



# Calmness

is the virtue for success with

# Arabian Horses

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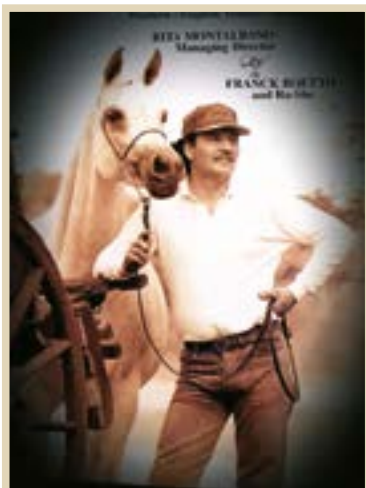
Pictures by Nicoletta Abelli, Marco Capelli, Irina Filsinger, Gigi Grasso, Thomas Gutterson, Glenn Jacobs, Joanna Jonientz and Tutto Arabi archive

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Frenchman Frank Boetto is a successful rider, trainer, handler and manager all in one person.  
How does he do? We spoke with him.

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Ag Haidi National Champ Mare  
Citta' di Castello 2000



Im Icare Cathare Champion Colt  
Agrivarese 2005



Ayah Bebo, Champ. Colt Reserve  
Baden Baden 2005 with Mila Khamis



Garidah, National Champ. Mare Reggio Emilia 1996  
with Monika Xavier

**T**owards the 1990ies, the American business model of „Arabian Horse Shows“ arrived in Western Europe. The market thrived and many breeders went to buy horses in the USA, importing with them the methods and know-how of the American show world. The classic European progeny inspection and stallions licence show, serving to evaluate and judge breeding horses and their offspring, was gradually replaced by a cat walk, called **SHOW**, where horses mainly exhibit their spur-of-the-moment beauty.

In France, they were two-minded about it at that time. On the one hand, there was a strong focus on riding: flat races for Arabian horses were held, the endurance sport started emerging strongly, and there were innovative forms of events intended to highlight the versatility of the Arabian horse, such as the „Arabissimo“ heptathlon

comprising seven different contests for Arabians, including race, show, dressage and endurance. On the other hand, the show scene blossomed in France, culminating in the invention of the first big title show: the World Championships in Paris.

In Italy, the Arabian Horse breeding was flourishing as well. Italians love beauty, aesthetics, and harmony, in many cases this aspect has more importance than functionality. Which was why Arabian shows started achieving success with the public quite early on. Trainers featuring know-how as well as show experience were sought after, and when the news got around that a Frenchman had arrived in Northern Italy who was able to successfully present Arabian horses for shows and had also been trained in the US, there was great interest in him.





Deska Hje Reserve World Champion Mare  
Paris 2000



Citta' di castello 2005 Champion Mare Fasyla



Deska Hje European Champion Verona 2000





**Verona 2000 Top Five Mare Lina Gopak**



**Imdella Italian National Champion Filly 2000**



**Wernera, Champ. Res. mare Citta di Castello, 2001**

*This Frenchman however, who was Franck Boetto, was not the common sort of handler, not the one just hotly eager to win with his horses. First and foremost, Franck was an Arabian horse enthusiast and lover, a real connoisseur, as well as an excellent rider. He knew what makes Arabians tick, ridden as well as in-hand. He was able to assess the horses' character and to tailor his training concept to that, invariably based on creating trust not fright in training a horse.*

*„Horses need to be taken seriously“ he used to say, and when he set himself a task, he would work on it consistently until he had succeeded. „At that time, what we talked about with the owners were their horses, and not the money these horses were meant to earn for them“.*

*Franck is fully entitled to his reputation as „a man who knows how to read horses“, however there are many show enthusiasts among the fans of Arabian horses who ask: „Is it possible to teach a horse the stand-up for the show in a*

*peaceful way? Franck Boetto: „I think so, yes. There are different reasons why trainers will often resort to pressing as one means of instilling respect or rather fright in a horse. It is faster than any of the soft methods based on trust and success by repetition and praise. Most trainers do not have enough time at their hands. But there is also the argument that the way horses are required to present their stand-ups today ought to be trimmed back, in favor of a more natural pose which would enable the judges to assess the horse more easily and correctly, in my opinion. There are quite a lot of screws that might need to be adjusted in order to improve the horses' situation in the show ring and make training more sustainable in a positive sense.“*

*Franck Boetto is a communicative person expressing lots of creative ideas. A „Clinic for Handlers“ was one of these ideas he frequently shaped, with his ambition being improving the world for the horses. That clinic would be a training center for young people, for breeders and owners, and for others who wish to go more professional in their*





FRANCK BOETTO



Vielkah Most Beautiful Head  
Paris 2000



Rowayah, Champ. Reserve Champion mare  
Israel, 2006 with Kobi Zirinski





**Franck Boetto and Mr Rashed Al Jasmi in Menton 2020. Be ready for new future project!**



**Salma Al Rashediah with Franck Boetto and Rashed Al Jasmi**



**Franck Boetto and Rashed Al Jasmi, son of the Al Rashediah Farm's owner Mr A. Rahman Al Jasmi**

„Arabian horse“ hobby. And indeed, together with the Italian Marco Capelli the „Clinic for Handlers“ seminars have been conducted in many countries. In immersion courses of 3 days each, young men and women were trained as handlers in practice and in theory. It was not only about empathy for the horse's behaviour in the ring and its presentation, but also the EACHO show rules were applied. I was there when he trained youngsters with great success at El Zahraa State Stud in Cairo, as well as in Yazd in Iran, in many places in Italy and other European countries.

Today, Franck Boetto works as Stud Manager of Al Rashediah Farm in Bahrain on the Persian/Arabian Gulf.

## INTERVIEW

### **How is your life in Bahrain?**

"For Europeans, living in the Gulf is of course a big change, but I can say that compared to other places at the Gulf, Bahrain is a very tolerant country, known for its relative freedoms in relation to the lives of all the people there.

In terms of Arabian breeding it still has two royal studs where pure blood breeding has been practised for 300 years. These horses embody the original desert horses and of course you can see a big difference to our show horses of today.

Talking about my work at Rashediah Farm, we are able to offer the horses a good life, despite the heat. "

### **When you got there, what was the first thing you did?**

"The first thing I did was put together a team, which started to do the urgent work with me. I have two Dutch collaborators and some grooms from around the stud farm. Everyone was given tasks with clear goals. We developed a plan and the first thing we did was to adjust the nutrition of the horses in a tailor-made way. Then we developed training units and started the training with the young horses.

In the stallion stable the boxes were separated by high walls, we partly dismantled them so that the stallions learned to communicate with each other, which finally brought peace to the stable.



Argo Lip Champion Colt  
Travagliato 2001



FRANCK BOETTO



SS Sahara Al Thawi, Champ. Mare  
Citta Di Castello 2004





## Open House at El Zahraa, Cairo, 2013



*I also integrated some veterinarians into the team, so that the work at the stallion station is done in close cooperation with the team's goals. Not only that, but we also carried out all the manual work restoring the stables and I can say that I am very satisfied, even proud, of the overall result.*

*The owner, Mr. Abdulrahman Al Jasmi and his son Rashed Al Jasmi love their horses and do everything to make sure they are doing well. I am very grateful to them for the freedom I have here. My old friend Eileen Verdick, whom I met the first time in Menton in 1992, and to whom I owe as much, is employed here as general manager and we work together on fair concepts for breeding, keeping and showing the horses of the Rashediah farm."*

### ***How come you've been working with horses all your life?***

*"I have always had a great passion for horses, as a child I was allowed to ride the stallion of friends, which impressed many who had great respect for this rather untrained horse.*

*We were poor back then and my parents sent me to the mountains during the holidays, where I rode everything I could find, including donkeys and mules. When I was old enough, I was able to buy a mare for myself. I worked as a trainer of Paint horses and presented them on shows. When I once saw an Arabian stallion at a big horse show in Marseille, I knew this was the horse I had always dreamed of and from that time on I knew which horses I wanted to work with. The stallion was called Forex and belonged to Richard Philstrom. We became friends and through him and his wife Cecile Dupret I got to know the world of the Arabian Shows.*

*Finally I managed to buy a young stallion from Richard with whom I trained daily and eventually became national champion. This was a marker in the show scene that did not go unobserved. I got good horses and various job offers and won a number of championship titles. Finally I decided to give up my job as a fireman and to fully enter the Arabian scene as a trainer. This was not easy, because I also had*



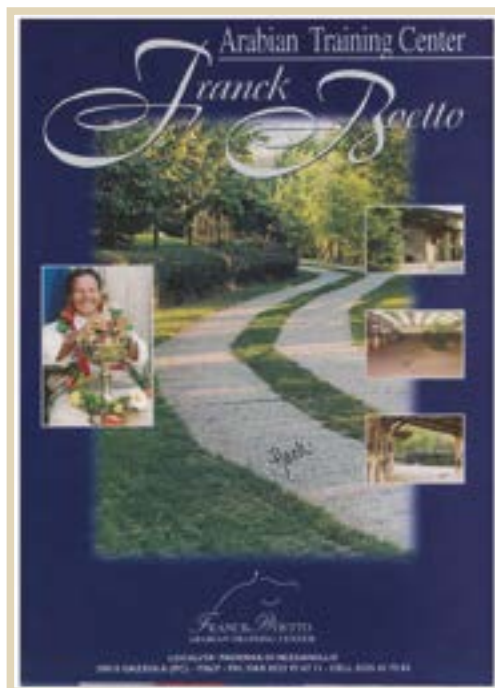
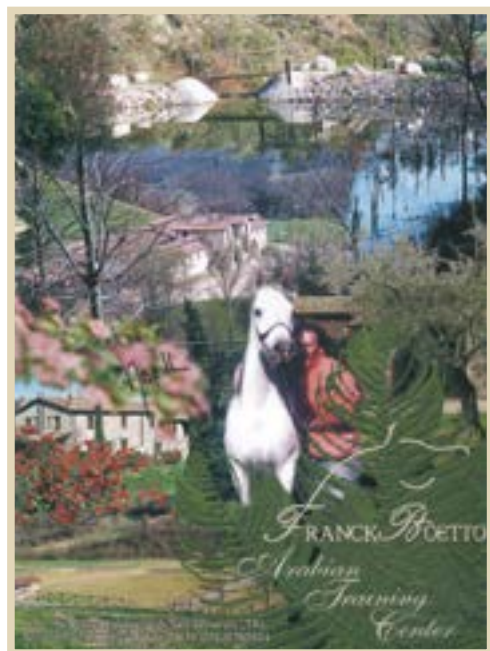


## Arabian Horse Handlers Clinic



FRANCK BOETTO





*bad experiences with owners who did not pay a salary and others with many ideas but no money, so that I had to secure my livelihood by other jobs again. I became a lumberjack, groom, worked in the trade, but after work I daily trained my arab because my goal was to present it in Paris at the world championship. It was difficult to organize my dream without money, but somehow I managed to do it.*

*The competition in Paris was already big in the mid 80s. Famous stallions and mares from Poland, from Jordan, from many countries were the competitors. But still, my stallion and I made it into the top five. I was incredibly proud."*

#### ***And which adventure happened next?***

*I worked for various studs until I had an accident and seriously injured my knee. The dream of being a successful trainer and showman was over for several years. I was still able to do stand-ups with the horses, but I could not run with them anymore.*

*I didn't want to leave the world of Arabian horses and after long time I could train and ride the horses again. Finally I decided to go to Canada to perfect my riding. The planned two weeks became a few years. There I met my wonderful teacher Diane Leduc, who rode at the highest level Reining and Western Pleasure tournaments.*

*In 1992 I received an offer from Italy to train the black stallion Coaltown, who had been bought in the USA by a partnership of breeders. That was my start there and after Coaltown I worked with success at various studs. Together with my long time girlfriend Rita Montalbano I finally managed to establish my own training center there. The photographer Gigi Grasso took over the marketing and media work for our project. We had a great time with many successes in the show ring in Italy and most other countries in Europe, but also in Israel, the Gulf countries, although I couldn't run with the horses as fast as I used to, but I was able to compensate this by using body language communication with the horses.*



Franck Boetto riding

Franck Boetto with  
Mr Abdul Rhaman Al Jasmi,  
owner of Al Rashediah Stud (left)  
and Mr Mathieu Miloux (right)



Franck Boetto with Jamil Al Rayyan



Franck Boetto with Jenniffer Dhombre owner of  
Kalliste Arabians France at International A Show  
El Jadida in Morocco





Frank Boetto with Piruet,  
Mr Richard Philstrom (right) and  
Mr Joseph Geneen (left)



Nader Bu Thaila  
International Bronze Champ. Vichy



Franck Boetto with Mr Kobi Zielinski,  
his wife Mathy and Mrs Miloslava Kamis

KZ Mashar  
owned by Mr Kobi Zielinski





**Bu Thaila Qatar Team, Franck Boetto as the trainer,  
Mrs Rita Montalbano as the General Manager,  
Mr Mathieu Miloux as the handler and  
the mare Mesna Bu Thaila**



**Absolut de Djoon  
presented by Franck Boetto**



**Noor Al Rayyan trained by Franck Boetto  
with Glenn Schoukens and owned by  
Sheikh Mishal**



**Franck Boetto as a teacher for the educational  
for children about Arabian horses  
organized in Milan by Tutto Arabi**



**Talilah Al Raix owned by  
Jean Michel Franceries**





**Franck and Al Lahab**

*I have always tried to show that Arabian horses not only look good in the show ring, but also have very special qualities under the saddle because of their intelligence and sensitivity. Whoever knew how to ride them could win every competition with them.*

*I was lucky to know and to work with so many people in the world who knew a lot about horses and friendship. This has always strengthened me and motivated me to continue.*

*Haven't many young people come to you to learn from your experience? I remember that becoming a horse trainer was a dream job in the 90s. That became even more*

*so when the studs moved from Gulf to the show world of Europe. Were you able to pass on your experience?*

*Yes, I was able to use my know-how in the "Clinic for Handlers" seminars to train young people. Many world-famous trainers of today started in my seminars or were placed by me as interns in other training stables all over the world. I am happy that I also had such success in my role as an influential teacher. This gives my career another meaning that is important to me.*

*Franck, we thank you for the interesting conversation and wish you all the best for the future.*

