

harem

Noble Arabian Horses in Switzerland



H Geyser
(H Glamours x Gazelle)

“ Today my life is entirely dedicated to horses.
I would say that they are the ones who manage my life ”

Manuela Lucini

The “Fattoria Collina d’Oro “(Golden Hill Farm) is located on the Golden Hill by the Lake of Lugano. The owner is Manuela Lucini - who is more than just the owner, actually, as it was her who created this small oasis, commenting today: „The farm is part of my DNA by now. I cannot even imagine a life without my animals anymore.“

Almost 70km north of Milan, in a small village near Lugano in the Swiss Alps region of Tessin – this is where she started her stud for Arabian horses in 1997. Manuela Lucini breeds Purebred Arabians as well as Straight Egyptians there. Today, 17 horses are stabled on the farm, two of them Anglo-Arabians and all of them accompanied by a lot of other animals such as two donkeys, more than a dozen Tibetan goats, and numerous other species and pets. Beautiful premises framed by green pastures and woodlands offer the animals even more than an enormously high quality of living: they also get a premium view of the lake. Manuela succeeded in making her ambitious plan of a horse center for show and sport come true by decisive action. She does almost everything by herself: show preparation, breaking in and training, equine physiotherapy, and rehabilitation of horses with physical and psychological problems.

When I asked her for an interview, she answered: “Please have some patience with me... I don’t know if it’s good to put in the article that I have to manage everything at 360 degrees around me - from the water pipe connections, to which nails to buy, to organizing the tractor overhaul; to horse management, training, and breeding; to property management, finances etc etc etc; and I know it’s not the right thing to do, but unfortunately it’s better not to delegate anything. And for a woman it is not easy anyway, even with employees.”

Monika: *Do you have a distinct concept in mind, an idea that guides you in your horse breeding?*

Manuela: *As far as Egyptian horses are concerned, I must tell you that I am not a great expert of lines. I rather work according to what I see, although I do not even choose the color. By pure chance, my five Egyptians are black. For my mares, I feel a bit like a mother who chooses the ideal husband :-)* I look at their characteristics in general, with strong points and weak points included, and try to give them a stallion who can improve their progeny. Regardless of color, I prefer type and charisma. I am not prejudiced against particular Egyptian lines. I get my orientation from the official definitions of Straight Egyptians by the Egyptian State Stud and the Pyramid Society.

Monika: *Your black Egyptians are highly impressive. Royal Colour has transmitted extreme type plus the black color more often than not, which is quite a rare*

combination actually.

Manuela: *I am quite proud to have bred some black offspring that earn excellent scores in shows and are successful otherwise too; which is because they have a lightness overall, and short and rather modern heads. But I don’t have Egyptians only, I have several Egyptian-related Arab horses, and two Anglo Arabians that I care a lot about, offspring of my great love HAREM. I like all my horses very much, regardless of the success they have in the show or under the saddle.*

Monika: *There are lots of work for you here, how do you manage to get it all done?*

Manuela: *I always took care of everything: starting with my two foundation mares TUAREG DREAM-CHA (Shabil x LF Chantilly) and GALILA (Coaltown x UP Bint Montaha). When I got them, they were still fillies. I raised them myself, broke them in, trained them, mated them with my stallion, was present when they gave birth, raised the*



GALILA (Coaltown x UP Bint Montaha)





H GEYSER (H Glamours x Gazelle)

foals, trained them, broke them in, and so on. It's just the line of work you chose when you breed for generations in a stud.

Monika: How important is ridden work with your horses here on your farm?

Manuela: For me it's essential that every single horse is trained to the saddle, in addition to the show work. The mares here are broken in for riding before they are covered for the first time. The same is true for the stallions before they are allowed to mate. In my opinion, that's a bit like school for children and young people, which serves to create a certain discipline, as well as some extra motivation in their lives. I find that for a horse to be alone in the pasture, or their box stall, or to run their circles on the lunging line – it's got to be terribly boring. However, training takes experience and competence, of course.

Monika: So what's your point of view about the show training within the frame of educating your horses?

Manuela: A show horse who is or was also ridden needs to be trained in a correct manner and outline, meaning we can't lounge him with his head in the air. We would ruin his back muscles that way, and not only that, the neck would also change in a negative way, a ewe neck will easily form. I'm sure you understand why it's not easy to just hand a horse over to somebody for show training, without applying certain standards of quality.

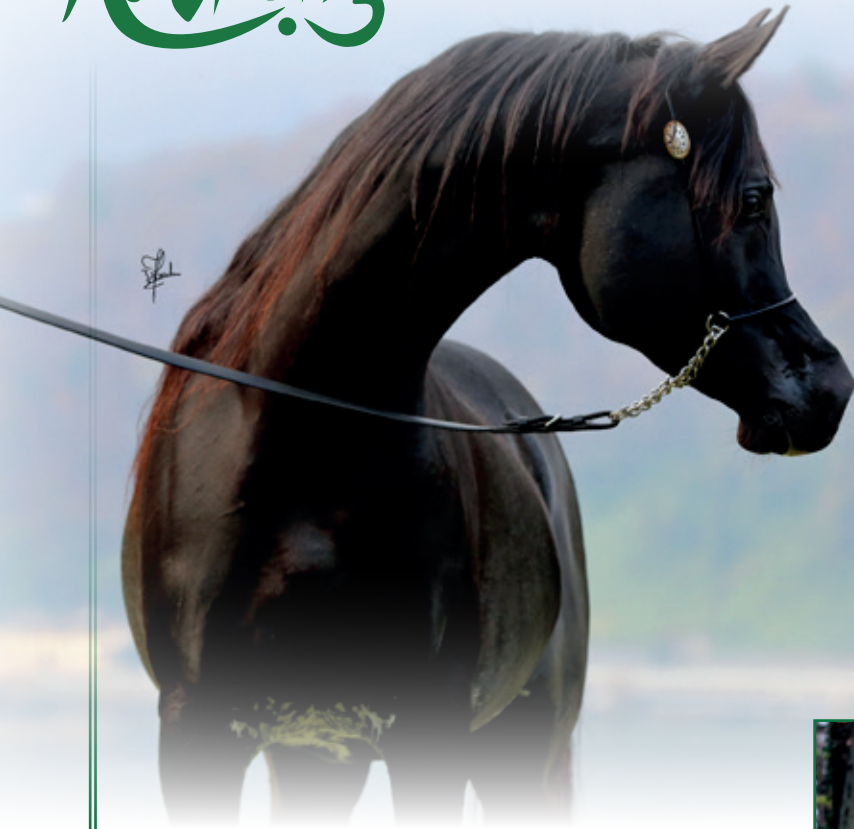
Monika: It's really good of you to look out for your horses. At the same time, I can see you have fun in the shows. Beauty is one of the passions in your life, and also in the lives of your horses. I happen to know that you also sell beauty paraphernalia for shows.



H GINGERGLAM

(H Glamours x Gazelle)





H GLAMOURS
(Royal Colours x Galila)

Manuela: Yes, for several years I have been offering my excellent products for show horses. Many show handlers order them from me, but private breeders will also often look out for beautiful and professional show halters and all the items you need for successful grooming and training of horses.

Monika: However, the horses are what your work concentrates on, aren't they?

Manuela: We used to run a photography shop, but since the time when we closed that, my life has changed enormously. Because from that time on, I applied myself to horse breeding and training full time. Today my life is entirely dedicated to horses. I would say that they are the ones who manage my life.

I am quite precise and thorough, so there is always plenty to do, for the horses as well as for external maintenance. It's not easy for me and not even for those who work alongside me, but the welfare and cleanliness of the horses are the priorities for me. I really want them not to lack anything. I would say they are all pretty spoiled, but in the end, they do





GALILA e GAZELLE



everything I ask them to do. Working with them gives me a lot of satisfaction. I couldn't imagine my life without horses, they are part of my DNA now.

Monika: *What part do the Straight Egyptians play in your life?*

Manuela: *GALILA was love at first sight, I got her when she was just a yearling, and she is my personal mare. I never found the ideal black stallion for her, but still I got some excellent offspring out of her, blacks and others, unfortunately only a few.*

TUAREG DREAM-CHA was the basis of my breeding, not only because of the quality of her foals, but she was the essence of the harmony that a mare must have. She was a great loss to my breeding and to my heart when she died. From her I had excellent Egyptian-related offspring that are still active in breeding today. They are irreplaceable to me.

Monika: *Do you prefer to use your home-bred stallions in breeding, or do you also consider matings with outside*

stallions?

Manuela: *I find it nice to be able to choose between many stallions nowadays, without the problem that long distances bring, since I can order transportable frozen semen. Certainly for a small breeder, like me, it is increasingly difficult not to succumb to competition. But I am satisfied with the kind of Egyptians I created, almost casually. Basically it's not easy to breed blacks who are elegant and typey. Mine turned out quite well, however: they have beautiful small heads with a well-expressed dish, they have strong bodies, and both of them are great movers. H GLAMOURS is my protégé. I simply adore him!!*

Monika: *What are your plans for the future?*

Manuela: *I don't know if the future will be rosy... it's getting more and more difficult. At the moment I can't breed more than I do, because I don't have any more box stalls available. Sounds odd, maybe, but it's true. I would have to sell horses, but that's a challenge for me emotionally, as I need to be entirely convinced they will get a good new home. For the*



GAZELLE (Classic Shadwan x Galila)

future, I hope for some positive change. I've taken horses to shows and they had very good results, but it seems to me that this doesn't have a positive effect on the price of the horse. Also I am not very good at selling a horse, I can screw it all up if the person or the new place doesn't convince me. So I live on passion as long as I can.

Monika: *What is the market like for Arabian horses in Switzerland?*

Manuela: *Unfortunately here in Switzerland, I tried in many ways to promote Arabian Horses, with interviews in television programs etc, but most people here have a false picture of Arabian horses. They have a reputation for being difficult to ride, and to be too small for many people – to sum things up in two keywords. Luckily, among us fans of Arabian horses, we understand each other and laugh because we know that the warmblood riders don't know what they are missing. I tried to breed quality offspring, but even so few people know how to distinguish between a typey and a non-typey head. Maybe they are more color-oriented. But I must*

emphasize that great demands are made on the qualities of Arabian horses under saddle, ignoring their proper intrinsic qualities. This is not good news for those who try to breed good offspring, but perhaps the really good thing about it is that those who choose Arabian horses, choose them simply as their best life companions. □

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