

HORSE PORTRAITS

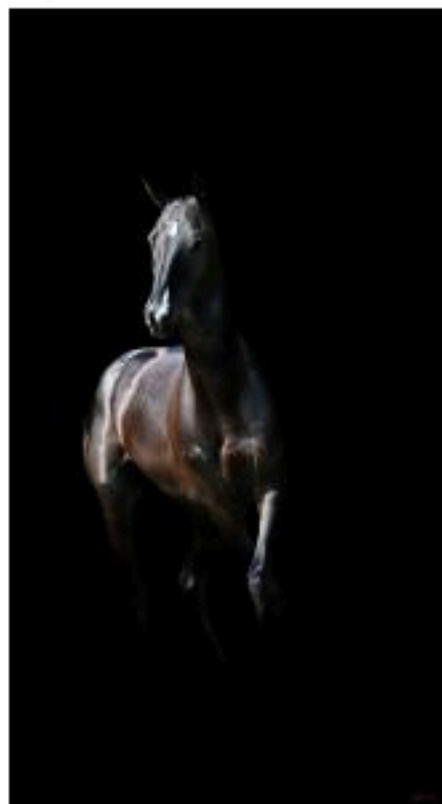
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THEY'RE FAST, ELEGANT, SENSITIVE, AND STRONG, with wild manes and tails that touch the grass. At times they seem otherworldly, mythological, like the four-legged inhabitants of fairy tales. Yet here they stand, living among us, helping with the most practical of endeavors while offering emotional sustenance, too. Many people have yearned to possess one. For those whose yearning remains unfulfilled, a question circles the arena of the mind at a steady lope: How do you capture a horse? For this trio of artists the answer is: with a camera.



Loménie

ISABELLE BEAU DE LOMÉNIE



GADJEE HAN 1 | "EQUUS IN BLACK SERIES"

"He was the equestrian love of my life," says Isabelle Beau de Loménie, a Cody, Wyoming-based and French-born photographer. She's recalling the equine companion of her youth, a French riding bay named Ispan who was small in stature but large in heart. Her connection with Ispan and its deep emotional impact led her to become a horse portraitist — though she isn't, as she puts it, "chasing a ghost. I truly loved him indeed, and he clearly is, for many reasons, at the origin of my work. But Ispan also belongs to another period of my life, and a very melancholic one. As a teenager, I was not thinking about being a photographer, but a painter."

Some of Beau de Loménie's images have a painterly quality — in her *Série Bleue* the horses are partially tinted with a dreamy azure hue. More notable, though, are the gestures she captures: They're so fleeting, so electric, it seems almost a miracle that they were caught by a camera rather than coaxed out of the imagination via paintbrush. "Most often, while shooting a horse, I know something is happening," she says. "But it's only at the moment of looking at the picture that I take the full measure and potential of the photograph. And I feel like it's a gift from the horse."

She appreciates the ways her equine subjects not only distinguish themselves from Ispan, but from each other. "I never forget that they [each] have their own personality and nature. And this is what I love the most while working with them: discovering who the horse is that I am facing. Some of them seem to be absolutely fascinated by what I am doing, as well as by the camera, and sometimes I swear they are posing. Some others," she observes in a respectful and good-natured tone, "are incredibly disdainful. I feel like they just deliberately ignore me and that I deeply bother them!"



VIF ARGENT



"HIDE AND SEEK" | SÉRIE BLANCHE

Beau de Loménie's *Equus Series* is breathtaking in part because the strong kinetic quality generates emotion in the viewer. Seconds that would usually flicker by unnoticed are stilled to startlingly beautiful effect. "I work as often as possible while the horse is in movement," she explains. "The idea is shooting in a fraction of a second to catch a position — a bearing, an attitude — that the horse may never reproduce. This requires that I take my time and be very patient in order to catch, in a glance, something which may be very fast and, above all, unique."

Beau de Loménie's work is represented by [Creighton Block Gallery](#) in Big Sky, Montana, and the [Terakedis Gallery](#) in Billings, Montana.