

THE FLAXMAN PHENOMENON

text by: Kamila Kozłowska

photos by: Jutta Kools, Sylwia Iłenda, Jan Kan, Rik van Lent, Paola Drera, Alessio Azzali, Elisa Grassi, Stuart Vesty



Presently located in the Belgian municipality of Brecht, Flaxman Arabians can be called a family farm for at least two reasons: most members of the Hennekens Van Nes clan are involved in its operation and, more importantly, all the animals that share the space with the people are treated as an important part of the family. Founded in 1978 by the late Jan van Nes who bred Welsh section A ponies since 1966, the Flaxman breeding programme is now continued by Jan's daughter Helen and her husband Kay as well as their son Koen. In the forty-four years of the farm's existence, the input of several family members with different preferences when it comes to pedigrees resulted in the well-matched mixture of Straight Egyptian, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Crabbet bloodlines.

The founder of the stud, Jan Van Nes, was not only a true horseman but he was also an actively involved board member of the Dutch Arabian Horse Society for more than twenty years. In 1978, Jan purchased his first Arabian horse, the four-year-old mare named Allegria (Gon – Deglet

Noer / Goldbey) representing the Polish and Crabbet bloodlines. Measuring only 144 cm at the withers, Allegria was supposed to take Jan's pony breeding programme to the next level as well as become Helen's favourite mount. When the mare joined Flaxman Arabians, she was in foal to Ibn Argos (by Argos) and in 1979 she produced a lovely filly, Flaxman's El Myrrah. Both the dam and her daughter spent their whole lives at the farm, producing precious progeny by various sires, and both Allegria and El Myrrah reached a ripe old age of thirty-one and thirty-three respectively. The purchase of his first Arabian mare made Jan fall in love with the breed and soon after he was on the quest for other Arabian bloodlines. While visiting Stoeterij Arabica in Vlimmeren, Belgium, owned by Joseph Peeters at the time, Jan fell in love with the liver chestnut stallion Aber (Anter – Nazi / Morafic), a fine blend of Egyptian and Crabbet pedigrees. Since then, Jan was determined to introduce Egyptian blood into his developing breeding programme, and hence he bought two yearling fillies from Joseph, both chestnut and both sired by Aber; Naxaba out of a Crabbet



1990 Waseem Saraakh (AK Waseem Montaal – Bint Serasaab /
Ansata Abbas Pasha) - SE Stallion



1974 Porsche with Helen van Nes in native costume - 1985

mare Naxindos (by Iridos) and Umbra out of a Polish mare Mazurka II (by General Grant). All the family members were actively involved in raising those yearlings and, a year after, another chestnut daughter of Aber, Varacina, out of a Russian mare Persona (by Naslednik), joined the Flaxman family from Stoeterij Arabica. As Jan favoured chestnut over other colours, the growing collection of Arabians was soon enlarged by the chestnut Straight Egyptian filly, Omara S (Fikri – Nora / Ibn Fahkri), bred by Smaroel Arabians from Tilburg. The filly was accompanied by her grey paternal half-brother, Hassan S (out of Bint Fayek / Ramses Fayek), coming from the same Dutch breeder. Hassan, who passed away at the advanced age of twenty-six, remained part of Flaxman family till the end of his life.

Struggling to find good SE breeding material in Europe, Jan decided to visit the world-famous Imperial Egyptian Stud in the USA. This journey resulted in the importation of a classy chestnut yearling filly, Imperial Monfisah (Moniet El Nafis – AK Monareena / Ibn Moniet El Nefous), who began the

Straight Egyptian branch of the Flaxman breeding programme. She was also the first filly exported from Imperial Egyptian Stud to Europe. Jan's search for Straight Egyptian bloodstock never stopped and, together with Sjef Smarius, he travelled to various farms in Europe and overseas. On one of such trips, Jan purchased the grey mare Shahd (Amlam Emam – Bint Shahbaa / Gassir), bred by Fatma Hamza from Cairo, Egypt, at the time in foal to Kasr El Nil (Tuhotmos – Bint El Nil / Anter). This cross resulted in a beautiful chestnut filly, Flaxman's Chaniah, born in 1983.

The development of the breeding programme and the increase of the number of horses to twenty-five led to the inevitable expansion of the farm which happened in 1985 with the build of new facilities in Hendrik Ido Ambacht. At the roughly the same time, Helen, now a renowned breeder, an expert and an accomplished international judge of Arabian horses, began her professional career. Together with her brother Pieter, Helen started showing the Flaxman



Pristice Kossack (WH Justice – Prisiage / Gordon)



Ibn Barrada (Gad Allah – Barrada / Ikhnatoon)
bred by EAO El Zahra in Cairo

horses not only at the local shows but also in Aachen and Paris. One of the greatest achievements of her brother was second place in Paris with the aforementioned mare Naxaba. The next step in Helen's career was the five-month apprenticeship at Eldorado Arabians of Bill and Evelyn Larsen in Arkansas, USA, where she learnt a lot about schooling and conditioning of show horses from Bill and Evelyn's daughter Kaia. What is more, during her stay she fell in love with a gorgeous grey SE colt, Shah al Jabbaar (Ansata Ibn Shah – Dars Hideeba / Hamza) who joined the Flaxman family for a short time and sadly passed away at the age of six due to a leg injury. Although the death of the beloved stallion hit the family really hard, they decided to organize the quest for a new stud. Despite his great admiration for chestnuts, Jan always dreamt about having a black stallion. His dream came true with the purchase of Waseem Saaraakh (AK Waseem Montaal – Bint Serasaab / Ansata Abbas Pasha), the beautiful black SE stallion bred by Waseem Arabians from Texas. A classic black stallion with the most kind and gentle disposition and a sire of good

racing and endurance horses, Saaraakh became Jan's all-time favourite stallion and spent his whole twenty-seven-year long life with the family. Meanwhile, the opportunity came up to purchase the stunning snow-white stallion El Masri Amir (by The Egyptian Prince) who was maternal half-brother to the late-lamented Shah al Jabbaar and at the time the chief sire at Eldorado Arabians. The Larsen family decided to reduce the number of horses and El Masri Amir found new home at Flaxman Arabians where he sired some typy and refined foals, putting a strong stamp on their Egyptian breeding programme. Another chance to purchase excellent breeding material came along with the Tax Reform Act introduced in the USA in 1986 which discontinued the passive investment allowance that was so beneficial to horse owners and breeders. As a result of this, many renowned breeders went out of business and were selling their livestock. After thorough consideration, Jan jumped on the opportunity and purchased some high-quality horses and so did many other breeders from Europe and the Middle East.



Jeryan Aljassimya (WH Justice – Psierra / Padrons Psyche)
bred by Aljassimya Farm



MM Sergio (WH Justice – Sarah El Bey / Bey El Jamaal)



MM Sergio (WH Justice – Sarah El Bey / Bey El Jamaal)



A Golden Girl of Kossack (WH Justice – Abakana Kossack / Balaton)



Etoryk (Om El Shahmaan – Etnologia / Gazal Al Shaqab)

The breeding programme of Flaxman Arabians was steadily growing when the Van Nes family were informed by the local government authorities that they planned to change the landscaping around the farm. It meant that approximately sixty animals including Arabian horses as well as Shetland ponies that Helen bred for a number of years were deprived of grazing land, which in turn instigated the search for a new facility. Meanwhile, Helen met her future husband Kay Hennekens at a horse show in 1987. The couple got married four years after and have had two children, the daughter Sophie in 1996 and the son Koen in 1998. The family found a new facility in Brecht, Belgium however it required some small alterations before both the people and the animals could move in there in the spring of 1996. The new farm was larger with more grazing land and more stables which in turn made it possible to expand the herd. Soon, the number of horses doubled to approximately a hundred and twenty and has stayed at this level until today. At that point, the growing farm required a person who would be responsible for its operation, and thus Gust Lambrechts, the former farm

manager of Arabica Stud, found his way to Flaxman Arabians. Gust managed the farm for many years until his health issues got in the way and made him change his career path. He was then replaced by Peter Wilms who has trained and shown the Flaxman horses for the last ten years and is still the main trainer on the farm. Since the family moved to Belgium, Helen and Kay Hennekens became the owners of the farm. Sadly, Jan passed away in 2009 at the age of seventy-one. In his memory, the Hennekens family kept his favourite horses till the end of their lives. A few years before his death, Jan purchased the liver chestnut stallion Ibn Barrada (Gad Allah – Barrada / Ikhnatoon), bred by EAO El Zahra in Cairo, who turned out to be his all-time favourite horse. A true Koheilan in type, Ibn Barrada was a very special stallion with a beautiful face. Unfortunately, he died of colic at the age of twenty-two.

Despite Jan's great love and appreciation for Straight Egyptian Arabians, Helen and Kay decided to incorporate other bloodlines into the Flaxman breeding programme.



FA Earl Grey (FA Zain – Flaxman's Nakaana / Hassan S)



FA Earl Grey (FA Zain – Flaxman's Nakaana / Hassan S)



Shadi Al Zobair (Al Adeed Al Shaqab – Maliha Bouznika / Imperial Mashhar)



Woronin (Vitorio TO – Wilda / Gazal Al Shaqab)



Woronin (Vitorio TO – Wilda / Gazal Al Shaqab)

Raised among amazingly moving Russian horses, Kay was keen to work with the bloodlines he knew from his early childhood. His parents together with his sister Suzanne owned Shamrock Arabians, first located in the Netherlands and later moved to Portugal. When Kay moved in with Helen, his favourite stallion, the Straight Russian Myca (Kilimandscharo - Pinega / Nazeeh) joined the Hennekens family. The liver chestnut Myca was amazing under saddle and Helen really enjoyed riding him until he passed away at the age of twenty-four. Kay's strong preference for the Russian bloodlines resulted in the purchase of a yearling colt at the Kossack Stud in 2010, the grey Pristice Kossack (WH Justice - Prisiage / Gordon). Pristice turned out to be a great sire but due to a serious colic surgery at the age of three he requires a special treatment. Another WH Justice son that joined Flaxman Arabians was Jeryan Aljassimya (out of Psierra / Padrons Psyche), bred by Aljassimya Farm in the USA and imported to Europe as a two-year-old colt after having been successfully shown in Scottsdale and Las Vegas by Ted Carson. His European show career has also

been very successful with four silver medals scored at shows in St. Oedenrode, Bruges, Addington and Lier with Glenn Schoukens on the lead. MM Sergio, another WH Justice son (out of Sarah El Bey / Bey El Jamaal) in the Flaxman breeding programme, won many in-hand classes as a young colt and now sires very nice foals. However, the precious genes of WH Justice have also been added through his delightful daughters: A Golden Girl of Kossack (out of Abakana Kossack / Balaton), Julnar Aljassimya (out of Ventures Serenade / GH Venture), MP Jawa Aljassimya (out of Pagentry EA / Padrons Psyche), Jubella Aljassimya (out of Om El Belinda Estopa / Om El Shahmaan), MP Julie Aljassimya (out of Belle Song HVP / Magnum Psyche) and Jannat Aljassimya (out of Karinena Dakar / Dakar El Jamaal).

Born among great horsemen, the youngest generation of the Hennekens family has naturally been involved with the equine world, each in a different way. Sophie showed an early interest in horses and was a keen rider of Welsh and



Woj (Empire – Waranga / QR Marc)



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Pinito (EKS Alihandro – Piniata / Eden C)



Epica KA (QR Marc – Espadrilla / Monogramm)



FA Zain (Ansata Ramesses – Ansata Hajira / Ansata Hejazi)



Firediva (QR Marc – Flancee / HDB Sihr Ibn Massai)
Bred by Stanred Arabians. Shown 3 times - 3 times gold medal winner



Magnola KA (QR Marc – FS Magnums Madonna / Magnum Psyche)



Kabsztad (Poganin – Kwestura / Monogramm) winning in Prague in 2020 with Koen Hennekens



Kabsztad (Poganin – Kwestura / Monogram) winning in Prague in 2020 with Koen Hennekens

Shetland ponies until she grew out of them and switched to an Arabian gelding. However, at the age of fifteen, Sophie gave up riding and lost interest in equine matters with the exception of occasionally enjoying new-born foals at the farm. On the other hand, her younger brother Koen was not interested in horses as a child, he did not enjoy riding and preferred football instead. It has changed when Helen asked him to show the gelding FA Emerald (Kar Tiburon x Kristal C / Alzubio) in the junior handlers' class at the Emerald Trophy in Brecht. Koen was thirteen-years old at that time and it was the beginning of his career with Arabian horses. After he finished secondary school, Koen decided to study horse management and this is what made him come back to riding. While at the university, he rode Dutch warmbloods and Trakehners but he set his heart on becoming professional handler of Arabian horses. This is why, he did an apprenticeship with Fernando Poli in Florida where he had a chance to learn a lot about schooling and conditioning of show horses. The hard work paid off and Koen became best amateur handler of the Aljassimya

challenge three years in a row. With such a great potential and passion for his job, Koen is a fast learner of his mentor Peter Wilms and he really enjoys schooling and showing horses. He had lots of fun while presenting his grey gelding Nabeel al Nasser (EKS Alihandro – Noof Al Nasser / Ashhal Al Rayyan). Koen had his first big achievements as a professional handler in 2018 with two Polish stallions bred at Janów Podlaski, the bay Esfahan (Ekstern – El Fatha / Entyk) and the grey Etoryk (Om El Shahmaan – Etnologia / Gazal Al Shaqab). For the last three years, he has been employed as a trainer and handler at Schoukens Training Center in Maldegem while also showing some horses for Flaxman Arabians.

However, Flaxman Arabians is not only renowned breeder of Arabian halter horses. Since 2020, it is also a licenced European Artificial Insemination Centre with the ability to ship the semen of their stallions across Europe. At the moment, Flaxman feature the following SE stallions: the grey FA Earl Grey (FA Zain – Flaxman's Nakaana / Hassan



Lawinia (Ekstern – Luanda / Emigrant)



Papillon KA (QR Marc – Polonia / Ekstern)



2019 Vakil Albaydaa (RFI Farid – Valentino's Angel MI / DA Valentino)



Valentino's Angel MI (DA Valentio – Always An Angel / SK Shakla Khan)

S), the black GH Meknes (Muddassir B Mehamam – Al Kadaira / Shaikael) and the grey Shadi Al Zobair (Al Adeed Al Shaqab – Maliha Bouznika / Imperial Mashhar). With the systematic addition of new bloodlines into their breeding programme, the Hennekens purchased several horses of precious Polish pedigrees, including the grey Michalów-bred stallion Woj (Empire – Waranga / QR Marc), class winner at the 2020 European Championships in Prague, gold medal winner at the 2020 Prague InterCup, gold medallist of the 2021 Schayk show as well as 2022 Belgian National Gold Champion Senior Stallion and his classy chestnut stable companion Woronin (Vitorio TO – Wilda / Gazal Al Shaqab). Woronin is a truly versatile Arabian horse as he won both halter and under saddle competitions. His most recent wins include the bronze medal at the Schayk show and the Gold Champion Senior Stallion and Best in Show titles in Lage Horste, Germany, with Koen Hennekens on the lead.

Flaxman Arabians got a serious boost of the Polish blood at

the 2022 Pride of Poland and Summer Sale in Janów Podlaski where Helen and Kay purchased five horses, four of them bred by Michalów Stud: the stunning snow-white stallion Kabsztad (Poganin – Kwestura / Monogramm), 2020 European Silver Champion Senior Stallion who spent two breeding seasons at Flaxman before the sale; the delightful dark bay Wieża Orientu (by Ganges), the daughter of the world-famous Wieża Mocy (QR Marc – Wieża Marzeń / Ekstern), European and World Gold Champion Junior Filly as well as Polish and US National Champion Senior Mare; the beautiful black-bay Frazza (Vitorio TO – Foggia / Gazal Al Shaqab), already a proven producer of show champions and race winners; as well as the ethereal Emfiria (Empire – Emfonia / Galba), the maternal granddaughter of Ernera (Monogramm – Ernestyna / Piechur), the only full sibling to the legendary stallion Ekstern. A stallion of incredible lineage was also acquired from Janów Podlaski and it was the charismatic chestnut Pinito (EKS Alihandro – Piniata / Eden C) with a double dose of world champions in his pedigree through his World gold medal winning sire and



Wahaj Albidayer (Versace – Baila De Djoon OS / Ajman Moniscione)



D Fayyad (FA El Rasheem – D Feddah / Shanghai EA)



Flaxman's Rania (WH Justice – Papillon KA / QR Marc)



Flaxman's Rania (WH Justice – Papillon KA / QR Marc)

his maternal granddam Pinga (Gazal Al Shaqab – Pilar / Fawor), Platinum Gold Champion Mare.

The modern show lines of Flaxman Arabians were also enhanced by the acquisition of the bay yearling colt D Fayyad (FA El Rasheem – D Feddah / Shanghai EA), purchased at the most recent European Breeders Trust Auction, as well as three horses obtained at the latest STC Auction: the six-year-old chestnut mare Zafira AS (Abha Qatar – Valentino's Angel MI / DA Valentino) with her colt foal at foot, Storm AS (by Midas AS), and a chestnut yearling filly Shasta AS (Midas AS – Serena AS / Marwan Al Shaqab). Last but not least, Helen and Kay purchased the wonderful Wahaj Albidayer (Versace – Baila De Djoon OS /

Ajman Moniscione), a tall and exotic chestnut stallion and a superb sire of outstanding offspring, already used at Flaxman Arabians before his acquisition.

The family of Flaxman Arabians is growing with more and more quality horses purchased each year to enhance and enrich its world-renowned breeding programme. The horses of the Hennekens clan are successful show champions as well as versatile ridden horses but, most of all, they are lifelong companions of the family considered its inherent part. The essence of the Flaxman phenomenon can be expressed in the following words: breed the Arabian horse at its finest and keep it all in the family.



Shasta AS (Midas AS – Serena AS / Marwan Al Shaqab)



Zafira AS (Abha Qatar – Valentino's Angel MI / DA Valentino)

FLAXMAN ARABIANS
KAY & HELEN HENNEKENS
MOLENSTRAAT 84 - B-2960 BRECHT, BELGIUM
PH.: +32 3313 6996 - MOBILE: +31 653 85 55 75
WWW.FLAXMAN.NL