

# A GREAT WEEKEND IN THE NETHERLANDS DEDICATED TO EGYPTIAN ART

By **MONIKA SAVIER**

Photos:

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*NK*

**NK Nazli**

# NORTH OF GERMANY ARABIAN HORSE BREEDING.



EL THAYEBA ARABIAN STUD



AL QUSAR ARABIAN STUD



KATHARINENHOF STUD

# OPEN HOUSE 2024 IN GROSSENKNETEN, GERMANY

This August, the three stud farms of straight Egyptian Arabians, once again invited guests to their open house in Grossenkneten, a small but important village for Arabian horse lovers in the north of Germany. Cornelia Tauschke and Klaus Beste made the start at well-known El Thay Stud. The next day, the caravan of visitors from many countries arrived at Al Qusar stud founded and belonging to Robert Schlereth and Volker Wettengl. The last stud farm reached by the visitors was the famous Katharinenhof of Dr Hans Nagel, his wife Nawal and his family. Dr Nagel has been a worldwide influencer for more than 50 years and his horses have left their

hoofprints in many stud farms around the world. El Thayeba is another stud with an impressive history. They are internationally known for their Arabian horse breeding. Al Qusar Stud, on the other hand, was originally a successful training stable for Arabian horses. Today they have dedicated themselves exclusively to horse breeding, with big success.

Despite the proximity in the same village, visitors could see that the studs presented very different horses. Each stud had its own group of selected foundation mares that have been bred for generations. Only the influence of some famous stallions from Katharinenhof runs as a



EL THAYEBA ARABIAN STUD



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common thread through the three studs. The overall appearance of the young horses on the farms was of impressive quality, but differed in the variety of types, gaits and size of the horses. This makes it all the more beautiful, and one could say unusual, that these three stud farms are still connected today through horse breeding and beyond, also in a neighbourly and friendly way.

The tradition of visiting the studs and the exchange about the common breeding, gives much information and is also identity-forming for the participants. Visitors will be able to find a common answer to the risks which Arabian horse

breeding is exposed today. An individual will not be able to influence it. Stud presentations are also popular because the spectators are not separated by expensive VIP areas. At an open house event, everyone can communicate with everyone and everywhere, and be inspired to continue their breeding dreams and to improve their own concept.

In this respect, the show world has worked for the good, it has produced a creative parallel culture through its deterrent reality, or at least promoted it.

This makes it possible for breeding and horse watching to be fun again.



## KATHARINENHOF STUD

# EL THAYEBA ARABIAN STUD



El Thay Komeira Al Sabah



El Thay Kais Al Sabah and Robert Schlereth



Klaus Beste

Cornelia Tauschke with her mare  
El Thay Konouz



El Thay Kholoud Al Sabah



EL THAYEBA ARABIAN STUD



El Thay Manaya





Mares of El Thayeba with their foals by NK Laziz



El Thay Kateefa Al Sabah



# AL QUSAR ARABIAN STUD



Majd Al Qusar



Badr Al Rayyan  
and Majd Al Qusar



Badr Al Rayyan  
with Volker Wettengl



Majd Al Qusar  
and Robert Schlereth





**Maha Al Qusar and Munisah Al Qusar  
with Robert Schlereth**



**Nadira Al Qusar**

AL QUSAR ARABIAN STUD



Munisah Al Qusar



Badr Al Rayyan



Muneera Al Qusar  
and Robert Schlereth



Muneera Al Qusar



Murjanah Al Qusar



Volker Wetteng



# OPEN HOUSE AT KATHARINENHOF WITH DR HANS NAGEL, HIS WIFE NAWAL, HIS FAMILY AND HIS 40 STRAIGHT EGYPTIAN ARABIAN HORSES.

By MONIKA SAVIER



*“Every stallion I use needs to have outstanding potential for improving my breeding. You can't always know that, sometimes you just have to give it a try.”*

With this quote from the now 94-year-old Dr Nagel, which dates from 2003, he could have opened his open house this August. Once again, it is his stallions with which he successfully experiments. Some of which have become

*I have the intention and the belief that every generation should be better than the previous one, so, it is not needed to keep frozen semen from the past.*

*DR HANS NAGEL*



NK Nazi

world renowned in the pedigrees of many famous horses. His address to the audience this time began: *"I welcome all dear friends from the Middle East who have a long journey behind them. The Middle East has a very*

*strong influence on Egyptian breeding nowadays and most of the activities of Egyptian breeding happens in this area. I hope that these nice people will handle their heritage in a proper way so that the*

*horses will be available for a long time for all of us. I am also pleased that there are still many enthusiastic supporters of these horses here in our latitudes, but I miss the fact that young people in particular are not actively involved in breeding today. So, it remains in the hands of us older breeders, despite and all the same, to bravely continue."*

After a short introduction, in German and English, Dr Nagel explains to the guests the breeding programme he has been practising at Katharinenhof, for more than 50 years. He imported his three foundation mares from Egypt. On the basis of these mares, he built up his successful breeding programme. After fifteen years of breeding with these mares and using various stallions, he decided to use the three dam lines from his foundation mares as the cornerstone of a closed breeding programme. From that day on, he never

again integrated an outside horse into the breeding programme.

Katharinenhof currently keeps three stallions and a group of over 20 mares and their foals.

The bay stallion NK Nabhan by NK Nerham came into the ring first. He is currently the chief Sire, following in the footsteps of his sire NK Nadeer in this role. His type and charisma are outstanding. Nagel describes his favourite stallion:

*"What I particularly like about him is his beautiful, curved neck and good shoulder. This is not so common in Egyptian breeding, especially not in combination with a very typey face".*

He is co-owned by Mr. Mahmoud Al Zubaid from Kuwait, so consequently he breeds alternately one year in Kuwait and one year in Germany. NK Nabhan demonstrably passes on his big points and again this year has very beautiful offspring, especially in Kuwait and Germany.

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His half-brother, NK Nizam, of the same age, out of NK Nadirah, was dark brown, strong, athletic, agile and showed enormous joy of moving in his free running in the arena of Katharinenhof. His sire is none other than NK Hafid Jamil. Accordingly, his hereditary potential is also interesting and recognised.

The third stallion presented was his four-year-old son, NK Amal El Dine, out of NK Abla. He has very dark pigment but will be a flea-bitten grey like his grandfather, NK Hafid Jamil. He has a lot of type and beautiful gaits. Nagel commented: *"I accept all colours but I think the grey horse and the chestnut show the beauty of the Arabian best."*

During the 50-year history of Katharinenhof, there were always brown and black offspring, thanks to the

foundation mare Hanan, with the dark colour gene that became more and more dominant after four or five generations. Even in the past, grey horses with pigment loss were never seen at Katharinenhof, which unfortunately often happens with dominant grey horses. Nagel's horses are all single-coloured dominant, mostly grey or bay and some chestnuts. And they all have the beautiful big black eyes.

Nagel defined his clear breeding

goal already many years ago:

*"To breed an original Arabian type, as a light, fine, noble horse, fully pigmented, and with specific features, being a slightly concave broad head with small, well-shaped ears, wide open flexible nostrils, a fine, small muzzle, impressive dark round eyes, high tail*

*"It's interesting to see how many traits from the past come to light that you must work with as a breeder."*





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**NK Nabhan**



**NK Nizam**



NK Amal El Dine

*carriage, a good, happy temperament and a reliable disposition. In all, an appealing and exotic animal which might be formed by a harsh environmental influence, and which would again fit into the Arabian culture and environment. In addition, to improve its conformation to correspond with a correct, healthy horse, and to increase the homozygosity of all these traits. Therefore, the typical look of each of the four female families on which this programme is based, will be respected, and, a healthy variety will remain."*

Dr Nagel loves his mares, they are unsaleable pillars of his strategic long-term experiment, the 'closed studbook' at Katharinenhof, from which foals are sold but into which no foreign horses have been accepted for over 35 years. "Some people might get the idea that the breeding here is now a little too narrow," says Dr Nagel, and continues: "The term inbreeding is used too quickly and generally. But the definition of inbreeding is parent-child or sibling mating. That has

*never happened here, and I wouldn't let it. The second thing is, are there inbreeding defects? Of course there are, but whether such inbreeding defects were already present in the parents is the big question. I spent three years observing the parents of my foundation mares in Egypt to rule out hereditary damage as far as possible. If you don't take this precaution at the start of breeding, you are taking a big risk."*

This relatively close breeding makes it possible to consolidate the horses' big points, with the risk of also consolidating negative aspects. However, the 2024 foal crop was absolutely convincing, even if it is not so easy to judge a straight Egyptian foal early on. Dr Nagel explains: "Most Egyptian families produce foals that mature very late. Maturity refers to both external characteristics and fertility. In my experience, they need at least three to four years to be at a stage of life where you definitely know what they will look like later.

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NK Naba



NK Lamya



NK Nawaal



NK Bint Nazli



NK Lateefa

MoSu



NK Houda



NK Lamya

*The older they get, the more beautiful they tend to be*". After the presentation of the first four foals by NK Amal El Dine, the handlers show us six beautiful NK Nabhan fillies. Dr Nagel's daughters and grandchildren, indeed his whole family is there today to help in the ring. They all love the horses, know every single one, no matter what age they are. They know how to handle the horses. It's easy to see that the horses also have complete confidence in the handlers, some of whom are very young. Breeders from the neighbourhood also show horses or help in other ways. Again and again, the animals are presented in groups to make it easier for the guests to judge the breeding results of the individual families. Nagel's mares from the Siglawy family are the first to enter the arena. They trace to the foundation mare of EAO Mahiba (Alaa El Din x Mouna out of Moniet El Nefous). NK Lateefa, NK Layla, NK Lamyia and NK Layal float past in front of the spectators.

Dr Nagel says: *"My Siglawy family, which opens at Moniet El Nefous, is the healthiest of my three mare families. Over the years, I can say that where other horses have had coughs or other problems, the Siglawy family has remained unaffected and has presented itself as the healthiest and toughest group."*

Next up are the three Obayan mares NK Ninnifee, NK Amsha and NK Allisya. They go back to the EAO mare Hanan (Alaa El Din x Mona) on her dam's side. Nagel comments: *"It wasn't that easy to find the right stallion for my Obayan mares. He actually had to be born first. I was able to solve the problem with NK Nabhan and NK Nizam. To have a healthy*

*mare family, the dams not only have to be fertile, but you also have to be lucky enough to have lots of fillies. In my Obayan family, I recently had a wave of colts, so the group is currently quite small. But I hope that after this year's fillies it will be over now"*.

***"All of my mares are easy to handle. They open up to people, not just the people they know.***

***This natural trust is something that is inherent to the Arabian horse and I want to preserve it and I also select for it."***

Then come the mares of the Hadban Enzahi family. They are divided into 2 groups. All the mares are tracing to the EAO foundation mare Lutfia (Alaa El Din x Bint Kamla). In the first group, the offspring refer to NK Nadirah. They are the mares

NK Naala, NK Nay, NK Naba, NK Nakibya, NK Nahla. The second group refers to NK Nasrin. They are NK Bint Nashua, NK Nina, NK Nazli, NK Nawaal. *"NK Nadirah and NK Nasrin are full sisters, but I have divided them into two groups because the offspring of NK Nadirah were more strongly influenced by the stallion Salaa El Dine. The offspring are taller with strong gaits. NK Nasrin, on the other hand, is influenced by her sire Adnan, who in turn bears a strong resemblance to the old stallion Ghazal. We are not only looking at 3-4 generations here, but we are going back even further. It's interesting to see how many traits from the past come to light that you must work with as a breeder. For example, these mare families have brought the chestnut and black gene into my breeding programme through the mare NK Nashua (Salaa El Dine x Lutfia)."*

Dr Nagel comments on the impressively beautiful mares: *'For me it's another important point, that the horse has a nice tail carriage. This is as important for the harmony of the horse as the dish on the head. I wouldn't use a horse as a breeding animal if it didn't trot with its tail raised.*

NK Hawa



NK Lamyā



NK Nawaal



NK Amscha



*"I am not an advertiser of frozen semen. My expectation is that each generation should be a bit better than the previous one, so this would not require frozen semen at all for my own breeding. I have the intention and the belief that every generation should be better than the previous one, so it is not needed to keep frozen semen from the past."*

*There is another point that I would like to emphasise in my breeding: all horses learn as foals that they can trust people. This is only possible if they receive people-friendliness training. As a result, all of my mares are easy to handle. They open up to people, not just the people they know. This natural trust is something that is inherent to the Arabian horse and I want to preserve it and I also select for it and observe my horses very closely.*

*Nowadays you can read everywhere that genetics only determine 25% of behaviour, while 75 are recruited. In this respect, the misbehaviour of horses is largely man-made. I am also of the opinion that an Arabian horse should not be too big or too heavy. It would probably no longer fit into the desert environment from which they came. **The Arabian horse was and is an exotic horse and you should think of it in its original environment when you breed it. The new environment has a great say and a great influence on the development of the horse.**"*

The fascinating thing about Dr Nagel's breeding strategy is his ability to always see and classify horses as a cultural part of a larger whole. He pays tribute to the history of Bedouin breeding and draws his experience from the historical Arabian breeding of the Orient. He is equally focussed on the reality of horses on the farm, their quality of life and their wellness. Science and genetics are also present and

included in all considerations. Commercial aspects have only had a latent influence, if any, on his breeding strategies. The Arabian horses are his great love and he would have liked to keep them all. But he is also a rationalist and says: "You don't need a hundred horses to breed successfully.

*A herd of a maximum of 20 mares is a wonderful size that allows us to know all the horses well and breed them in a targeted manner. Arabians of origin were kept in small groups mainly because there was not enough food. Those that were kept had to add*

*to the breeding and herd improvement, and maintain the Arabian horse quality. Small herds do very well, and we should hold on to this tradition. Big farms and large herds are not the way to go for the future of the Arabian horse".*

Nagel thinks in terms of generations and wants to breed individuals successfully. He has succeeded in this for 50 years, as many of his horses have made history. His 'small is beautiful' concept has opened up. 'Speed breeding' with embryo transfer, which practically places breeding in the hands of veterinarians and pharmaceutical giants, assigns the mares the role of a production machine. That is alien to him and he concludes his presentation with advice to Arabian breeders.

*"We don't need embryo transfers. We don't need further artificial handlings and I'm convinced, a small well selected group of mares gives all satisfaction to the small breeder. **My intention is not to breed many horses but to show that a small group of horses can do better. I think we should keep this tradition of the Bedouins in mind and in our stables"**.*



NK Nazli



NK Houda

