

USDF's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

*Grand Prize Winner
Photo: 16 - 21 Years Old*

Architecture by Lily Cole

Photo by Lily Cole, Holland, MI



USDFA's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Art: 15 & Under: First Place

Best Friends by Nellie Stallsmith

Artwork by Nellie Stallsmith, Parrish, AL



USDF's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Art: 15 & Under: Second Place

Future Dreams by Ayla Spry

Artwork by Ayla Spry, Milaca, MN



USDF's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Art: 16-21: First Place

Gabel by Amy Schierbeek

Artwork by Amy Schierbeek, Holland, MI



USD F's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Art: 16-21: Second Place

Engagement by Maria Filsinger

Artwork by Maria Filsinger, Excelsior, MN



USD F's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Art: Adult: First Place

Spur of the Moment by Tania Radda

Artwork by Tania Radda, www.taniaradda.com -

photo of artwork by Ken Manicki, Fountain Hills, AZ.

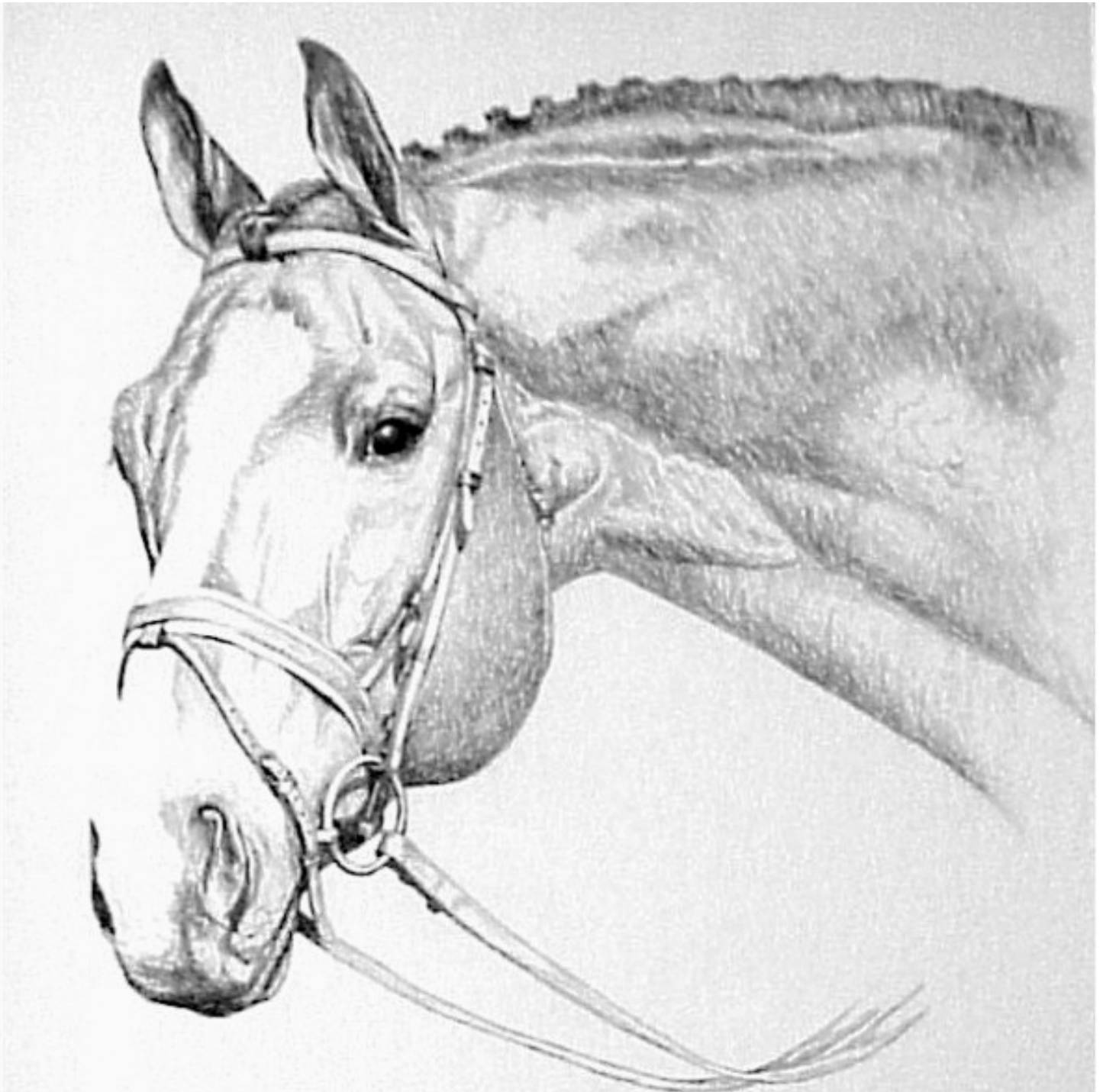


USDFA's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Art: Adult: Second Place

Adagio by Bonnie Marentette Bendzans

*Artwork by Bonnie Marentette Bendzans, www.farawayfarm.homestead.com
www.threehorsestudio.com Folsom, Louisiana*



USDF's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Photography; 15 & Under: First Place

Freedom by Emily Howser

Photo by Emily Howser, Louisville, Kentucky



USDF's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Photography; 15 & Under: Second Place

Keyanna, In Spite of the Rain

by Morgan Messersmith

Photo of Keyanna, 3 yr old RPSI filly by Prelude by Mozart, by Morgan Messersmith



USD F's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Photography; 16 -21: First Place

Trust by Hannah Walsh
Photo of Hannah Walsh, Pleasanton, CA



USDF's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Photography; 16 -21: Second Place

Cadence by Maria Filsinger

Photo by Maria Filsinger, Excelsior, MN



USDF's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Photography; Adult: First Place

Mirror by Jodie Robbins

Photo by Jodie Robbins, Kernersville, NC; www.pumpkinrunphotos.com



USDF's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Photography; Adult: Second Place

Best Friends by Kay Geraghty

Photo by Kay Geraghty, Mondovi, WI



USDFA's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Writing: 15 & Under: First Place

Horses in the Spring by Alexandra Varisco

Written by Alexandra Varisco, Covington, LA



Hoof prints in the mud

Bales being rolled in the fields

Green fields of clover

Girths being tightened

Saddles resting on strong backs

Chomping bits in mouths



USDFA's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Writing: 15 & Under: Second Place

The Pair by Ashley Murray

Written by Ashley Murray, Iowa

The Pair

Haiku poem by: Ashley Murray

Flashes of color
bay, black, grey, palomino
All joined together...

...by this crazy thing
that takes years to master.
This thing called Dressage

It consumes our lives.
Any waking hour we have,
we think of our horse.

A long, precise ring
with letters placed randomly
but all still the same

No jumps are set up
it's quiet and empty
Only low, white rails.

Then the pair enters
dressed in military style
of mere black and white.

The bell rings, halt, salute
Then the ring is full of life
with movement and grace

Half pass and volte
changes almost like flying
some may say they are

Down the centerline
straight toward the judge at C
halt, salute, the end

but that is not the end
we all know they will be back
for who can stay away?

USDFA's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Writing; 16-21: First Place

The Power of a Smile by Victoria Retamoza

Written by Victoria Retamoza, Goshen, KY

The Power of a Smile

When I was a little walk- trotter; my trainer required my friends and me to have a huge smile as we were showing in the arena. As little ten year- olds, my friends and I loved the idea of showing off our smiles in the arena! When we were little, showing was so laid back and enjoyable, we didn't care about the color of the ribbon. We felt lucky to be able to experience what it was like to show; if we messed up, oh well!

As my friends and I got older, we stopped smiling in the show ring and even while schooling. No more walk/trot meant no more smile in our eyes! What had really happened was that the competitiveness had taken over. Riding was no longer fun; it was only for the trophies and ribbons. I will be the first one to admit that I, too, was becoming a monster. Friends were no longer friends; they were becoming enemies. We fought to ride and show our trainer's best horses, and disrespected our parents. When we lost our smile, we lost the true meaning of riding.

At fourteen years- old, I realized that the pressure I was feeling was not how horseback riding should feel. I decided at that point, I was no longer going to act like that spoiled bratty kid I was becoming. I was taking everything for granted and not enjoying the moment.

As I have gotten older, I have learned that competitions can be just as fun as they were when I was a walk- trotter. If you do not enjoy what you do, then you shouldn't do it. Every person's needs and desires vary, do what makes you happy.

Nobody is ever too good to smile! Smiles are infectious, they spread like a disease. Be happy while on a horse's back, they know and can feel your mood. The horse world is one of many ups and downs. Smile because you love what you are doing and the journey that goes along with it!

USDFA's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Writing; Adult: First Place

The Dressage “Type” by Fay Windsor

Written by Fay Windsor, Longmont, CO

The Dressage “Type”

My horse cost less than some people's britches;
I won't "train him and sell him" for untold riches.
He doesn't have papers, he wasn't imported;
The quality of his gaits is rather assorted.
My white breeches NEVER stay white;
My jacket's off ebay and rather too tight!
Truth be told, I'm a little chubby.
My only "sponsor" is my hardworking hubby;
Sometimes we back up at "X" and spook at the judges box.
I've a stiff ankle and he's had surgery on his hocks.
Despite all this, my horse and me;
Are a shining example what a dressage "type" should be.
We have a deep, passionate love for the sport;
The bond it creates, the things we are taught;
To enjoy dressage you don't have to be perfect;
Come on, join in - you'll soon find that its worth it!

USDFA's 2011 Arts Contest Winners

Writing; Adult: Second Place

To Care by Nancy Lashua

Written by Nancy Lashua, Granite Falls, WA

To Care

Losing hope in dressage is like losing a beloved friend. It's a knife straight through the heart. I've many times believed my dream to have been lost.

But, I'm an optimist. I remind myself of all the good I've gained from dressage.

I remember when my friend Sharon walked up a steep hill in the hot sun with her bad knee to watch me ride a training level test on my new horse. The show photographer happened to take a picture with Sharon in it. I look at that picture every day and smile. She cared.

I remember watching a group of young riders arrive at a show, the father commandeering the horse van and helping the girls unload. It took me back to the days when my dad would drive the motorhome towing the trailer. Now the man who had stood tall and strong sits silent in an Alzheimer's ward. I depended on my dad and he had cared.

I remember a schooling show watching the rider before me valiantly trying to get her belligerent horse through their test. Not a single movement was completed and I was feeling for her when she exited the ring red-faced and tight-lipped with frustration. It was then I noticed an elderly couple waiting for her with smiling faces. I heard them telling her what a splendid ride it had been and how proud they were of her. It didn't matter to them how badly the horse had performed, only that their lovely granddaughter had looked so pretty in her black hat and coat atop her shiny horse. They simply cared.

There is a poem that states the things we see may be shadows of what is meant to be. If that be so, even though I have not won a lot of ribbons or a single medal, maybe the love and devotion I have seen is my reward. So, I shall keep my dream. I shall ride.

About this thing we call dressage; I shall continue to care.