

# D. Haskell Chhuy

## An Artist of Multi-dimensions

by Hay Hardy



*Hounds in Full Cry* — transparent watercolor

The one thing that stands out about D. Haskell Chhuy's works is its range and diversity in every aspect. The mediums she works in span oil, watercolor, ink and pencil. In the past she also did lithography, etching and engraving, with a period of concentration on engraving. The subject matter ranges from equestrian themes to wildlife, landscapes—many with moving or reflective water—and portraits. While some of her works are done with such detail that they are almost anatomical illustrations others are quite loosely rendered. This multidimensional characteristic is even reflected in the

various ways she markets her works. Although most are sold as originals, they have also been reproduced as notecards, place mats, door mats and even thermometers. Many have appeared on magazine covers, as illustrations in books, on posters and in programs for special equine events. The list goes on and on.

Chhuy was born and raised on a small farm in Sudbury, Massachusetts. Horses were an integral part of her life during this time, starting with a pony at seven and later moving up to horses. She and her sister were active in a 4-H program, both in the horse projects as well as gardening.

Drawing horses has always been a favorite pastime for Chhuy from an early age. If she was found doodling in class, she would be drawing a horse. She took art classes all through high school and was accepted into the Massachusetts School of Art. But upon the advice of her parents, she attended the University of Massachusetts and majored in sociology so she could be gainfully employed. Even so, she took many art classes and studied under Jack Coughlin who became her mentor. She graduated with a double major in sociology and art.

After her third year in college, she spent six months in Panama with the 4-H

International Farm Youth Exchange. Prior to her departure, she joined the International Student Club to acquaint herself with foreign customs and foods. There she met Lim Chhuy, a foreign student from Cambodia. Upon her return from Panama she was accepted into the Peace Corps and planned to go to Latin America after completing college; however, she instead joined Lim in Holland where he was employed by an international company. They were married in England and spent the next 10 years in Europe, mostly in France.

While searching for employment, she studied French at the Alliance Francaise and took printmaking classes at the American Center for Students and Artists in Paris. Her teacher happened to be a student of S.W. Hayter, a well known printmaker from England. Through the introduction of her teacher, Chhuy was accepted into Hayter's prestigious atelier to study etching and engraving. At the same time, she also studied life drawing, painting and lithography at the Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux Arts in Paris.

In 1976, the Chhuys moved back to the U.S. For the next 24 years, the couple resided in New Jersey, where Chhuy continued to pursue her career in art, and sold much of her work through M.J. Knoud, an exclusive saddle shop on Madison Avenue in New York. She felt greatly honored when her work was also accepted by Associated American Artists on Fifth Avenue, a gallery that handled both Coughlin's and Hayter's work. During this period she did spot illustrations for *The Chronicle of the Horse* and *Gourmet* magazines and received two illustration assignments for Jean Slaughter Doty's books—*The Valley of the Ponies* and *Dark Horse*.

Over the past 20-plus years her paintings have appeared on 27 *Chronicle* covers. Two fun projects from that time were pen-and-ink drawings that were used on a wine label and a miniature portrait of a Lab which was engraved on a signet ring at Tiffany's.



*Tree Study* —watercolor, accepted by New Jersey Watercolor Juried Exhibition

*Polo II* —engraving on Copper



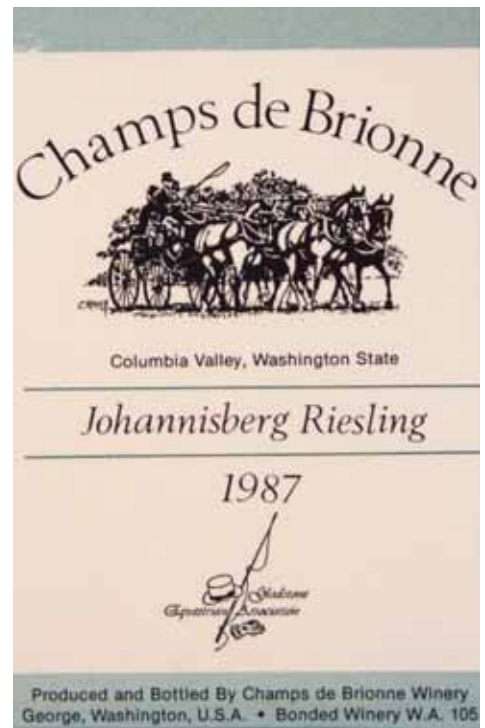


*A Good Run on Midway Farm* —oil, included in the book *A Centennial View*

*The Last Hurdle* —oil, Best in Show, Virginia Equine Artist Association



Wine label, pen-and-ink drawings

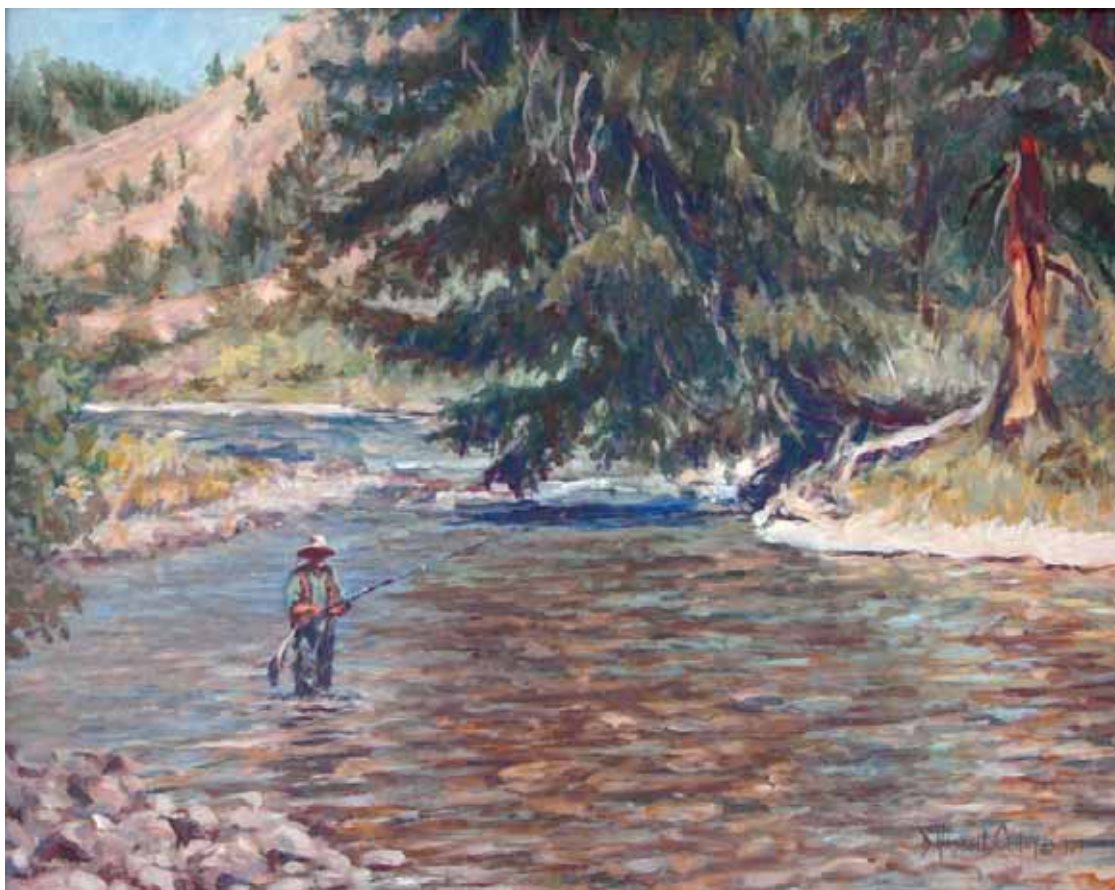


Living near Gladstone, New Jersey, she became involved in the Gladstone Driving Event, one of the biggest driving events in the country. Her pen-and-ink drawings were included in 15 years of programs and it was at this event that *Achenbach*, a Swiss publication on the sport of combined driving, interviewed her for a feature article.

In 2000, her husband retired and the couple moved to Virginia. Chhuy joined the Farmington Hunt Club and in the decade that followed, her paintings have been used on posters for Farmington events as well as steeplechase races such as Foxfield, Montpelier in Virginia and also in Aiken, South Carolina.

Chhuy's works are composites of impressions she has gathered while in the field. A single piece may have elements that are separated by many years and large geographical expanses. Great detail on such things as a group of trees or poultry netting is often created by filling in the empty spaces between the tree trunks or wire. The integration of detail and loosely rendered areas produces a stunning effect.

Chhuy is extremely prolific. Her works are found in such places as the offices of the Irish Export Board, EEC Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium and the National Sporting Library in Middleburg, Virginia, and the recent coffee table book *A Centennial View*, published by the Masters of Foxhounds Association of North America. She has had one-person shows up and down the Eastern Seaboard from Vermont to South Carolina. Six of the shows have been at the Thoroughbred Racing Hall of Fame and Museum. Her pieces have been exhibited in juried shows nationally and internationally, including Spain and France, where she received the bronze medal in printmaking at the Salon des Artistes Francais in Paris. Chhuy is represented by Antiques Etc. at the Boar's Head Inn in Charlottesville, Virginia, where a show is planned for December, and also at the Aiken Thoroughbred Racing Hall of Fame.



*Fishing on the Wood River, Idaho—oil*

Pencil illustration for *The Valley of The Ponies* by Jean Slaughter Doty

