

March Speaker : Patrick Kempe – “Working Backstage with one of the World’s Top Equestrian Artists”

Our March Speaker was Patrick Kempe who talked about the years he spent working with Lorenzo, one of the world’s top equestrian display artists.

Born in 1977, Lorenzo grew up on the family farm in the Carmargue where he first came into contact with the world of horses.

His first horse was named Niasque, who was originally a wedding gift for his mother, but the family soon observed that both the horse and the little boy had an instinctive communication.

At the age of 8, Laurent began to demonstrate his skills in public. His first acrobatic tricks were riding on the backs of horses at the Cheval de Cheval horse show.

Lorenzo rides Lusitano horses who originate from Portugal and are renowned for their intelligence and willing nature. Originally bred for war, dressage and bullfighting, Lusitanos formed part of the Portuguese and Spanish dressage teams at the Olympics and World Equestrian Games, and were an ideal breed for Lorenzo’s equestrian skills.

In 1989, he performed his first vaulting show with his horses Niasque and Tarzan, becoming known as Lorenzo, the Flying Frenchman.

Between 1995 and 1996, Lorenzo developed his skills to the extent that he could drive between 10 and 12 horses together, whilst standing astride on two of their backs.

He began to receive invitations to horse shows in Germany, Ireland, the Middle East and other regions of France. His demonstrations were becoming increasingly spectacular, and audiences were amazed at the close relationship he had with his horses.

Lorenzo has been quoted as saying “When I am with my horses, I become one of them. I think like a horse, I react like a horse, I become like a horse. Maybe that is why I understand them.”

Patrick has supported Lorenzo over the years by helping to secure venues, ensuring that the stabling is of sufficient standard and comfort for the horses. The welfare of the horses always takes priority, and when attending shows, the horses will arrive in good time to allow them to settle into their new, temporary stables, and to be fed, watered and exercised so as to remain relaxed and stress-free.

Patrick’s talk was illustrated by numerous photos and short videos, and was very much enjoyed by his audience.