



*Big Brown*

Peter Williams



*Provocative*

Andre Pater



*Winsome Adante*

Rod Lindauer



*Joytown*

Lloyd Kelly

Horsetails  
Celebrates Horses,  
Classical Music,  
and Visual Arts



*A.P. Indy*  
Toss Chandler

# HAIR

# Raising

By Patti Nickell | Photos by Lee Thomas

Most folks might not make the connection between symphonic music and the horse, even though the latter's tail has provided the strings on the bows of orchestral instruments for centuries. Without horses' tail hair, Itzhak Perlman might have been forced to take up the kazoo, or Midori might have been relegated to strumming the ukulele.

So, it makes sense that when the Lexington Philharmonic began to think about how it could best get involved with the high-powered horse hysteria surrounding the 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games at the Kentucky Horse Park, committee members harked back to a familiar theme — Horsetails.

Horsetails was first introduced as a fundraiser for the philharmonic in 2000, when the symphony committee approached a group of local artists about taking part in an unusual collaboration. They were asked to create a piece of art in the shape of a violin with an accompanying bow. To symbolize the relationship between equines and orchestral music, the bow would be strung with the actual hair of horses.

Say what? If the artists were a bit flummoxed, the art-buying public was flabbergasted.



*Doc*  
Steve Armstrong

*Cigar*  
Arturo Alonzo Sandoval



*Spiceo Life Present Tense*  
Diane Kahlo



*Wimpys Little Chic*  
Sandra Oppgard

## HAIR *Raising*



Sara Lord wanted many breeds represented in Horsetails.

"People didn't really quite understand the concept," said local artist Helene Steene. "They weren't quite sure what to expect."

Steene and the 51 other artists who have contributed their time and talents to the 2010 project are hoping this time around the public's fascination with all things horse-related will be coupled with a bit more knowledge of what it takes to create these unique pieces of art.

Both will come in handy for the show-stopping 54-piece exhibition featuring what Steene describes as the "crème de la crème of both artists and horses."

Artists include those who are nationally and internationally known — Andre Pater, Alexa King, Arturo Sandoval, Stephen Powell, and Peter Williams — and those whose name recognition is rapidly increasing — Theo Edmonds, Philip High, Mike Goodlett, and Patrick Adams.

Then there are the high-profile people who have donated their horses' hair — Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum of Dubai (Provocative); HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein of Jordan (Lucilla II), and Zara Phillips, granddaughter of Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh (Toytown.)

If you think that's a lot of star power, just consider some of the horses that gave up some tail hair in the name of art.

In the Thoroughbred category, there are Afleet Alex, who narrowly missed being a Triple Crown winner and is today one of the prides of the Gainesway stallion barn; Kentucky Derby

# HAIR *Raising*

*Lucilla II*

Helene Steene



In creating her work, Helene Steene selected colors — royal blue, burgundy, gold, gray, and black — that are favorites of Princess Haya.

winner Funny Cide, Smarty Jones, Alysheba, Big Brown, and Fusaichi Pegasus; Kentucky Oaks and Belmont Stakes winner Rags to Riches, and beloved equine icons John Henry and Cigar. Trotting horses are represented by Deweycheatumnhowe, undefeated winner of the Hambletonian, and Saddlebreds weigh in with three-gaited Supreme Sultan and five-gaited Gypsy Supreme. Newcomers include Doc, a champion vaulting horse; Connaught, an eventing champion; and two superstars in the reining category, Wimpys Little Step and Wimpys Little Chic.

“For this project, we knew, of course, that we wanted Thoroughbreds, but we also wanted horses from every breed that

would be competing in the World Games,” said Sara Lord, co-chair of Horsetails.

Once the horse owners were on board, Lord said they were sent instructions as to how much tail hair was needed.

“Our ideal was that it (the swatch of hair) should be as wide as a pencil and as long as they could provide,” she said. “Horse hair, like human hair, varies — some have fine hair while others have coarse hair; some have a lot and some are sparse.”

Then the real work began. Each artist was given the name of a particular horse and set about doing in-depth research. “There’s a story about each horse that is told in the correspond-

# HAIR *Raising*

ing piece,” explained Steene.

Equally important was the medium the artist chose to tell that story. For Steene’s piece — Princess Haya’s Lucilla II — she chose industrial metal and faux jewels to illustrate the contrast of strength and beauty of both horse and rider. She selected colors — royal blue, burgundy, gold, gray, and black — that are favorites of Princess Haya and her late father, King Hussein. The strands of elongated beads represent Lucilla II’s discipline of show jumping, and the circles represent the 2000 Sydney Olympics, in which both Princess Haya and Lucilla II competed.

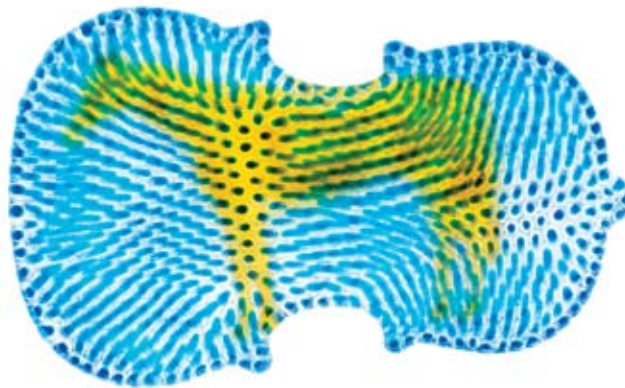
The various media used by the other artists — glass, fabric, porcelain, collage, pastels, metal, oils, wood carving, and beading — are as diverse as the horses and their riders.

Toss Chandler painted 1992 Horse of the Year A.P. Indy against a backdrop of Lane’s End Farm, where the stallion stands at stud. Carleton Wing told Alysheba’s story through a series of collages — from an old postcard print of Hamburg Farm, where the horse was bred, to images of Churchill Downs and Pimlico, where he won his greatest victories. Stephen Powell used delicate glass to capture the elusive quality of champion sire Elusive Quality. Rod Lindauer, who learned to weld at an early age, re-imagined the violin as a rough-hewn country fiddle in honor of his equine subject, crossbred eventer Winsome Adante. Diane Kahlo used intricately sewn sequins and beads in her representation of champion Morgan SpiceoLife Present Tense.

The final step was the actual insertion of the hair. Upon completion of the violin forms and bows by the artists, each piece went to Peter Kucirko, former executive director of the philharmonic, who had the painstaking task of inserting the actual tail hairs from each horse.

Both Lord and Steene said the 2010 version of Horsetails turned into an enormous undertaking that required not just the artists’ and horse owners’ participation, but help from members of the community as well.

In September each piece will be put up for sale on eBay, although the art will remain in Lexington until after the Games end in October. The Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra Foundation will receive 80 percent of the Horsetails proceeds to help establish funds for music education for school children throughout Kentucky, and the artists will receive 20 percent of



## *Elusive Quality*

Stephen Powell

the proceeds as well as additional recognition in both the art and horse communities.

Then, of course, there are the successful bidders, who, according to Lord, will be getting “a one-of-a-kind collectible piece of sporting art that they can carry home with them, hopefully spawning a whole new global market for our home-grown artists.”

Still, her wish is that some of these pieces will find their own Kentucky home.

“I hope that many of them will remain here in Kentucky, not just in private collections, but as public art as well,” she said. “What a special memento that would leave us from the World Games.”

## Where to See the Horsetails Exhibit

Most of the pieces will be on display at Cross Gate Gallery at 509 East Main St. throughout the World Equestrian Games. Twenty pieces at a time will be rotated to the Maker’s Mark Bourbon Village at the Kentucky Horse Park, depending upon the events taking place at the Games. Bidding for the pieces will open on eBay on Sept. 20. For a look at the entire collection, go to [www.horsetails2010.com](http://www.horsetails2010.com).

A book featuring each piece and information on the horse and artist will be available in a limited number of hardbound copies and a larger number of softbound copies. Inquiries about purchasing the book should be made to the Lexington Philharmonic office by calling (859) 233-4226. 