

# Strong Foundation

## The impact of maternal lines on the success of RFI ARABIANS

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### Introduction

The history of RFI Arabians, formerly known as Haras Santo Antonio da Bela Vista, is a narrative filled with passion, meticulous strategy, and a profound respect for maternal lines. From the very beginning, the breeding program was carefully directed to strengthen the maternal base as the cornerstone of the breeding program. "The quality of the dams has been the key determinant of our trajectory, even though we are also recognized for producing world-class stallions," explains Leopoldo Coutinho, consultant and right-hand man to Rodrigo Forte in managing the breeding program since 1996. Rodrigo, representing the second generation of the family in charge of the breeding, adds: "One of the secrets to the

success of our breeding program is our decision to select and retain high-quality mares, often resisting market pressure to sell them."

Thus, from the beginning, breeding at RFI Arabians has been carefully

focused on the quality and consistency of the maternal lines, understanding that this approach is fundamental to developing a robust breeding program. When selecting the foundation mares, acquired from the market, Rodrigo and Leopoldo applied rigorous analysis to



Fire Glory (NV Sure Fire x Key of Glory JP)

ensure the consistency of these maternal families, generation after generation. This accurate evaluation guarantees that the desirable characteristics of these lines are consistently transmitted. This philosophy remains today in the evaluation of mares bred at the farm, as well as those recently acquired to strengthen and diversify the breeding program.

### Foundation Mares and Stallions

Initially, RFI Arabians acquired mainly pure Polish mares, or predominantly Polish mares, influenced by the Forte family's involvement in Performance classes. This vision guided the breeding program to always select mares with excellent conformation and movement, qualities that continue to be distinctive in the RFI herd today. Rodrigo laments that some of these mares did not end up establishing families in the breeding program, but they were fundamental for various learnings. Those that succeeded have



RFI Farid (RFI Maktub x RFI Fayara El Shiraz)

descendants in the fourth and fifth generations and are remembered with great affection and respect, such as C-Cynadra (\*HFS Phoenix x C-Cherry by \*Dewajtis), Nizina (\*Cobrah x Ghadia FA by SA Fadji), \*Singularsensation (Gold Krugerand x Forever Mi Love by Negatraz), Key of Glory JP (\*Naadir x AF Beulah by \*Ansata El Tareef), and her daughter Fire Glory (\*NV Sure Fire x Key of Glory JP), whose stories and significant contributions will be told later.

Starting with the initial mares and already with a vision towards halter horse breeding, RFI Arabians acquired Shiraz El Jamaal in 1996 from Lenita Perroy, in partnership with Haras Massari. This stallion, son of the renowned Ali Jamaal and the pure Polish \*Satyna (by Etat), brought more type and reinforced functionality in the breeding program, marking a crucial step in defining what would become RFI breeding. Shiraz produced several good daughters aligned with this new philosophy, with significant highlight to RFI Fayara El Shiraz (x Fire Glory, by \*NV Sure Fire), who later gave birth to her first product, named RFI Farid.



RFI Fayara El Shiraz (Shiraz El Jamaal x Fire Glory)

A few years later, mainly to breed the daughters of Shiraz El Jamaal, RFI Arabians introduced \*Neschnij, a pure Russian stallion born in Germany, bred by Silvia Garde-Ehlert, son of Neman and the distinguished European aristocrat Neschi (by Kilimandscharo). This stallion stood out for his striking Arabian type, charisma, and exceptional movement, characteristics



selecting and retaining the best individuals for breeding. At that time, without the means to compete in halter shows dominated by large and renowned breeders, this strategic choice prioritized internal quality over external visibility.

Fire Glory, although born at the farm, was officially bred by a client and friend, and established the "F" family, an icon of RFI breeding. Daughter of the renowned \*NV Sure Fire (Aladdin x Bint Miss Fire, by Gdansk) and Key of Glory JP (Naadir x AF Beulah, by Ansata El Tareef), a mare with elevated Egyptian blood, Fire Glory produced with Shiraz El Jamaal one of the most important mares in the world, RFI

that reflected his impressive pedigree, an explosive blend of Aswan and Arax. The arrival of \*Neschnij further enriched the breeding program, adding a superior level of type and athleticism. Like Shiraz El Jamaal, \*Neschnij produced several high-quality daughters, notably RFI Sophia Al Neschi (x \*Singularsensation), mother of the globally renowned RFI Sophie AlMaktub (by RFI Maktub).

this initial phase, despite the farm still being little known and recognized in the halter circuit, the family and Leopoldo opted to focus efforts on

At this point, the RFI Arabians breeding program was based on three groups of mares: the foundation mares, the daughters of Shiraz El Jamaal, and the daughters of \*Neschnij. This arrangement consolidated the concept that the breeding program should evolve through blocks of mares, an approach that continues to be followed to this day.

The rigorous selection of the foundation mares and stallions proved the correctness of these acquisitions and the effectiveness of the RFI Arabians breeding program. During



**Neschnij**  
(Neman x Neschi)

RFI Sophia Al Neschi (Neschnij x Singularsensation)



\*RFI Sophie AlMaktub (RFI Maktub x RFI Sophia Al Neschi)





RFI Maktub (Altam Yshmayl x RFI Cyntilation)

by this great stallion. It is valid to highlight that RFI Maktub is the result of another dam line developed at RFI after the purchase of C-Cynadra (HFS-Phoenix x C-Cherry by \*Dewajtis) from the extinct and renowned Haras Canapuã, owned by Cláudio Bardella. Crossed with the Brazilian National Champion Stallion Ninjah in El Jamaal (Ali Jamaal x Naharra by El Shaklan), C-Cynadra gave birth to RFI Cyntilation, who was later crossed with Altam Yshmayl (RSD Dark Victory x Yamina), resulting in the birth of the great RFI Maktub.

RFI Maktub, by breeding daughters of Shiraz El Jamaal and \*Neschnij, produced world-renowned highlights such as RFI Farid and RFI Sophie AlMaktub, among the most notable products of his progeny born at RFI Arabians. Furthermore, when crossed with daughters of other influential stallions, RFI Maktub continued to enrich RFI's breeding program with exceptional broodmares, including: RFI Bettina AlMaktub (x SB Ballerina by

Fayara El Shiraz. Fayara, in turn, gave birth to RFI Farid, the first son of RFI Maktub, who became a Brazilian and world champion and is currently one of the leading stallions in global breeding.

\*Singularsensation, with a pedigree marked by Bask and Crabbet, established the "S" family at RFI Arabians. She, in partnership with \*Neschnij, produced another notable broodmare, RFI Sophia Al Neschi, mother of the phenomenon RFI Sophie AlMaktub, daughter of RFI Maktub, a mare recognized worldwide, 2018 Brazilian National Gold Champion Senior Mare, and both mother and grandmother of national champions.

### RFI Maktub and His Daughters – The Great Advancement

With the start of RFI Maktub into breeding, RFI Arabians took the most

significant and transformative step in its breeding program. This change allowed the implementation of a high-quality standard, despite the initially limited number of mares at the farm at the time. The impacts of this move continue to be felt today, both in Brazil and internationally, reflecting the exceptional value and type legacy left



RFI Maktub (Altam Yshmayl x RFI Cyntilation)



**RFI Sensation (Jazeer De Wiec x RFI Sophie AlMaktub)**

Don El Chall), mother of Marcelhah Arabco (by El Tino), 2019 Brazilian National Champion Gold Junior Filly; RFI Ultraa AlMaktub (x Seduction HBV by Power World JQ), who became the dam of RFI Unique, who captivated everyone at the 2019 Brazilian Nationals, receiving a standing ovation from the audience from the beginning to the end of the judging, where he unanimously won the title of Brazilian National Gold Champion Young Colt. RFI Unique is currently establishing himself as one of the most promising stallions in global breeding.

Once again, RFI Arabians formed an impeccable group of RFI Maktub

daughters. Despite the limited time in breeding, Maktub also had a significant impact on other breeders, whose daughters not only stood out in shows but also went on to produce numerous winning offspring.

The main daughters of RFI Maktub in breeding at RFI Arabians consolidated several families of prodigious importance to the breeding program: the "N" family, with RFI Norah AlMaktub (x RFI La Jolla by Expoente) as its main representative, a mare that carries strong characteristics of her maternal grandmother Nizina (\*Cobrah x Ghadia FA by AS Fadji), founder of the farm, with Serafix and Fadjur lineage;

the "B" family, represented by RFI Bettina AlMaktub (SB Ballerina by Don El Chall), already mentioned earlier; the "M" family, with RFI Mahara AlMaktub (x RFI Macarena by Pavel Rach); the "U" family, represented by RFI Ultraa AlMaktub, mother of RFI Unique; and the "F" family, also with RFI Fiorela AlMaktub (x RFI Fiona by Power World JQ) as one of its main representatives.

RFI Sophie AlMaktub, the most prominent daughter of RFI Maktub bred by RFI Arabians, is a central figure in the "S" family. In addition to being an exceptional competitor, winning the Premium Cup at the Breeders Cup in 2011, Sophie was already the dam of

RFI Sawari (Excalibur EA x RFI Sophie AlMaktub)



RFI Sawari (Excalibur EA x RFI Sophie AlMaktub)





**RFI Splendor (El Tino x RFI Sophie AlMaktub)**

three Brazilian National Champions — RFI Sensation, RFI Sawari, and RFI Splendor — when she herself won the title of Brazilian National Gold Champion Senior Mare in 2018. In that same year, her son, RFI Splendor (by El Tino), confirmed his excellence by winning the title of National Silver Champion Colt for the second time. In 2019, after being exported to Royal Arabians in 2020, RFI Sophie AlMaktub saw her daughter, RFI Sensation (by Jazeer De W'iec), win a national championship title for the second time, this time as Silver Champion Senior Mare, placing behind Lumiar Ethna, another standout daughter of RFI Maktub, who took the Gold. Later, in 2020, RFI Sawari, her daughter by

Excalibur EA, achieved the title of National Gold Champion Young Mare and went on to win the title of Brazilian National Gold Champion Mare in 2023. Another significant highlight of her offspring is Pharaoh HBV, who was exported while still very young, where he won the title of Silver Champion Junior Colt at the All Nations Cup in Aachen and World Bronze Junior Colt Champion in Paris, and is currently the sire of national champions in Brazil and overseas.

#### **Principal Maternal Families**

Continuing with the special "S" family, which could fill pages and pages of a book, it is essential to highlight other

important carefully selected broodmares that are among the best and most promising in the breeding program. Among them are RFI Saskia El Jythar, a beautiful gray mare, daughter of RFI Sophie AlMaktub with Jythar El Perseus (Perseus El Jamaal x Jylda El Jamaal by Ali Jamaal); RFI Special AlMaktub, daughter of RFI Maktub and RFI Sophia Al Neschi, who was highly awarded at the Brazilian Nationals and twice Top Ten at the Breeders Cup, and is the dam of RFI Salina by the World Champion Excalibur EA. Like her mother, RFI Salina possesses remarkable type and movement; and RFI Stella AlMaktub, another beautiful full sister to RFI Sophie AlMaktub, recently sold to

RFI Sharam (RFI Unique x RFI Sawari)



RFI Salina (Excalibur EA x RFI Special AlMaktub)



Sylvio Barbosa Neto and Leonardo de Castro. RFI Selena, one of the daughters of RFI Stella AlMaktub with RFI Unique, is eagerly awaited to begin her breeding career at the end of this year.

Finally, the two most notable daughters of RFI Sophie AlMaktub deserve mention: RFI Sensation and RFI Sawari, both extensively discussed earlier. RFI Sensation had three offspring in Brazil before being sold to Nayla Hayek in 2019, two of which achieved national awards. The oldest, Royal Destiny, son of \*Dominic M, won the title of Brazilian National Silver Champion Young Stallion in 2023, Bronze Champion Young Stallion in 2022, and Bronze Champion Colt in 2021. With El Tino, Sensation also produced Farfalla HHC, who placed third in the Junior Filly Championship in



**RFI Special AlMaktub (RFI Maktub x RFI Sophia Al Neschi)**

2021 and was a Top Ten in 2020. Her third offspring, RFI Singular Emotion, born from the cross with Quasim CRH and bred by RFI, carries the refinement

and femininity of her mother and will begin her breeding career in 2025 with high expectations.

RFI Sawari, another standout of the "S" family and Brazilian breeding, is a three-time Brazilian National Gold Champion: Junior Filly in 2017, Young Mare in 2020, and Senior Mare in 2023, a rare achievement in the Brazilian breeding. Her son RFI Sharam, from the first generation of RFI Unique in Brazil, debuted in the show ring as part of the champion team at the Breeders Cup in 2022 and won the Gold Stallion Championship at the Interstate and Inter-American shows in 2024. Recently started in breeding, Sharam awaits a selected group of mares from RFI and other breeders for the upcoming breeding season.

Another notable family is the "B" family, founded by the exceptional SB



**RFI Ballerina (El Tino x RFI Bettina AlMaktub)**

RFI Bettina AlMaktub (RFI Maktub x SB Ballerina)



RFI Marek (Vivaldi Al Shawan x RFI Mahara AlMaktub)



Ballerina, one of the best daughters of Don El Chall, represented at the farm by the wonderful RFI Bettina AlMaktub (by RFI Maktub), mother of Marcelhah Arabco (by El Tino), Brazilian National Champion Gold Junior Filly of 2019, and exported to the Middle East. Also, with El Tino, RFI Bettina produced Donatella Arabco, twice National Top Ten, and now debuting in the 2024 National show, the incredible RFI Ballerina. Incidentally, the daughters of RFI Maktub have proven to be one of the best crosses with El Tino, producing offspring that have won nine Brazilian national championships in recent years, with six different mares, three of these titles won by the offspring of RFI mares. At RFI, the charismatic RFI Norah AlMaktub, the main representative of the "N" family, also produced with El Tino RFI Naya, who did not compete due to an accident shortly after birth. Naya has great conformation and refinement, and in her first foal, she produced with RFI Unique the super charismatic RFI Nayla, whose perfect conformation,



RFI Mahara AlMaktub (RFI Maktub x RFI Macarena)

extreme movement, and charisma are expected to debut in the show ring in 2025. Norah is also the dam of RFI Nina, by Barolo Carol, a filly with great conformation and refinement, expected to be bred soon by RFI Unique, generating high expectations.

From the "M" family, which originated

from RFI Murana El Shiraz (Shiraz El Jamaal x Sweet Margarita by 'Dewajtis), RFI Mahara AlMaktub stands out, daughter of RFI Macarena, whose pedigree harmonizes Polish and Egyptian influences with the lineage of her pure Polish sire and National Champion, Pavel RACH. RFI Mahara AlMaktub is the dam of RFI Marek, who won the title of Gold Champion Colt at the 2023 Interstate show and began his breeding career in 2024, promising to be a stallion of high quality and potential. RFI Marek is a son of Vivaldi Al Shawan, born from the cross between the renowned FA El Shawan and HK La Fiesta Power, daughter of Power World JQ, one of the most prestigious broodmares in Brazil.

The "U" family, initiated and primarily represented by RFI Ultraa AlMaktub, originated from a collaboration



RFI Norah AlMaktub (RFI Maktub x RFI La Jolla)

RFI Unique (AF Maden x RFI Ultraa AlMaktub)



RFI Pavarotti (RFI Unique x Preferida Rach)





**RFI Ultraa AlMaktub (RFI Maktub x Seduction HBV)**

between RFI and HBV farms. RFI Ultraa AlMaktub, by RFI Maktub, is also the daughter of Seduction HBV (by Power World JQ), a Premium Cup winner at the Breeders Cup and known for her impressive maternal lineage, tracing back to \*Ultraa (by Bey Shah), one of the most respected aristocrats in Brazil, who lent her name to her great-granddaughter. RFI Ultraa AlMaktub, crossed with AF Maden, produced RFI Unique, one of the most celebrated young sires globally today, and the sire of numerous champions in major competitions in Europe, the United States, the Middle East, and Brazil. Locally, the offspring of RFI Unique were crucial for RFI Arabians' victories at the Breeders Cup in 2022 and 2023.

One of the main representatives of this lineage in Brazil is RFI Pavarotti, son of RFI Unique and Preferida Rach (by Bandit SRA), a six-time Brazilian National Champion. RFI Pavarotti was awarded the Premium Cup at the Breeders Cup in 2023, achieving the highest score in the history of this prestigious show.

As evidenced, RFI Maktub elevated RFI Arabians to an unprecedented level of quality and global prestige. Through his sons, daughters, and other descendants, the farm established an exceptionally consistent and distinctive breeding standard, achieving undeniable victories in competitions. In addition to numerous national

championships, RFI Arabians also excelled by winning five editions of the Breeders Cup, establishing itself as the most successful active farm in this competition, matching the record previously held by the renowned and now-defunct Haras Vanguarda.

#### **Quasim CRH and His Daughters**

Another significant moment in RFI Arabians' breeding program was the acquisition of Quasim CRH when he was just 6 months old. Even then, there was the expectation that he would become the successor to his father RFI Maktub, due to his excellent conformation, type, and distinct pedigree. Quasim CRH is the son of the

Quasim CRH (RFI Maktub x Maxine CRH)



RFI Fahaara AlMaktub (Quasim CRH x RFI Fayara El Shiraz)



**RFI Fiorano (Dominic M x RFI Fahaara AlMaktub)**

notable Maxine CRH, daughter of Nuzyr HCF, an influential stallion known for producing a distinct Arabian type and excellent conformation. Quasim CRH's maternal lineage includes Barbara Psyche, daughter of Magnum Psyche, and Egyptian lines

through Ali Jamaal, further enhancing his exceptional pedigree.

With the premature death of RFI Maktub, Quasim CRH began breeding at a very young age, breeding a few mares but of great quality, such as Fire

Glory and RFI Fayara El Shiraz, the dam of RFI Farid. Quasim CRH surprised everyone from the start, producing RFI Faenza AlMaktub and RFI Fahaara AlMaktub, both general Top Ten and responsible for RFI Arabians' victory at the 2017 Breeders Cup. Additionally, RFI Fahaara was the National Bronze Champion Junior Filly in 2016. Both occupy a prominent place among the young broodmares at the farm, with Fahaara producing RFI Fiorano (by Dominic M), the unanimous Brazilian National Gold Champion Junior Colt of 2020, who was later exported to the USA, where his first foals are now being born.

The third daughter of Quasim CRH, currently one of the most important young broodmares at RFI Arabians, is RFI Elisha. Her dam, Scarlet El Karim, daughter of Karin El Power JQ — one of the most distinguished sons of Power World JQ — was acquired to expand the maternal families at the farm, originating the "E" family in homage to her grandmother AF Escada, daughter of the renowned 'Sahibi (by EL Paso). RFI Elisha is the dam of RFI Elena (by RFI Unique), a filly who excelled in two national editions and was a key player in RFI's victories at the Breeders Cup in 2022 and 2023.

Within the impressive group of young daughters of Quasim CRH, RFI Raffaella stands out. Daughter of the exceptional 'S Rhapsody by Marwan Al Shaqab, Raffaella gave rise to the "R" family at RFI Arabians. She was the National Silver Champion Filly in 2020 and one of the main contributors to

RFI Elena (RFI Unique x RFI Elisha)



RFI Raffaella (Quasim CRH x S Rhapsody)





**Evening Star TGS (Lumiar Amadeus x Promise V)**

RFI's victory at the 2021 Breeders Cup. As a broodmare, her first foal, by "Dominic M, showed spectacular promise from an early age. This colt is scheduled to debut in the 2025 shows, promising to continue his mother's legacy.

### **Other New Families**

While the legacy of RFI Maktub permeates the core of RFI Arabians' breeding, the farm is also actively engaged in diversifying bloodlines, enriching both the genetics of their stallions and their mares. In terms of stallions, RFI Arabians has been dedicated to acquiring breeding rights to renowned and emerging stallions.

Recently, they acquired a share in the young and highly awarded stallion HK Gran Valehoso (Dominic M x Sweet Music by HDF Lugano), who won the title of Brazilian National Gold Champion Colt at the 2023 Nationals. Valehoso is set to breeding the farm's top mares, especially the daughters of Quasim CRH, offering a new dimension of pedigree, beauty, and conformation to the breeding program. As for the mares, the Forte family has intensified investments in acquiring mares and embryos from distinguished and influential maternal lines, reinforcing their commitment to excellence and genetic variety.

In this regard, we must highlight other

newly established families, such as the "P" family, initiated by Evening Star TGS (Lumiar Amadeus x Promise V by Huckleberry Bey), acquired at the age of 22, notably for her exemplary production with RFI Maktub. Among the famous descendants of this cross are Lumiar Ethna, 2019 Brazilian National Gold Champion Senior Mare, and dam of Royal Asad (by El Tino), chief stallion at Royal Arabians, responsible for numerous international champions; and Lumiar Elektra, dam of Hariry MAM (by El Tino), 2018 Brazilian National Gold Champion Junior Colt. At RFI Arabians, Evening Star TGS also contributed with two promising young broodmares: RFI Pietra HPA (by RFI Maktub) and the exceptional RFI

**RFI Petrus HPA (Quasim CRH x Evening Star TGS)**



Phenomena (by Quasim CRH), both recently started in breeding. RFI Phenomena stood out particularly as a key player in RFI Arabians' victory at the 2021 Breeders Cup, exemplifying her refinement, beauty, and femininity. Additionally, from the same ovulation that produced RFI Phenomena came RFI Petrus HPA (by Quasim CRH), who won the title of National Bronze Champion twice. Co-bred and co-owned by RFI Arabians and Haras Panorama, Petrus recently started his breeding career, promising to stand out not only for his beauty but especially for his excellent conformation and legs, aligning with the high standards of RFI's breeding program. Rodrigo, the farm's management leader, reiterates the central philosophy of the program: "We must never forget that the Arabian Horse is a saddle horse, with great

sporting abilities." This vision reflects RFI Arabians' commitment to maintaining functionality alongside beauty in their breeding.

In addition to the aforementioned new families, other newly incorporated mares are expected to soon make

significant contributions and establish new families. These include Donatela UB, daughter of Vortex (by FA El Shawan) out of US National Champion Mare Dulcinea BHF (by \*Denali BHF), Irina LA, daughter of \*HDB Sir Ibn Massai out of Emarwa Meia Lua (by Marwan Al Shaqab), and Ariela W, by



**RFI Phenomena (Quasim CRH x Evening Star TGS)**

Quasim CRH out of Aline W (by RFI Fellini – DA Valentino x RFI Fayara El Shiraz). It is noteworthy that the farm has also incorporated animals bred by other breeders but based on RFI pedigrees, such as Ariela, Miranda HPA (by RFI Maktub), and Quasim CHR, chosen as the primary successor to his sire RFI Maktub. "All these animals coming from outside, with or without RFI blood, fit perfectly within our philosophy and the 'type' of animal we aim to breed," comments Leopoldo Coutinho. Rodrigo further emphasizes the concern of maintaining, generation after generation, the qualities and characteristics that today identify and differentiate the RFI herd, especially the balance between refinement and conformation.

## Conclusion

RFI Arabians currently boasts over 50 mares of breeding age. Many other younger females have already been selected to represent all these mentioned families, and a new group

Irina LA (HDB Sihr Ibn Massai x Emarwa Meia Lua)



of mares is being formed from the daughters of RFI Unique. The eldest of these daughters at RFI Arabians, RFI Elena, is set to be bred in the next breeding season. RFI Unique has demonstrated a remarkably high production capacity, conferring extreme refinement, elegance, and excellent movement to his offspring. "We are already eager to see Unique's best daughters enter to the breeding. I am sure they will take prominent positions at RFI, just like the daughters

of Maktub and Quasim," comments Carlos Forte, the farm's host.

Thus, here lies a clear opportunity to witness the synergy between past, present, and future at RFI Arabians. A future made predictable by a breeding program carefully planned and executed over more than thirty years with exceptional precision and strategic vision. Continuous development, driven by the dedicated and passionate work of this family and their collaborators, exemplifies a tradition of excellence. RFI Arabians demonstrates the impact of consistently adhering to its founding principles, solidifying its prominent position both in Brazil and on the global stage. ♦



Miranda HPA (RFI Maktub x Bey Shahriza TGS)

