

WE, WOMEN

by Giorgia Mauri

Women all over the world
are dedicating their **lives**
to obtaining **freedom**!

For all.

I am close to them.

And you?



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BETTINA VON KAMEKE



photo by G.Boiselle

Breeder and Chairwoman of Pyramid Society Europe

I am Bettina von Kameke. I am living in the north of Germany where I have a small stud farm and where I breed Arabian horses who enjoy a happy life in wide pastures. To support the breeders of SE horses I became chairman of the Pyramid Society Europe in 2015.

I grew up with two working horses and was the proudest child in the village if I was allowed to ride them home from the fields. At the age of eight I persuaded a neighbour farm owner to give me two ponies just for the vacation period. Nobody of my family shared this passion for horses but one day, I was twelve years old, a former employee of my parents called me from another neighbourhood farm: Bettina, you have to come here. They have many beautiful Arabian horses here.

So I took my bicycle and my dog and went 5 km to this farm. From that day on until I finished school this stud farm Grabau became my second home. Almost every day I went there for grooming these wonderful horses. My favourite moment was when the evening light fell down and it was time to get home mares and foals.

After a short while the owners for me were uncle and aunt and they took me to all kinds of exhibitions. I was allowed to sleep in the barn, I run with some legendary mares for presenting them and I assisted with difficult veterinarian actions. Later I got permission to ride them and to learn about their unique character, their sensitive spirit and their indescribable loyalty. These six years imprinted my life for the Arabian horse.

The Arabian horse world changed enormously since the time when I met my first Arabian horse in 1969. The number of shows increased incredible before Covid and competition dominates breeding. As chairman of the breeders association Pyramid Society Europe my first question is how do the breeders deal with this development?

There are and have been extraordinary feminine breeder personalities such as Judith Forbis, Marion Richmond, Lenita Perroy, Maria Salas and many others who had a tremendous influence on this Arabian horse breeding world. They all had to fight prejudices and obstacles.

Their common basis is that they were dedicated to their goal and put all their effort, money and energy in it. I doubt that these foundation breeders appreciate the present situation.

The cultural and religious tradition of many countries with strong bands to the source of Arabians horses have a certain habit to deal with women. When 20 years ago I saw the American sales manager Eileen Verdieck negotiating with sheiks and officials from the middle East I could learn that knowledge and competence are the needed values and make a big difference.

It is easy to be a woman in the Arabian horse world if you just attend shows and come as a visitor. As a

business partner no matter if you are an owner, trainer, dealer or breeder you need to have more qualities to convince.

When I was faced with the task to manage the stud farm of my passed away father-in-law my experience was based in my childhood many years ago. I had to understand that enthusiasm and belly feeling is not enough to take care of 70 Arabian horses. The staff of employees knew everything better but from my point of view they did not treat the horses in a good way.

That was the reason to finally do my master ship in horse management. From that moment on I had a much better position because some things had to change not only because I said it as the owner but because I had the arguments. The next step was to introduce horsemanship in the handling of the horses. The system of Pat Parelli was easy to pick up for the girls in the stud and the men needed longer time but in the end the horse had the benefit.

To the breeding program of the solid Weil-Marbach bloodlines I added more pure Egyptian bloodlines. In preparation for that I travelled around the world to see and compare and wherever I went I found open arms and beautiful horses. I was curious and open to learn.

I think you need to have a vision, solid knowledge and education, detailed research, dedication, integrity and authenticity, consistency, enthusiasm, energy, means and time, understanding and respect of different ways and love for your project. Many books, journeys, impressions, meetings, and talks with friends can help to bring structure to your ideas and emotions.

As a little sister of two elder brothers. I always tried to be as good as they were but today I don't think that it would have been necessary or a question of gender. It was a kind of competition and preparation for the real life, but it was not depending on age or gender but on the result. In my opinion women as well as men have to find and follow their own ways. It is not enough to be born as a woman or to own or deal with Arabian horses if you don't have more qualities.

The Arabian horse world might be dominated by bloodlines and success of beauty and for sure beauty and success are keywords for women but my message to a future generation of women is a different one.

As long as you don't know enough about the soul and the internal qualities of an Arabian horse you miss the goal. As long as you don't have a happy horse you don't need to think about bloodlines. If you feel with your horse and for your horse, its beauty and success is no more important. The unity of rider and horse in Endurance competitions for example is sometimes more fulfilling than any championship. The partnership with your Arabian horse when it is heading towards you when you are coming to the pasture expresses a different form of success.

THE DEFINITION OF SUCCESS CAN BE MODIFIED, AND I AM SURE WOMEN ARE ABLE TO EXPERIENCE NEW VARIATIONS OF SUCCESS WITH THE ARABIAN HORSE. BE CREATIVE !

CLAUDIA ORSI



Breeder and Arabian Horse Event Organizer

Hi, I'm Claudia Orsil!

I was born in Milan and now divide my time between my hometown and Salerno - and I am so happy that Giorgia asked me to participate in the 'WE WOMEN' project!

I have always been in love with horses, to the point that as a child I only drew them, and even today when I feel like painting, the subject is always a horse.

I spent many years doing other things, as a manager in the fashion industry and horse riding in my spare time, until I realised that what I really wanted was to be happy, and there is no better way to feel that way than being around horses. So I took a sabbatical and bought my first horse for jumping (much to my mother's disappointment). I spent so much time at the stables that they eventually hired me as stable manager!

Whenever the opportunity arose, I spent hours with vets, dentists, osteopaths and farriers.

I wanted to learn more and more about this beautiful animal, so fascinating in every way, and I started studying 'Breeding and animal welfare'.

But it was only recently that I approached the Arabian horse: it was in 2017 when I was asked to collaborate on the organisation of a morphology event, and it was love at first sight!

My jaw literally dropped seeing these magnificent animals showing their beauty, their attitude and moving as if they could always hear music.

In 2019, at one of these events, I met my partner Claudio Mazza (breeder and show organiser), to whom I am deeply grateful for involving me in the organisation of the aforementioned shows and for

making my dream of breeding horses a part of my reality.

I spend most of my days in the paddock with them, observing their beauty, behaviour and temperament.

With its warm blood, I consider the Arabian horse a step ahead of other breeds: it has a remarkable sensitivity and a strong personality, but at the same time the will to please the person who is able to win its trust. That is why I always feel honoured when I find the right way to communicate with the horse.

The best moments, however, are when Claudio and I spend sleepless nights waiting for a foal to be born, and the magic of when it is born is indescribable.

Of course, there are also difficult moments, both in organising an event, where planning can be slow and then the days become hectic a few days before its opening - and in breeding, where good or bad weather does not matter, working hours can be endless, weekends off are not an option and social life can be non-existent.

In addition, it is not always easy to maintain balance while working with one's partner, and sometimes I feel prejudiced precisely because I am a woman who works with her partner. As if my work would count more if I worked for a stranger.

But on the other hand, I consider myself a very lucky person: my passion has become my job and, what's more, with the person I love.

Another reason why I am grateful to be part of this world revolving around the Arabian horse, despite being a niche, is the enrichment you get as a person. You meet people from many different countries, each with their own culture and traditions, so important to open your mind and make room for all the abundance!

MY MESSAGE TO YOUNG WOMEN WHO WANT TO BE PART OF THE ARABIAN HORSE WORLD IS:

BE CURIOUS. LISTEN TO YOURSELF AND HAVE THE COURAGE TO BE THE PERSON YOU WANTED TO BE AS A CHILD. EXPRESS YOUR TALENTS AND LET THE WORLD CONTAMINATE YOU.

KERSTIN WISNIOWSKI



photo by M. Groger - ZoomPerformance.de

Lawyer, Teacher at University, Breeder, A ECAHO DC

Thank you for inviting me to the We, Women project! My name is Kerstin Wisniowski and I live in Germany. I am a lawyer, teacher at the university - so working mom, wife, horse owner, horsewoman, breeder and dog lover. I am also an Ecaho A DC, so I have the opportunity to be around the most beautiful Arabian horses in the world.

As a young girl I bought with a loan from my parents my beloved riding school horse, a Polish half Arabian. Also, I live in southern Germany, close to where the Marbach State Stud Farm is located and where Om el Arab was founded, so I grew up going to see those fantastic gray Arabian horses with very big eyes. Also, the city of Baden-Baden is where Arabian horse races and breeding horse shows used to be held in the past and is very close to my hometown. So horse names like El Shaklan, Estopa and Marbach's W-line were familiar to me from the beginning. When I grew up, I started buying Arabian Horse Magazine in Germany and reading Susanne Bösch's news with all the insights about small farms. In my and my husband's hometown, Heidelberg, the Kübe family had their Brigittenhof farm with the most extraordinary horses like Al Kidir, later founding a dynasty. Later I was happy to be able to buy from a friend two horses of El Shaklan blood. So Arabian horses are part of our family and are family members for us.

Since the days of Om El Arab and the Marbach State Stud in the early 1980s, the world of the Arabian horse has changed a lot, due to high costs small breeders are disappearing and the horse business has changed very fast, also due to modern methods like embryo transfers, flying horses for shows and more. But the great character and aura of the Arabian horse have remained. To protect and support the Arabian horse and its breeders, the best way I found was to work as DC for Ecaho, which is mainly a volunteer work and therefore needs

a lot of heart from us for horses and horse shows. Because I think shows are basically still breeding shows and so they are still the best way even for small breeders to compare their horses, learn and also do marketing. I hope we can all support small breeders and exhibitions more!

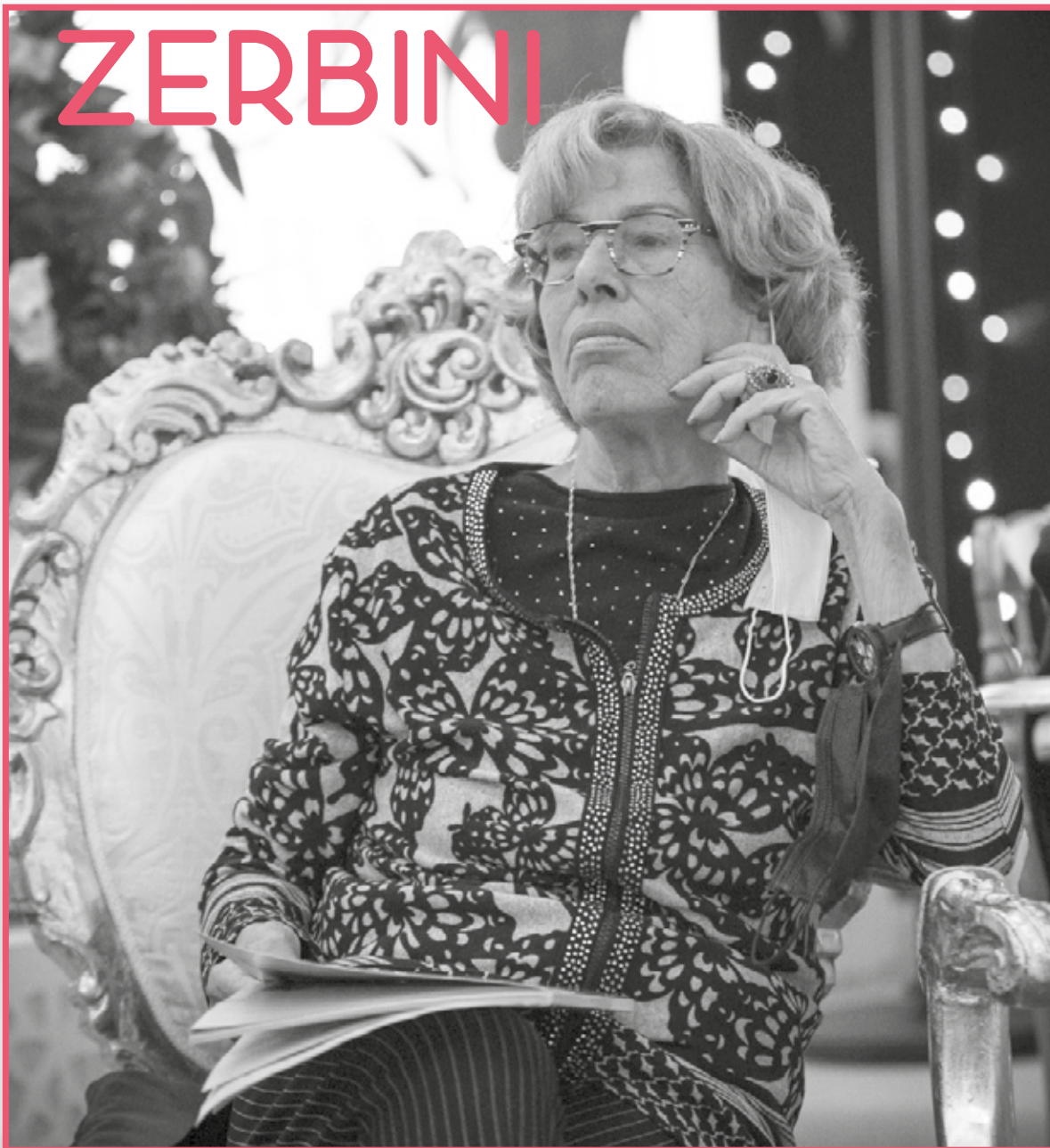
I was asked if I found any difficulties or obstacles in putting myself forward in this world. Well, as a DC this is a rather funny question, because you know that with this job I obviously have many small discussions with owners or handlers who complain or have problems to solve! But I've never felt that being a woman is not helpful - I think having a different view and approach to things as a woman is very helpful. And I think the fact that women are basically focused on solving situations and have an open ear gives a good balance in the Arabian horse world. I think of all the wonderful strong women in the Arabian horse world, like the Polish Izabella Zwadska or the Swiss Ursula Rahm or Joanna Maxwell (GB)...to name a few.

I think being more patient with others - I try to train every day and I'm still working on it - can help us reach our dreams. And one quality I will never achieve is that of "letting go" - so I am a bad breeder because I can't sell a horse so I leave this task to people who know how to do it better than me.

I sincerely hope my experience and story can be an inspiration to a future generation of women in this world - first and foremost as a full-time working mom with horses, dogs and as a DC - anything is possible if you really want it. And as a DC A I usually have young DCs on trial and in training with me during shows - and I take great pride when I watch them become strong women with self-esteem in the ring!

MY MESSAGE TO FUTURE GENERATIONS OF YOUNG WOMEN TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO TAKE THEIR OWN PATH, WHATEVER IT MAY BE, IS: WE NEED MORE YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE ARABIAN HORSE WORLD TO BECOME HANDLERS, JUDGES, DCS AND RINGMASTERS, AND EVEN BREEDERS - AND ESPECIALLY WOMEN! COME ON GIRLS!

SERENELLA ZERBINI



Breeder and DC

I have been breeding Arabian thoroughbred horses since 1981, when I bought my first purebred Arabian horse, Satir, at the Verona fair. He was a Russian line horse, who had also participated in flat racing in his home country. During my career as a breeder I bred Russian and Polish Arabian horses and then at a certain point I specialised in Straight Egyptian, as I wanted to try to keep alive ancient bloodlines, which are the basis of Arabian horse breeding. Just on the occasion of the 2022 Italian National Straight Egyptian Championship, three sons of Fräsera Mashar bred by me at La Fräsera (the breeding farm founded by my husband and I) won, and this is a great satisfaction because it means that we have worked well over the years.

Seeing that this is a space dedicated to women and I am asked how I see the situation of women in this world and if I have had difficulties in presenting

myself in the world of Arabian horses, I would like to say that unfortunately as a woman I have felt disadvantaged not only in the world of horses but in general in all spheres, and I believe that unfortunately women are still disadvantaged all over the world, across the board, while men are increasingly advantaged at all levels. Deep reflection should be done on this, by everyone!

Although I must say that in the Arabian horse world I have always felt respected.

I have never personally had any problems, perhaps due to a question of age, or experience, I don't know. But unfortunately I see that the new generations of women are not really considered and involved, even in the world of Arabian horses. It is all about possibilities, opportunities that are given, rather than respect for the person as a woman.

MY MESSAGE TO THE NEW GENERATIONS OF WOMEN BREEDERS IS NOT INSISTING ON BREEDING THROUGH EMBRYOS, UNLESS EXCEPTIONAL AND MOTIVATED, BECAUSE IN MY OPINION IT IS A PRACTICE THAT DAMAGES NOT ONLY BROODMARES BUT ALSO THE MARKET FOR ARABIAN HORSES. I TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY IN THIS INTERVIEW TO SAY NOT ONLY TO FEMALE BREEDERS BUT ALSO TO ALL BREEDERS IN THE ARABIAN HORSE WORLD TO REFLECT ON THE USE OF THIS PRACTICE, REGARDLESS OF THE CURRENT RULES, BECAUSE IT IS A VERY IMPORTANT ISSUE AND ONE THAT IS VERY MUCH FELT IN OUR WORLD AT THE MOMENT.

ALESSIA D'ONZA



Breeder

Hi, my name is Alessia D'Onza, I am 26 years old and I was born and raised in a small town in southern Italy, where my family's Arabian horse farm is located. Ever since I was born I have had the privilege of growing up in the midst of nature and sharing this place with horses has always given me a great sense of security.

Arabian horses came a few years later thanks to my father, I was carried away by his love for these horses and I learnt from him the passion and respect for breeding Arabian horses. As far as Arabian horses are concerned, I call myself a constant student, and the desire to learn makes everything more exciting and fascinating. I personally believe that it is essential to listen to and confront the views of others in order to gain new knowledge.

It is amazing how a common passion can

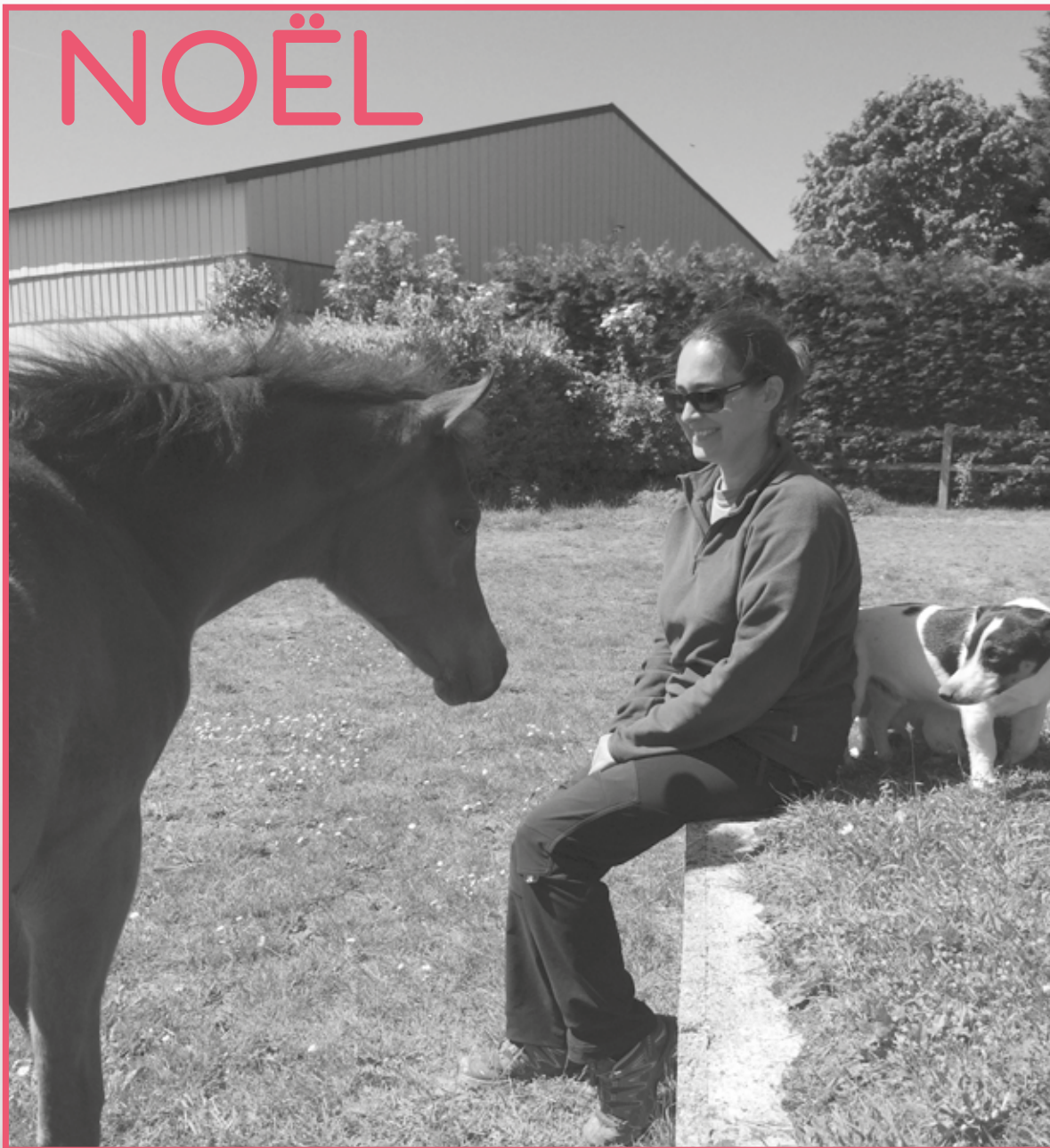
overcome language, cultural and gender barriers: whether you are a man or a woman, the only thing that matters is respect for the other. Honestly and fortunately as a woman, I have never found any kind of obstacle in approaching this world; I have never experienced it as an impediment, I think that is why we are all bound together by the same passion for such a noble specimen.

The same love that determines an essential contribution to the world of the Arabian horse. In my opinion, there is nothing that helps to understand this environment better than curiosity: the obsession for knowledge. I truly believe that the most important thing is to immerse oneself in the history of the Arabian horse, to learn from it to guide the future.

Thank you to the We Women team for inviting me to be part of this fantastic project!

MY ADVICE TO A NEW GENERATION OF WOMEN IS: BREATHE IN THE LIGHTNESS OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS. LET PASSION ERASE FATIGUE. ALWAYS WEAR KINDNESS AND POLITENESS. DETERMINATION DOES NOT MAKE THINGS EASY, BUT IT MAKES THEM POSSIBLE. FOCUS ON THE FACT THAT EVERYTHING YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE IS WAITING FOR YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE OF CONSTANCY. EXPLORE, DREAM AND NEVER STOP DISCOVERING.

CATHERINE NOËL



Breeder and Businesswoman

My name is Catherine Noël, I have been an Arabian horse breeder for more than 20 years, a horse lover and a rider for even longer.

I am a midwife by formation, but I decided to move away from my profession to dedicate myself to horses: **being able to make a living from one's passion is an opportunity that one must give oneself and then take.**

I have always been attracted to horses, although there were none around me. I started riding at the age of 11. I wish I had done it earlier, but it was only when my family left Paris where I was born to live in the province that I was able to start going to a riding club. I spent every Wednesday and Saturday there. During the years that followed, I learned about jumping, dressage, trail riding...

It was only after I met my partner Thierry in 1993 that I got introduced to the Arabian Horses, at the show in Menton. I still remember a stallion, entirely covered with a black satin blanket. All we could see were his big eyes, his ears and his hooves: Nadir. For me, it was love at first sight with this noble breed.

Later on we created our Arabian horse stud together, which developed in 1999 with the arrival of Wh Justice.

I will never be able to thank this horse enough to have entered our lives. To me, he represents the essence of the Arabian Horse: beauty, poise, elegance, complicity. I have self-qualified myself his "private secretary" and have been proud and happy to be so for 23 years!

It is also since 23 years that I have been fulfilled

by what I consider to be the most successful achievement in my life as a woman: my son Thomas, who has always been a driving force in my choices and decisions.

Becoming a mother has not slowed down my enthusiasm for riding, and by switching from club horses to Arabian horses, I have discovered another discipline: endurance, which I have practised for several years at international level. Here again I appreciate the complicity that is formed with the horses that we train for many months, the confidence that they give us, the energy that they transmit to us.

All this experience gained over the years with horses and the people around them has led me to a new adventure as I am now co-founder of a tech start-up related to the equine industry.

As a woman in the Arabian horse world I have encountered very few situations that I would call "embarrassing", a couple of times when I felt that my female presence was not appreciated. But I think those days are over.

Today, being a woman in the Arabian horse world is neither an obstacle nor an advantage.

It is not the appearance that characterises a person, it is in my view his fundamental values: Respect and Tolerance are in my opinion the most important, regardless of gender.

Just as women have found their place in the Arabian horse world, I hope that they will do so elsewhere, everywhere, even if it will not always be easy to achieve.

When I was a child, I was given a book by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, which I often reread, and from which is taken the quote that I advise everyone to follow:

« LET YOUR DREAM DEVOUR YOUR LIFE, SO THAT LIFE DOES NOT DEVOUR YOUR DREAM »

WE, WOMEN

is:

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