

# AN INTERVIEW WITH THE ACCLAIMED ARTIST JILL SOUKUP

By Farah Rezeika

JILL SOUKUP IS KNOWN FOR HER ARTISTIC TALENT AND AFFINITY FOR HORSES. JILL'S PASSION FOR HORSES LED HER TO CREATE NUMEROUS DRAWINGS AND STUDIES OF THEM, DEVELOPING A STRONG FOUNDATION IN DRAWING. IN HER PAINTINGS, JILL AIMS TO CAPTURE THE BALANCE BETWEEN OPPOSITE ELEMENTS AND EXPOSE THE UNDERLYING SIMILARITIES IN SEEMINGLY DIFFERENT SUBJECTS.





I'VE GONE THROUGH ALL YOUR DRAWINGS AND REALLY LIKED YOUR STYLE. CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT THE ARTISTIC STYLE YOU USE WHEN DRAWING HORSES?

My artistic journey has matured over several decades. It's been shaped by dedicated practice, playful experimentation, and keen observation of both live and photographic representations of horses. My layering of paint, in a variety of fluidities, is a continual process of exploration, with each stroke capturing the intricate, dynamic nuances of my subjects.

YOUR DRAWINGS SEEM SO LIFELIKE, IT'S LIKE YOU CAN SEE THE PERSONALITY AND ENERGY OF EACH HORSE SHINING THROUGH. WHAT IS YOUR PROCESS FOR GETTING TO KNOW THE HORSE YOU'RE DRAWING?

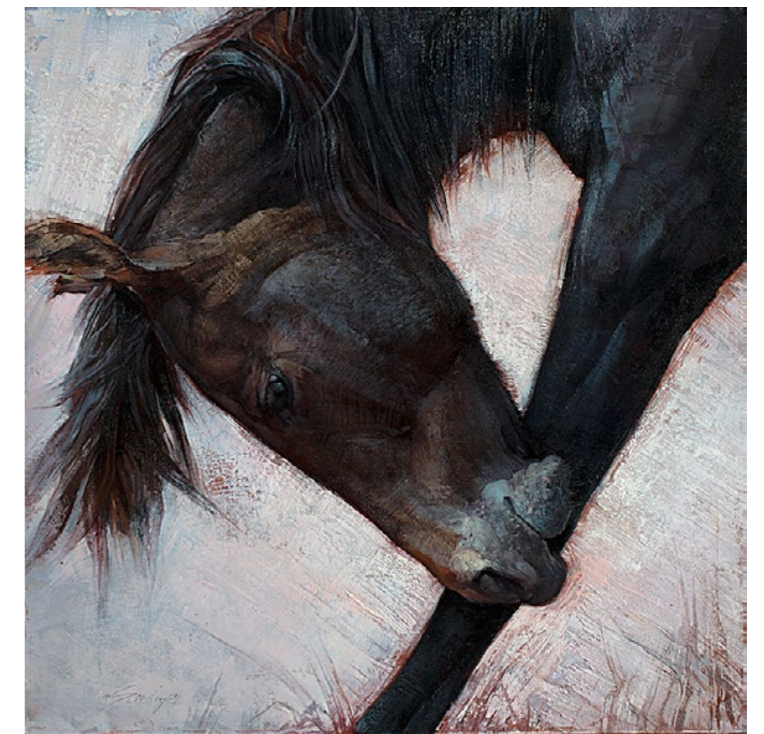
The time I invest in studying each subject ranges from fleeting moments to extensive photo shoots. I don't consciously think about articulating a horse's personality or energy; I'm simply translating what I see onto the canvas. It's an intuitive process that precedes any formal thought or intentional consideration, a byproduct of observing and spending time with them.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE HORSE THAT YOU'VE DRAWN, OR A PIECE THAT YOU'RE MOST PROUD OF?

Every equine subject holds a special place in my heart; some even appear in multiple paintings. It's the occasional seminal work—often marking pivotal moments of discovery and improvement—that holds my attachment.

HOW DID YOU FIRST GET INTERESTED IN DRAWING HORSES?

Like many young girls, I was obsessed with horses. I never had the opportunity to have my own, so I found an outlet for my passion by drawing and sculpting. In this, I had my own sense of touching and communing with them.



WHERE DO YOU FIND INSPIRATION FOR YOUR EQUINE ARTWORK?

My collaboration with Ranchlands, a company managing ranches in the American West, since 2003 has provided me with a lifetime of inspiration. That said, I'm inspired by subjects across many equine disciplines, from rodeos and hunter jumpers to draft horses and Thoroughbred racehorse. I embrace the

diversity of shape, size, color, and breed, finding unique beauty and charm in each.

HOW LONG DOES IT TYPICALLY TAKE YOU TO COMPLETE A PIECE?

It varies significantly based on the artwork's size and nature. I can complete a smaller painting in anywhere between two and 10 hours. In contrast, larger

paintings may take up to 80 hours, in concentrated time spread over months, to be completed.

WHAT'S THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF REALISTIC EQUINE ARTWORK?

Delving into—and truly integrating—a horse's anatomy and traits is the most challenging aspect by far. Even after all of the years I've spent studying





them, I am continually discovering new subtleties and structural components.

WHEN YOU FACE A BLANK CANVAS, DO YOU HAVE A CLEAR VISION OF THE FINISHED PIECE, OR DO YOU LET THE HORSE AND THE MOMENT GUIDE YOUR STROKES?

Most of my paintings are anchored in a clear vision, which is refined through preliminary studies identifying and solidifying color schemes and compositions. This approach aids significantly in producing harmonious and impactful artwork.

WHAT NON-ART HOBBIES AND INTERESTS DO YOU HAVE OUTSIDE OF HORSES?

I love spending time with my family, art in general, gardening, the outdoors, and meditation.

DO YOU HAVE ANY UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS OR SHOWS PEOPLE CAN CHECK OUT?

I have a solo exhibition at Colorado State University's Johnson Family Equine Center in October 2024. As an alumna of the university's art program, this

collaboration with an internationally recognized institution focused on equine health offers the convergence of art, science, and a shared love for horses.

DO YOU HAVE ANY UNPUBLISHED WORKS THAT ARE A DEPARTURE FROM YOUR TYPICAL STYLE?

Indeed, these pieces are some of my most dear, the jewels of my artist's oeuvre.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOUR ARTISTRY GOING IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS? ANY NEW DIRECTIONS OR MEDIUMS TO EXPLORE?

Great question! I don't know. Ha! I anticipate both losses and new opportunities in 2024, which, in many ways, presents an open and surprisingly appealing slate. I'm mulling over my situation and feeling a sense of freedom with the unknown potentialities. 🐾

Check full art work at: [www.jillsoukup.com](http://www.jillsoukup.com)



## A WHOLE NEW LOOK FOR HORSE TIMES WEBSITE



THE MOST INFORMATIVE EQUESTRIAN

WEBSITE

EW

MOBILE FRIENDLY WITH EASIER NAVIGATION & MUCH MORE...

[WWW.HORSETIMESEGYPT.COM](http://WWW.HORSETIMESEGYPT.COM)