



The Kentucky Horse Park & Breyerfest

So what is the legal definition of a stalker anyway?

For the entire three days we were at the Kentucky Horse Park, I spent the bulk of my time following *Alborozo* around, waiting for my chance to get ever more photos of "Big Al," which is what I took to affectionately calling him (to myself) after we had a moment together where I got to pet him and have my picture taken with him (*photo at right*).

In between his shows, the owners kept him hidden away in a covered stall (I imagine so people like me wouldn't constantly be pestering him.) So I would return to my booth and work it for a little until the announcer would say that *Alborozo* was coming up in about an hour. And I'd be like, "Gotta Go!" to Carol, grab my camera and make tracks.

Why an hour ahead? Well, because this was the time that they brought him out of his stall to get ready for the show, and because everybody else was in the indoor arena watching the show. So I was able to get much closer, with almost unrestricted access. After being groomed and tacked up he would then get a workout in an outdoor arena. This, of course, is much preferable to photographing him indoors, as lighting makes a dramatic difference in a photo's outcome, which then directly relates to the painting's outcome.

It wasn't until the last day that I actually remained in the arena to watch him perform (and it was spectacular.) Otherwise I would be waiting either outside the arena or back at his stall (all the better to get some distance shots while he was returning to barn.)

Of course, I was not alone in my adoration, as "Big Al" was almost constantly surrounded by fans.

I, however, was by far the most tenacious, probably because I was there for a completely different reason than all the others. I was on a mission to get some seriously beautiful horse photos.

When I got my photos developed, it was very much like Christmas. I'd be carefully opening up the many packages and rifling through all that glossy equestrian goodness, all the while breathing in deeply that hint of developing chemical wafting from the photos. Ahhhh! All in all, I took around 800 pictures that weekend with well over 400 photos being of "Big Al." Choosing on which of the many photos to base the first painting, took

quite awhile (like around a year). But I succeeded in narrowing down the selection.

About The Painting

With *Spanish Gold*, what attracted me the most, besides the horse himself, was the gorgeous tack. I love painting tack on horses anyway, but this is by far the most intricate work that I've seen, made all the more so by the stallion wearing it.

I did alter my painting a bit from the actual horse, by the addition of the pink nose. True, I do have a "thing" for pink noses on horses but in this instance, I thought it also added a dash of color to a rather monotone color scheme.

This painting was once again created on suede board. When working on watercolor paper I often struggle with getting a decent-looking white horse, most likely because my starting surface color is white and, once color gets added, it can't be easily removed. So by using a soft gray suede, the white was almost effortless.

By Mona Majorowicz

My most recent painting, *Spanish Gold*, was modeled after an Andalusian Stallion named *Alborozo*. I had the pleasure of photographing him at the Kentucky Horse Park for Breyerfest in 2008. I attended Breyerfest with my good friend and equestrian artist, Carol Herden. Carol is a sculptor who has created models for Breyer and asked me if I wanted to share a booth with her and go along for the ride. With hardly any hesitation, I agreed.

This being my first visit to the Kentucky Horse Park, I was very impressed. The Park is quite large and even though I walked all over that place, I still didn't see it all. Several museums (all dedicated to the horse), a racetrack, polo field, cross country course, and show jumping and dressage arenas, are all features of the Park. Additionally, there is an extensive barn showcasing the various breeds, complete with demonstrations, as well as many displays dealing with the history of the horse. In short, I was in horse heaven.

Breyerfest itself is an expo dedicated to the Breyer model horse industry. *Alborozo* was the featured horse for that year and his model was made available for purchase only at Breyerfest. To make it especially collectible, Breyer made a limited number of them and then broke the mold... something it has never done in its 60 years of existence.

I was surprised at how many live horses were participating in event. In my wanderings, I talked with some of the people who brought their horses and asked them why they traveled so far to attend it. The answer: *It was in the hopes that their horse would be chosen for a future Breyer model.* And apparently this plan works because in subsequent years, some of those horses were indeed made into models.



The reward of "stalking:"
I finally got to meet "Big Al" up close and personal.