



# The Horse's Arse

By Laura Gascoigne

## PRESS RELEASE

*Fakery, fraud, kidnap, murder and the Russian Mafia are all part of the picture for the innocent artist-hero of this delightful crime caper.*

Pat Phelan is an ageing artist who has never made it big, but who somehow manages to live on air in a North London suburb. When not running art classes for amateurs, Pat wrestles in the shed at the bottom of his garden with his life's work: a series of visionary canvases of The Seven Seals. When his wheeler-dealer son Marty turns up with a commission from a rich client for some copies of paintings by modern masters — from Derain to Modigliani— Pat reluctantly agrees, as it means extra cash to get his ex-wife Moira off his back.

However the deal with Marty is not what it seems, and what follows is a complex chain of events involving fakery, fraud,

kidnapping and murder. As Pat becomes increasingly embroiled in his son's affairs, he finds himself at the centre of a web of corruption featuring a cast of dubious art world characters, from a scuffling picture dealer down on his luck to a dodgy global gallerist in hock to the Russian Mafia. A contemporary spin on Joyce Cary's classic satire *The Horse's Mouth*, **The Horse's Arse** by Laura Gascoigne is a crime thriller-cum-comic fable that poses the serious question: where does art go from here?

Based on her long career in art journalism and her first-hand experience of the cut-throat world of 'celebrity art' that has come with the rampant monetisation of the art market, Gascoigne's **The Horse's Arse** can be read and enjoyed as both an exposé of corruption and a crime caper with a strong dash of satire.

**About the author:** Currently living in Hampstead, North London, Laura Gascoigne has worked as an art journalist for over twenty years, editing *Artists & Illustrators* (1994-1999) before going freelance. Laura was born in Cairo in 1950, the daughter of a bookseller and an Italian teacher, and grew up in Brussels and Cambridge before studying Classics at Oxford University. Her sister is the writer Marina Warner. Surrounded as a child by the paintings her father collected, she has always had a passion for art and when not writing about it, she paints.

**The Horse's Arse** by Laura Gascoigne (published by Clink Street Publishing 4th April 2017 RRP £8.99 paperback, RRP £3.99 ebook) is available to purchase from online retailers including amazon.co.uk and to order from all good bookstores.

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