

Nadina Ironia

Following passions ..

“Horses flying high above the ground breaking frozen air and lifting sparkling millions of iced snowflakes.. it was truly breathtaking view I will never forget.. It was first time I have seen trotter many years ago.. it was love from the first sight! “

Now surrounded by these wonderful animals every day – in art, in the yard and at the races...

Nadina Ironia is an Irish-based, Latvian born equine artist and photographer, whose artwork of famous and simply loved horses have travelled the world. Nadina studied Design in Art College and Communication Sciences in University of Latvia. It may not sound like it has anything to do with horses, but by doing this she was able to combine her biggest passions - horses and art - into one. Besides full time artist job she is a passionate photographer at local racetrack in Dublin and small marketing department of Irish Harness Racing Association.

All that didn't come in one day and road to trotting world wasn't short

“I grew up surrounded by most beautiful books about horses, my mother have always had passion for horses and our house was full of photos, books and sculptures. I spend hours and hours studying photos and thinking that “one day ... “ what exactly it was I'm not sure .. it was general daydreaming of horses..

As every child attempts to draw horses from the books, this didn't skip by me. Born into creative family I always knew I have to be an artist, since early days I was told I can draw, but there was something inside that kept me dreaming of real horses.

At age of 10 my passions brought me to a local stud farm where I spent days helping with stable duties.. Most important thing I have learned there was to listen to horse, understand it's language, feel it's needs.. I spent most beautiful years by the Baltic sea, surrounded by forests and freedom.. Racing bareback on the beach and had no single worry about what tomorrow can bring..

One sunny day happiness was crushed..

Tragic accident left me disabled, doctors giving prognosis of maximum of 5 years to live.. I suffered leg, spinal and brain injuries, that left me with permanent nerve damages.. for three years I was waiting for the end and had to forget horses.. Even studying in Art College my creative self was broken..

Strong will and love brought me back to the stables and magic of equine therapy. In very short time I was able to get back in saddle.. I was challenged by own body.. it was hard work on regaining balance, dealing with vision problems and fears.. Ironically after all, I became a trainer of young show jumping stock. I understood I love this work the most: bringing on youngsters, allowing them to find their own balance, trust, enjoy work and discovering own talents. no.. it wasn't my job.. it was my therapy, place for inspiration, food for my soul.. I felt I have purpose in life again.

Then I met him .. a trotter!

He came to our warmblood yard like an alien, with big dreamy eyes, small in size and oh so beautiful! He was very different to all horses I have known before.. he was first to

make me feel I can fly when asked for big trot in the forest. He was first horse to make me feel what magic of trotting feels.. He brought me to the trotting track.
And there it all began..

I could not believe how beautiful and powerful these horses were flying high above the ground... I simply loved the sound of it, the look and feel of it. Now those feelings are transferred to my paintings.

Family life brought me to Ireland, and discovery that trotting sport is not very developed in this country was very upsetting .. I discovered a local track and small, family size crowd. I was amazed by the quality of racing and passion of people involved.

There creative part of me woke up again and painting returned to my routine with new level of quality, much bigger ambitions. Must say it all came in so naturally.

Who would have thought that lonely girl with big camera standing in the corner of paddock taking photos will become one of the ambassadors of Irish Harness racing.

I believe everything happens for a reason. I found wonderful trotters, they found me. I'm proud to be part of growing industry which is doing major steps towards success, especially with massive input of LeTrot in past few years.

Along with the success of racing industry projects my arts have experienced a world wide attention. These two things would not work without each other. Everything is connected in this world. Horses brought me to most beautiful places and I have met so many wonderful people from all over the world.

It is so important for me as an artist to know my subject inside and out. I spend every morning in the yard and there's no days off.. only passionate people will understand that feeling. You need a dose of horse every day to feel alive. I need to feel my purpose and hear that sweet bubbly call from the stable on arrival.

These warm feelings transfer to canvas..

Every painting I do I feel the breeze, sweet breath of big nostrils and smell of tack. There's no single piece that leaves my easel that I didn't have an emotional conversation with.. would it be a horse I know personally or someone I would only feel if I paint it real enough.. From family pets to world champions, they all are personalities with own stories..

Harness racing world gave me so much.. every day is bringing new opportunities and challenges, like if I was a racehorse with targets set as high as to win Prix d'Amerique..

First time attending the event brought me same feelings like when I first time seen a trotter in full flight, It was combination of happy tears and chills.. Feeling like when you know this is it.. I want to be part of it! I am part of it!

Just few years later my paintings arrived in Club Uranie for Prix de Cornulier and Prix d'Amerique 2017.. Was I dreaming? May be..

I was told as a child, never give up on your dreams!

"I was born dreaming of horses. I was painting my dreams as a child... I still do and I strongly believe that dreams do come true, just follow your passions!"