



young girl growing up in Johannesburg, with the exception of school years at Heathfield in England, Slack recalls adoring paintings in her parents' home but finding "the French furniture tack." Like her father, who bought his first important painting, for less than \$10,000 while still a student at Oxford University, Slack demonstrated an appetite for collecting early, convincing her father to buy her a still life by Maud Sumner when she was only 14.

Recently, she helped put together the substantial corporate collection of Ernest Oppenheimer & Son, headquarters of the family businesses, which includes collages by Sam Nhlengethwa. She added to her own bulging collection by shunting canvases to her various homes: her impressive array of Hodgkins to her beachfront house in Johannesburg, many of her sculptures to the homes of her four grown-up children, and her horse-theme works to Wilgerbosdrift, where she

spends most of August and September, when foals are being born.

Slack describes her stud farm, established in 1997, as her other "super passion." It is home to 70 mares and two stallions, and she's expecting 50 foals by the end of the year. Slack dominated the recent Equus Awards (the Oscars of South African horse racing), as breeder of the champion filly Asylum Seeker and as the owner of Ilha da Vitória, joint horse of the year. "I get more excited about something I've bred winning than something I bought," she says.

At Brenthurst, she crams new canvases onto any spare wall space, including the bathrooms and service quarters. And she marvels at the quality of crafts coming out of the most remote corners of her beloved country. "I bought the most beautiful basket the other day," Slack says, her voice full of girlish enthusiasm. "It is absolutely exceptional. I can't think of any other places that produce things of such beauty." ●

