

# Ismer

*Arabian Horses from Germany*



FAMILY TRADITION  
THAT TURNED INTO THE PARADISE

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by Urszula Łęczycka ■ photos by Ismer Stud archive

**All of us in Arabian horse community got used to the fancy international horse show with its characteristic point – the elephants carrying the judges into the arena and the private zoo just around the corner visited often during the show breaks. The place of Ismer Family also runs dedicated Arabian horse breeding following their own special vision but surely not all of us have known that the history of that place started 700 years ago!**

The Ismer family had located in Stroehen over 700 years ago. The history of the zoo as well as the stud farm established by Rolf Ismer (1912 - 2005) began 60 years ago when the animals from all over the world have been brought to the place that has been built in traditional wooden style. He also introduced the first Arabian horses in that place, like Inazzah and Shari which traces back to the oldest existing European import mare - Murana I from the studfarm of Mrs Griesbach.



The reason for the purchase of the first Arabians was actually to improve the local pony breeding. The whole huge animals and horse stud operation has been continued by his son Holger, who added the Arabian horse show to be the part of the regular family activity since over 30 years now. Holger also bred and imported numerous successful Arabians like Mashour, Mashoura, Madoura, Pasat and Eunizar, to mention only a few. With all the beauty of the place, its tremendous collection of not only horses but the collection of animals representing all continents of the world it can surely be called one of the most fancy events in the Arabian horse calendar. Thus its not a surprise that Ismer Stud has been visited by the animals and Arabian horse lovers from 30 different countries so far. The huge dedication of whole family since many generations run continuously at the same place in Stroehen turned the traditional cottage style farm into the international 350 000 square metres paradise with over 600 animals hidden in the forrests of North-Western part of Germany. Even one of the main roads of the town now carries the name of "Tierparkstrasse" (the Animals Park street). The Ismer Stud counting almost 200 horses is the biggest Arabian stud in Germany and it is a great ambassador of our beloved horse breed amongst the people visiting Stroehen not only for horses purposes.



Madkour I on 1981



Pasat on 1984. Photo by Ernst Werner



Madkour most influential stallion  
at Stud Ismer 1972-1997



Nils Ismer  
with Siam 1999



Let's hear the story of the place and the breeding program of Ismer Stud from one of its main inheritor and continuator – dr Nils Ismer – the breeder, judge and veterinarian, son of Holger and grandson of Rolf Ismer, the founder:

**Urszula Łęczycka: The history of the family place since 700 years ago – that's impressive tradition. Were your first ancestors related to any animals breeding?**

**Nils Ismer:** We have documents from 1241 proving that the family Wege had a farm already at that place and can trace back directly till 1530 - our ancestors. It had always been an agricultural farm, until Rolf Ismer married Annemarie Wege (1912 -1966) during World War II. He was a farmer from Silesia and found his wife and future in Ströhen. So animals in different species have been always a part of their lives.

**UŁ: The zoo has been started by your grandfather Rolf Ismer. What was the reason and idea of collecting the animals here – was it for a private use only or was it a public place for the beginning?**

**How the Arabian horses joined that place?**

**NI:** Rolf Ismer was an animal lover and he collected different animals, especially birds. He found the beauty of the Farm and the forrest close by as an ideal place to build a zoo. In 1959 he started this concept also as professional idea and developed the zoo step by step afterwards. The size of the farm is constant in total 150 hectares of which 30 of them had been transformed into the zoo area.

At the beginning of 60-ties my grandfather and his family found the fascination of the Arabian horses. By the possibility of buying three mares from the breeding program of Mrs Griesbach the stud was founded. In 1966,

Archie  
BOISELLE





Ströhen 2021





after the passing of Rolf's wife - Annemarie, his son Holger, almost 20 years old at that time, took over the farm and developed the Arabian horse breeding program. In 1984 he opened the studfarm next to the existing zoo for the public. Holger imported countless horses from the Polish state studs during the 1970s and 1980s. Many of them became international Champions in Show and in racing. He was always accompanied by his late wife Almuth, which passed away in February this year.

**UŁ:** Have your family breeding programm changed during the years – in terms of type and purpose for your horses or it stays the same?

**NI:** During the 70-ties and 80-ties racing had a bigger influence on our breeding decisions, as at those times classic pure bred Arabians were competing against each other. The appearance of the French lines made us decide not to continue in this field. Anyhow our

breeding aim has not really changed: a charismatic, typey, correct and healthy horse with strong movements and a brave but kind character being able to perform on highest levels!

**UŁ:** You seem to have your precised vision about the ideal Arabian horse – how it should look like and what lines you appreciate the most?

**NI:** We all have our vision and very seldom we come close to it. An Arabian horse needs beauty and charisma. I believe it must be also functional and well balanced. A horse which can not move may be beautiful, but can never be charismatic and will not touch my heart. I believe we find wonderful horses in many lines and breeding programs, but I love the athletic movements of many Polish and Russian lines combined with type note from Egyptian or old Marbach lines. Those combinations you will find in most successful show horses worldwide today.



Weltreiterspiele Aachen 2006





## Pallaton K

born 2009 (El Nabila B x Pocahotas K by Borsalino K)  
 Champion Stallion, National Championship Germany 2014  
 Champion Stallion, All Nations Cup 2016  
 Bred by Murillo Kammer  
 Owned by Ismer Stud



## **Ascot DD**

(Glorius Apal x Lady Nina DD)

Res. Champion Senior Stallions PSAIAHF 2019

Res. Champion Senior Champions European Championship 2018

Res. Champion Junior, World Championship 2013

Res. Champion Junior, All Nations Cup 2012

Bred by Dejonckhere, D., Belgium

Owned by Ismer Stud and Yun Hu







**Ascot DD**

**UŁ:** What do you think about the changing fashion in the modern show breeding – are you following the fashion or rather continue the long family traditions?

**NI:** We are not following any fashion, but we are always open for new developments, if we believe it brings us closer to our vision. This vision will always guide us and then we try to access bloodlines, where we see a development for our program. But I have to say, that we have many show horses lately, which are missing functional bodies and as a result of this: movement. This will never be my fashion!

**UŁ:** The 2021 season is very successful for Ismer Stud bred horses. Which titles won this year have brought you the biggest satisfaction so far?

**NI:** Of course the successes of home bred filly IS Pialuna by Ascot DD was our highlight this year – three times shown as a foal in 2021 and three times gold: AFE Cup, Bruges Arabian Horse Event, Arabian Horse Weekend, She is very

close to my own vision of an Arabian horse, I will follow her future development with some pride.

The other important wins of Ismer Stud bred and owned horses in recent years are: IS EtTu, born 2015 (IS Exxpu x Is Etara – Altis) - National Champion Aachen 2018, Champion Junior Fillies, Prague Intercup 2016, IS Essencia, born 2019 (Poseidon OS x IS Ella Nora – El Mariachi) - Reserve Champion Junior Female, Sopot 2021, IS Exxpu, born 2009 (QR Marc x IS Exelsia – Madkours Impuls) - Reserve Champion Stallion, European Championship 2016, Reserve Champion Stallion, National Championship Germany 2015 and several Silver Champion or International Shows.

**UŁ:** Germany has strong horse performance traditions – are your horses competing at sports as well and what are their best achievements?

**NI:** We have stallions that we take to the stallions performance test, as we want to breed horses which can



Photo by Archiv Boisselle





be ridden and which are able to perform. Our stallion IS Orlow for example won the dressage index at the performance test against warmblood stallions in Marbach and also competed well at showjumping. But most of our horses we only train until a good pleasure level before they find new homes.

**UŁ:** Running the breeding and care of so many different animal species plus the Arabian horse breeding, with vet and judge profession must be very time consuming. Is the whole family involved into this operation? Do you still have time to enjoy the free time in your paradise?

**NI:** Well this place only works because of the amazing staff we have. In every single part of the company we have people who work with a high level of passion, love and responsibility for this place. Only because of this we are free to enjoy sometimes the beauty and peace of this little place and also give us the opportunity to travel to other farms and shows. But of course this job has never an end and it is a big pleasure and help, that the entire family stands behind it. Lina, our daughter is very much into the horses, but recently also finds more fascination in other animals. Noah likes more the dogs and is enthusiastic on hunting.

But luckily they both feel and live the special sense of this place with its entire miracles. We hope it will stay like this, but both of them will undergo huge developments in their future life, which we will respect of course.

**UŁ:** It's so important to have well experienced, professional and dedicated support. Anyway being an owner or a staff member it has to be amazing to work here. Looking around your paradise - what are, honestly, your favourite animal species at this place?

**NI:** I love the elephants, the horses and our dogs...probably a little bit more than all the others.

**UŁ:** If you can dream even more then - what would be your biggest dream regarding that place and your Arabian horses?

**NI:** A homebred World and All Nations Cup Champion filly for the horses and a large Africa enclosure with giraffes, zebras and antilopes at the zoo!!

**UŁ:** Well, nothing else to say than wishing you the further dreams to come true, looking at your recent horses achievements - it may be just around the corner...

*Archiv*  
**BOISELLE**





## IS Exxpu

born 2009 (QR Marc x IS Exelsia by Madkours Impuls)  
 Res. Champion Stallion, European Championship 2016  
 Res. Champion Stallion, National Championship Germany 2015  
 several Silver Champion Int. Show  
 Bred and Owned by Ismer Stud







## IS Pialuna

born 2021 (Ascot DD x IS Piniata  
by Gazwan Al Nasser)

3 times shown as a foal 2021:

AFE Cup, Bruges Arabian Horse Event,  
Arabian Horse Weekend

3 times Gold

Bred and owned by Ismer Stud.

Photo by Henrike Hoermann



## IS EtTu

born 2015 (IS Exxpu x Is Etara by Altis)

National Champion Aachen 2018 - Champion Junior Fillies, Prague Intercup 2016

Bred and Owned by Ismer Stud



**IS Con Air** born 2015 (Altis x Castella II by Wermut)  
Stallion Performance Test Marbach 2018  
Bred by Ismer Stud, sold in the meantime

