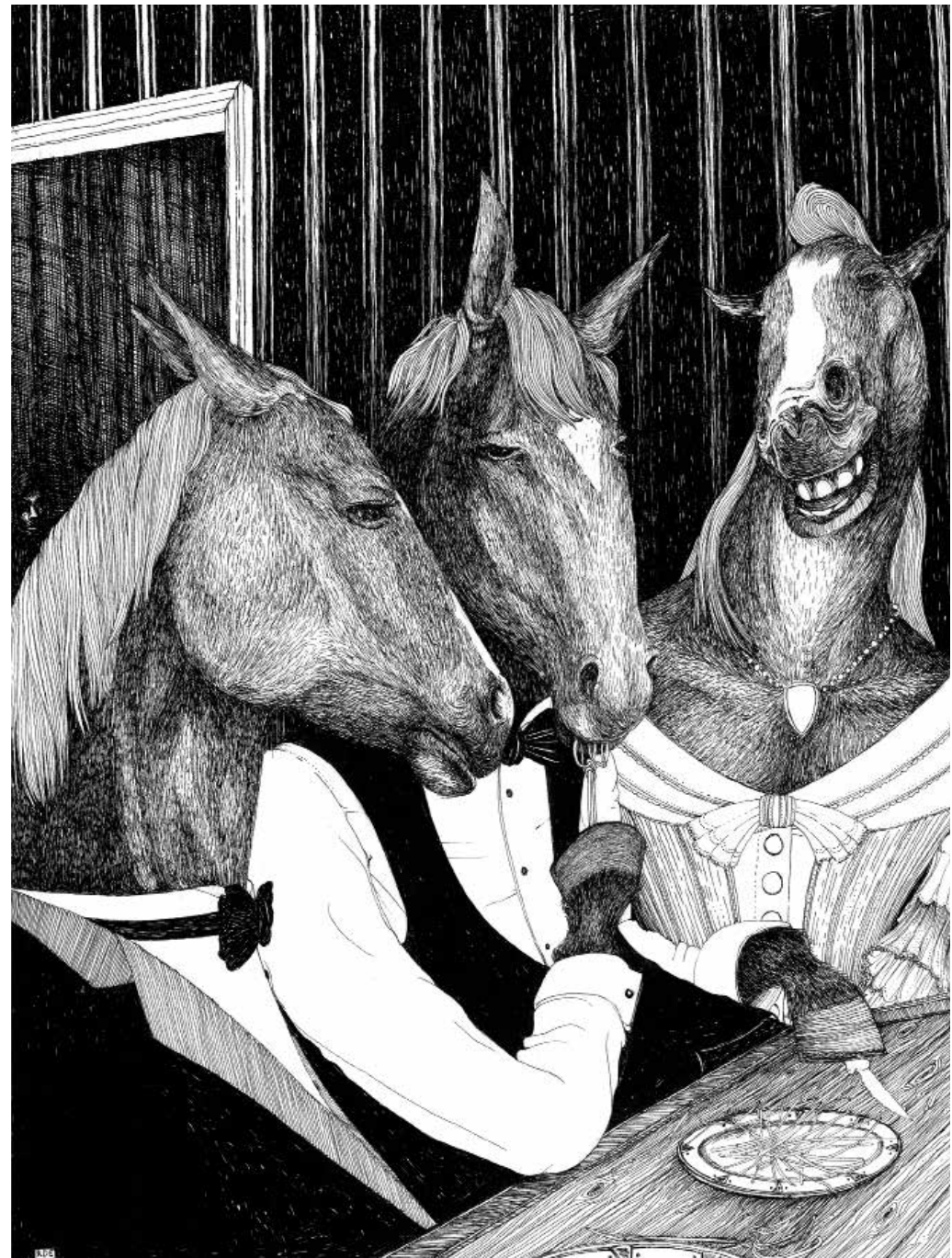
TO KEEP YOUR

elbows and your

HOOVES

OFF THE TABLE WHILE
YOU'RE EATING.

Rohan Eason, *The Horses' Dinner*, 2012
(from *Anna and the Juniper Dog* by Geoff Cox, 2010)



EDGAR DEGAS

Race Horses at Longchamp

1871

Opened in 1857, the Longchamp racecourse, or Hippodrome de Longchamp, was built to the west of Paris on the banks of the Seine. Imported from Britain, the 'sport of kings' became quite the thing in 19th-century France, attracting a fashionable crowd of aristocrats and artists such as Degas and Manet, who drew inspiration from the racing scene. Unlike many of his contemporaries, who painted *en plein air*, Degas painted in the comfort of his studio. Anyone who studies his paintings carefully will notice that he was not opposed to a spot of recycling, either, as the same horses and riders appear across many different canvases. Like Degas's beautifully observed studies of race horses, Longchamp has lost none of its appeal over the years — it is still home to the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, currently the world's richest turf race, with a purse running into the millions.

