

# Horsham Museum

## The Raoul Millais Collection

Hesketh Raoul Lejardera Millais, usually known as Raoul or 'Liony', was born in Horsham on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1901. He was one of four children born to John Guille Millais and 'Fanny' Margaret Skipworth, daughter of a Lincolnshire landowner. Both his father and grandfather, Sir John Everett Millais, were notable artists.

As a boy during the First World, he attended Winchester College, a public school in Hampshire, moving on to study at the Byam Shaw School of Art and later the Royal Academy Schools in 1921.

Raoul Millais was a portrait painter, equestrian artist and sportsman. He inherited from his father and grandfather, not only his artistic talent, but also his love of animals, the countryside and the chase. He is best known for his equestrian paintings and for his Spanish work, created when he accompanied Ernest Hemingway to the country.

In 1923 Millais traveled to the Sudan with his father. Amongst other activities he collaborated with his father on a book *Far Away up the Nile* (1924). They spent three months there. In 1925, Millais and his first wife, Canadian born Clare MacDonnell, settled near Malmesbury in Wiltshire. He set up as a painter of equestrian portraits and for the next 14 years, travelled throughout Britain and Ireland, painting and hunting. Millais and Clare had two sons, but the marriage was later dissolved.

In 1936 he held a one-man show of 50 works in London, which all sold and enough commissions to last him several years. His hunting career, however, ended in 1939 following a bad fall in which he broke a bone in his neck, cracked a shoulder and dislocated his spine. Despite these injuries Millais managed, on the outbreak of the Second World War, to bluff his way into the Army without a medical. He obtained a commission in the Scots Guards and his most interesting job was to command the company that guarded Rudolf Hess. He did several drawings of his prisoner and always regretted that he did not visit Hess subsequently in Spandau.

In 1949, Millais married his second wife Kay Prior-Palmer with whom he had a son. They spent part of each year in Spain where they had bought a derelict property in 1958 near the coast of Andalusia coast. They lived at Westcote Manor in the Cotswolds from 1947 until Kay's death on the 21<sup>st</sup> August 1985; Raoul remained there until his death.

Millais was given leave by his regiment in 1943 to paint the classic King George VI's race winners 'Big Game' and 'Sun Chariot'. He painted other top-class racehorses – 'Abernant', 'Airborne', 'Blenheim', 'Court Martial', 'Nijinsky', 'Tudor Minstrel' and for Sir Winston Churchill, 'Colonist II'.

Tall and distinguished in appearance, Raoul Millais was a man of great courtesy and charm. The subjects whom he painted reflected those which he loved and included hunting, racing, bullfighting, stalking, shooting, fishing and skiing. He held surprisingly few exhibitions, the most recent being in 1982, at the Tryon Gallery in London. His approach to his art was refreshingly un-commercial and he was more inclined to give his pictures to his many friends than to sell them. He died on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1999 aged 98.

2008.146

20th century chalk drawing; text 'Don Quixote'; initialled 'RM'; artist Raoul Millais.



2006.242

20<sup>th</sup> Century double sided work; recto impressionist pen and ink drawing (possibly watercolour) of a wolf attacking a horseman; verso chalk drawing of a mounted dressage competitor; text 'Olympia in 1936'; artist Raoul Millais; unsigned.



2006.243

Pastel drawing titled recto 'Hagenbach Circus'; signed recto 'Raoul Millais'.



2006.245

20th century oil painting; signed recto 'Raoul Millais'; text verso [unintelligible name]...with love from Raoul Millais, 1983. 19th August'.



2009.9

20<sup>th</sup> Century (19136) oil painting by Raoul Millais; signed recto; titled 'The Pageant'; dated '1936'.



2009.360

20<sup>th</sup> Century pen and wash drawing; signed recto 'Raoul Millais'.



2009.361

20<sup>th</sup> century pencil and charcoal drawing of a Spanish matador; signed 'Raoul Millais'.



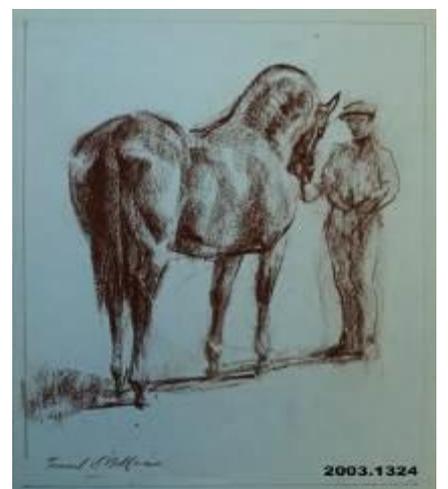
2003.1322 20th century (1950-1958) chalk drawing of a cockerel; signed 'Raoul Millais' recto.



2003.1323 20<sup>th</sup> century (1950-1958) chalk drawing; signed 'Raoul Millais' recto.



2003.1324 20<sup>th</sup> century (1950-1958) chalk drawing on blue paper; signed recto 'Raoul Millais'.



2009.362 20<sup>th</sup> Century ochre pencil and crayon drawing; signed 'Raoul Millais'.



2014.214 20<sup>th</sup> century pen, brush and ink drawing by Raoul Millais entitled 'Rotten Row'; date unknown.



2015.15 Mid-20<sup>th</sup> century watercolour painting by Raoul Millais; faint signature recto.

