

audacity. The French Academy with its forty immortals remains a monument to his incarnation of the homosexual affinity for literature and art.

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BONDAGE

See **Sadomasochism**.

BONDING

See **Friendship; Homosociality**.

BONHEUR, ROSA (1822-1899)

French painter. Born into a family of artists, Bonheur was encouraged early on by her father, who sent her to the Louvre to copy old-master canvases and urged her to visit farms and stables to sketch. She was only nineteen when she entered her work for the first time in the official Salon. In her twenties she frequented the slaughterhouses and horse fairs for material. For these visits she obtained a permit to wear male costume. At the age of twenty-six she won her first Gold Medal, awarded by a jury that included Corot, Delacroix, and Ingres. Five years later, her reputation reached its height in France with the display of *The Horse Fair*, an imposing tour de force which today adorns The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Prosperity enabled her to acquire a chateau near Fontainebleau, where she kept a menagerie of exotic animals. She traveled frequently and hobnobbed with royalty. Claiming that the duties of her craft required her full attention, Bonheur never married.

At the age of fourteen Rosa Bonheur began a friendship with Nathalie Micas, a sickly child whom she protected. In their blossoming relationship (which Bonheur described as "sisterly"), Nathalie looked after the clothes and the studio, freeing Bonheur for her work. Although it was never openly acknowledged as a love affair, this intimate connection lasted until Nathalie's death in 1889.

Her last years were illuminated by a passionate friendship with a young American artist, Anna Elizabeth Klumpke, whose mother had brought her daughters from San Francisco to Paris so that they might take advantage of European culture. Although they had met in 1889, the very year of Micas' death, it was not until 1898, in an imperious letter to Mrs. Klumpke, that Bonheur announced that she and Anna had decided to share their lives. Klumpke's writings leave little doubt of the nature of her relationship with Bonheur. In a few letters to intimate friends the aged painter referred to her companion as "my wife." Despite family opposition, Bonheur made Klumpke her sole heir.

Although there had been notable women painters in earlier centuries, Bonheur's career flourished in an era of increasing assertion of women's rights and creativity, as seen in the careers of such writers as Flora Tristan and George Sand. Bonheur also took advantage of the interest in androgyny then current to paint "men's" subjects, while adopting, however guardedly, a male role in her personal relations as well. After her death Bonheur's reputation declined, but it revived again with the late-twentieth century resurgence of interest in academic painting.

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