

WINNERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ART&CAVALLO COMPETITION ANNOUNCED

Art critic **Vittorio Sgarbi**, attending the award ceremony, commented on all the works on show in the exhibition and spoke briefly about the figure of horses in the history of art

Verona, 6 november 2021 - Hall 2 at **Fieracavalli** this morning hosted the announcement of the winners of the international **Art&Cavallo** equestrian art exhibition competition conceived by architect **Federica Crestani**, which celebrated its third edition this year.

The three winners in the *painting, photography* and *sculpture* categories were selected by a jury from more than 150 artists from all over the world, from the United States to Australia by way of Croatia and Germany. An international open call was made possible this year thanks to the partnership with the equestrian art gallery **Paard Verzameld in Amsterdam**.

The audience at the award ceremony also included a guest of honour: art critic **Vittorio Sgarbi** who, in addition to commenting on all the works on display - including the winners - spoke briefly about the figure of horses in art, starting from rock art and then passing on from the horses of the Parthenon by Phidias to those of astride St. Mark's Marco in Venice: "After the human figure, figures of horse are certainly the most widely represented in art. Horses have always expressed dynamism and power. It only need be mentioned that even with the advent of motor vehicles - the greatest symbol of modernity - the power of their engines is indicated as horsepower."

The first prize for painting was awarded to the work *Horse* (tempera on photographic paper) by artist **Andrea Baleri** from Bergamo, whose works are part of an artistic current where painting is no longer a means of representation but a gesture of expressiveness, an essential graphic sign.

The winner in the photography category was **Maria Shutova**, of Russian origin, taking first place thanks to her skill in capturing the soul of horses through three equine portraits. A skill that can only derive from deep knowledge of the animal so that character of each subject can be portrayed to perfection.

Croatian artist **Hrvoje Dumančić** convinced the jury in the sculpture category. With *Sphera, Pangea* and *Circulation*, Dumančić sought to make equestrian art more popular; as an artist and show jumping rider alike, horses have always helped him find new ways and ideas to transfer his thoughts and points of view into a work of art.

A special mention for **Paolo Nicolai** whose work *Selene's horse distraught with fatigue* in recycled plastics earned the **Kep Italia Prize**. Reusing and transforming plastic as if it were marble or bronze is, for Nicolai, a metaphor for a new artistic permanence: plastic, like the new marble, will survive us, just as classic marbles survived the classical age.

First held in 2019 with the aim of promoting the figure of horses and a more ethical and respectful approach towards this noble animal, the **Art&Cavallo** contemporary art exhibition brings together works by the 30 finalists in the **international competition** and is open to visitors in Hall 2 until Sunday 7 and again 12-14 November.

This year, the Art&Cavallo project is the result of collaboration with **KEP Italia** - the riding helmet specialist which has always been attentive to the promotion of artistic and cultural themes - and **Banca Passadore** which until -14 November, itself hosts the first collateral Art&Cavallo event in **Palazzo Balladoro**.

FIERACAVALLI 2021: PROTOCOL OF INTENT SIGNED BETWEEN FIERACAVALLI and THE ITALIAN FEDERATION OF EQUESTRIAN SPORT FOR THE "RIDING THE BLUE" PROJECT

This collaboration aims to achieve recognition by the Italian National Health Service of horse-assisted therapy in the treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorder in children

Verona, 6 november 2021 - The Vice President of Veronafiere, **Matteo Gelmetti**, the President of FISE, **Marco di Paola**, and the Scientific Advisor for the *Riding the Blue Project*, **Dr Leonardo Zoccante**, met this morning in the **AGSM AIM Forum Area** in Hall 4 for the official signing of version 2.0 of the experimental protocol launched in 2019 and implemented in the Veneto Region thanks to collaboration with the **Integrated University Hospital of Verona** and the **Local Social and Health Unit Scaligera 9**. The intention is to replicate research promoting the benefits of horse-assisted therapy in children with **Autism Spectrum Disorder** even on a national scale, with the ultimate objective of achieving recognition for this type of therapy by the **Italian National Health Service**.

"The research results presented during the Horse Digital Days of Fieracavalli 2020 saw functional improvements in participants in several areas of adaptive behaviour, as well as an increase in motor coordination and sensory processing ability with a positive impact on daily life," said Dr **Leonardo Zoccante**.

"We therefore want to extend the experiment on a national scale give room to the potential of Assisted Interventions with horses and thereby promote social inclusion for these children

"Fieracavalli has taken part in the Riding the Blue project since 2019," said **Matteo Gelmetti**, Vice President of Veronafiere, "because the horse world is not only sport and life in the open air but also of sensitivity and solidarity. Direct relationships with these splendid and generous animals offer many benefits for people, as now also witnessed from a scientific point of view thanks to the effective results of this assisted therapy initiative, as already presented in 2020. The way ahead has therefore already been marked out and Fieracavalli - with the protocol signed today - will actively continue to support Riding the Blue, with the aim of replicating the experimental protocol on a national scale and achieving recognition by the Italian National Health Service " .

"FISE unquestionably has a strong sporting vocation," explained its President, **Marco Di Paola**, "but in addition to promoting equestrian sport we also aim to spread the social values that horses represent. Our wonderful partners in sport have also proven to be great therapists. Thanks to the work of our numerous centres engaged in equestrian rehabilitation, we already have good representation but, thanks to scientific input ensured in this protocol, we can also achieve far greater goals. We will start off from the Veneto Region as far as Sicily by way of Latium."

The event was also attended by the operations manager of the project, **Michele Marconi**, and **Linda Fabrello**, President of the A.S.D. Horse Valley which made its facilities and horses available in order to implement the project.

"Edoardo was always closed inside himself," his father **Andrea Barbieri** confessed, "but the benefits of this experience were evident. While he does not speak, however when he is on his horse his strong emotions are readily perceived. His therapy day immediately became a happy day - so much so that he continued riding even after the experiment ended. To the extent that he will take part, together with his 3 new friends, in two carousels in Area A here at Fieracavalli."

The meeting concluded with the **E-Campus University**-Polo Mediterraneo Telematic University initiative which assigned two free master vouchers to Dr. Leonardo Zoccante to support the preparation of specific professional figures operating in the treatment of autism spectrum. The two first level university masters valid for the courses included in the full on-line training courses "*Autism: from diagnosis to psycho-*

educational intervention” will last 1500 hours (1 year) for a total of 60 credits. The professional project coordinated by Polo Mediterraneo Telematic University, guided by **Domenico Cacioppo** and also based in Verona, is part of broader collaboration by the online university with the **Fevoss Santa Toscana Foundation**, the non-profit organization based in Verona founded by Michele Romano, which since 2017 aims to offer continuous services to people and families involved in the treatment of autism.