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100 YEARS OF BRITISH ARMY POLO – Ponies at War BY JEREMY HOUGHTON

Jeremy Houghton, one of Britain's most acclaimed military and sporting artists, announces an unprecedented exhibition '100 Years of British Army Polo' which reveals the fascinating story of how this equestrian sport came to influence the outcome of British military history.

In commemoration of the centenary of WW1, and inspired by previously unseen photographic archives provided by the British Army Polo Association, Houghton has produced a unique collection of watercolour paintings in his chiaroscuro monochromatic style, celebrating this little-known story of adventure – of ponies, generals, kings, princes, prime ministers and servants, united in this age old pursuit. He will reveal how the unique relationship between man and horse was evident not only on the battlefield, but also on the playing field and how lessons learned on the polo pitch – 'playing the greater game in the field of honour' – instilled courage, agility and team spirit, and forged international camaraderie, in times of peace and war, for generations of British soldiers.

This exhibition will commence on 18 March 2014, at the Cavalry & Guards Club in Mayfair, before touring nationally to Guards Polo Club, Cowdray Polo Club, Cirencester Polo Club and finishing up at the end of 2014 at the Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur, India, kindly hosted by HH the Maharaja of Jodhpur.

Houghton explains:

'The British Army has long believed that sport prepares men for combat by increasing fitness, channelling aggression, and focusing the mind. It serves to strengthen the ties between men, instilling discipline and readiness to serve a common cause.'

My exhibition sets out to capture the dynamics of the relationship between man and horse, the mastery of the game, but also this exhilarating team spirit and camaraderie'



'Polo at Cirencester', original watercolour by Jeremy Houghton

The exhibition is commissioned by the British Army Polo Association (APOLOA). **Colonel Simon Ledger, Director, says:**

'I met Jeremy in Jodhpur last year and his paintings of polo could not have been more fitting in that ancient town so closely associated with our sport. Not only is Jeremy's work an aesthetic triumph, but the stories his paintings tell reverberate with wonderful narrative. So the plan to tell the story of polo through a touring exhibition was hatched, and I am delighted that Jeremy has embraced the idea. Not only does this collection of polo paintings commemorate the lives of men and ponies who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country; it also illustrates and celebrates, keeping their stories alive.

We are hugely grateful to Jeremy for working with us on this project; British Army Polo has made the sport what it is today all round the world, and I congratulate Jeremy on sharing this story in such a memorable way.'

A percentage of proceeds from the sale of the exhibition paintings will go to the Horse Trust. **Jeanette Allen – Chief Executive, says:**

'Jeremy has been a great friend to The Horse Trust over the years; we have worked together before, and I am delighted that Jeremy has once again chosen the HT to be the benefactor from this exhibition. Our charity cares for service horses in their retirement and repays their life of service with a life of green fields, kindred spirits and relaxation. Our Trust was founded in 1886 and many a sporting pony has been cared for in our stables.

Equestrian sport has played an instrumental role in training soldiers to ride with agility and bravery. Without the added bravery of our horses and ponies, Britain would be a very different place to what we have today, and I congratulate Jeremy on telling this story for our future generations.'

For further information or to arrange an interview with Jeremy Houghton, please contact Angie Nilson or Jean Egbunike from J E Communications on 0208 875 1868 or angie@jeanegbunike.com

www.jeremyhoughton.co.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS:



'Ploughing Amongst the Highgrove Orchards' by Jeremy Houghton © A.G. Garrick Ltd.

Background on Jeremy Houghton:

After graduating with a degree in Law, Houghton went on to study at the Slade School of Art and the Université de Provence, before becoming Head of Art at the International School of Cape Town where he stayed for five years. It was during this time that he was first asked to work on a military commission. The late David Rattray worked with Jeremy to produce a series of drawings of the Anglo-Zulu wars, later made famous by the Michael Caine film 'Zulu'.

Houghton's achievements as an artist include **Tour Artist for the Aston Martin** Centenary Tour of Europe; Official BT **Olympic Artist for London 2012**; he won an award from the Society of Equestrian Artists: 'Best Sporting Artist', where his prize was a commission to paint the legendary racehorse 'Frankel'; **Official Artist for London Fashion Week** and last, but by no means least, he was **commissioned to paint HM The Queen in 2009** for the Gentlemen at Arms' 500th anniversary.

He has had solo exhibitions at esteemed galleries such as The Saatchi Gallery in London and solo shows in Johannesburg and India.

Most recently he was honoured to be **Artist in Residence at Highgrove**, producing a series of watercolour paintings that capture the way in which light and movement is enhanced by the seasons, and how farming communities adapt year in and year out to work in harmony with nature.

Of the Highgrove exhibition, **HRH The Prince of Wales recently said:**

'It is a splendid collection of unusual watercolours that truly captures the spirit of Highgrove and Home Farm.'

Jeremy Houghton is something of a phenomenon: all this has been achieved in only eight years.