

THE ART IN HORSES

Do You Hear What I Hear?

By Sandra Wallin, MA

"Snow Stallion" photo by Carol Walker

It is common for folks to recount stories of their visits with the horses but every now and again, someone will relay an experience which can only be described as a literal "message from the herd". In keeping with the winter theme of this issue, I'm reminded of a visit the horses and I had last Christmas, by a woman who braved the snow because she "wanted to know peace before the craziness of the season"...

The snow had been falling for days. We were enjoying a true winter wonderland with drifts of snow higher than I've ever seen here on the wet coast. The horses delighted in the weather, especially Cricket who hails from wintry Alberta. She and Chiron were

kicking up their heels and even the normally reserved Grace could be observed making snow angels.

One of the things I notice most when it snows here is the deep quiet that settles itself onto our little mountain top. Instead of hearing the faraway sounds that seem to carry upward during the course of everyday, it is the sounds that seem to lay between each snowflake that whisper imperceptibly when I'm out with the horses.

When Kristin arrived it was still snowing. We bundled up before walking down to the horses, following the path I had forged with our puppy earlier that day. At six months of

age, Saxon was already 90 pounds and in this weather, his exuberant play allowed him to be part mastiff and part snow plough.

When we reached the horses, they were sprinkled in white and each approached in turn to offer a friendly hello. Kristin giggled as Chiron touched her nose with his. He gave way to Cricket, who not to be outdone, batted her bejeweled eyelashes, showing off each snowflake to its best effect.

Then came Grace.

Grace lightly rested her head on Kristin's shoulder, whiffing her nose by Kristin's ear and breathing warm horse breath into her hair. Kristin sighed and everything became still. As I watched, a gentle smile spread across Kristin's face, and then a tear fell to her cheek. She sighed again and with her eyes closed, leaned her ear closer still to Grace's warm breath. Another sigh and she opened her eyes to look at me.

"Do you hear what I hear?" she asked?

Before I could reply, she told me it sounded like Grace was whispering to her and the words she thought she heard were, "You are the source of your peace."

Kristin raised her hand to rest on Grace's neck. Another sigh, another tear, then Grace walked away, leaving Kristin with the peace she had arrived with, but needed reminding of.



Remembering Inner Peace with Horses



Saxon's First Snow – "Wow this is deep!"

HOW HORSES HELP US BECOME OUR OWN MASTERPIECE

Sandra Wallin is a registered clinical counselor, an educator, author and presenter, who divides her professional time between a private practice, working in a local school district and teaching Equine Guided Development and PSYCH-K. As an expressive arts therapist, Sandra often combines the arts with equine guided activities.



SANDRA'S THOUGHTS ON THIS SERIES: Horses have inspired artists throughout the ages and in turn, those of us who look upon their art are captivated by the beauty and majesty of the horse. The cave drawings in Lascaux, Leonardo's sculptures, and the finger paintings that adorn kindergarten classrooms, created by little girls who dream of being a horse.

What I want to share however, is a new way of looking at horses, through stories that pay homage to the master artist in each horse. Instead of the painted, they are now the painters, transforming the at times tattered canvas of the human spirit into glowing masterpieces, alive with the colours of love, compassion and joy.

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Submissions/questions: L.A. Pomeroy, IHSA Media Liaison
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