

# PHILIPP SELVA

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## MASTER OF FURNITURE LOVER OF ARABIAN HORSES

By Sandra Adams

PHILIPP SELVA, A BUSINESSMAN WITH A PASSION FOR FASHION DESIGN AND AN AVID LOVE FOR THE BEAUTIFUL ARABIAN HORSE. TO HIM AND HIS FAMILY, THE ARABIAN HORSE IS THE ESSENCE OF BEAUTY, HISTORY AND IS A CONNECTION BETWEEN SO MANY ARABIAN HORSE LOVERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD; IT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER TO SHARE THE SAME PASSION. IN HIS WORDS, "THE ARABIAN HORSE HAS CHANGED MY LIFE AND HAS OPENED A LOT OF DOORS FOR ME AND MY FAMILY."

As President and Chief Executive Officer of Selva Company, Philipp Selva is fast becoming one of the most recognised figures in Europe when it comes to furniture. Merely a baby when his father's dream of making unmistakably original and fabulously beautiful examples of Italian art through furnishings came to fruition, he worked in the family business as he grew. He studied business management at Innsbruck and gained further practical experience at Hukla, Germany's largest manufacturer of upholstered furniture, followed by a short tenure at one of the country's largest furniture houses, eventually assuming leadership of Selva in 1998.







▲ *Mobarak*

Peppi Selva, a Bolzano furniture maker and a leisure time horse breeder, began breeding two Haflinger mares. He then discovered his love for Arabian thoroughbreds and educated himself to become a specialist in understanding the complicated pedigrees and heredity lines of purebred Arabian horses. Selva purchased stallions and mares throughout all of Europe from famous and successful breeding families and founded the 'Gaughof' Arabian stud farm in Wangen/Ritten in the Tyrolean Alps, one of the first breeding operations in Italy where thoroughbred Arabians were bred in the grand style. Steeply climbing paths, blossoming meadows, a man-made lake in the vicinity, abundant sunshine, and in winter an orderly frost – the bracing climate of the mountains is apparently precisely the right one for these horses of the desert who are accustomed to challenging conditions.

Peppi Selva was among the founding members of ANICA (the Italian National Association of Thoroughbred Arabian Horses), a group which brought thoroughbred Arabian horses raised in Italy to a level of international recognition. Numerous national and international competitions were won; one of his mares, 'Rasheda', was selected three times as the most beautiful mare of

Peppi Selva, who was also an A-Level judge of the international breeding association WAHO (World Arabian Horse Organisation), passed away on June 14, 2002. Today, it is his son Philipp with his wife Andrea who carry on his legacy with a breeding programme based upon pure Egyptian bloodlines. They have already been able to record their first successes in shows both in Italy and abroad. The foundation mares are 'Gameelah', imported from Texas and a very noble daughter of 'Ruminaja Ali', and 'TH Bint Rissala', a very typical daughter of 'Ansata Hejazi', in addition to 'Maydana-Madheen', the Junior Champion of the International Egyptian Event 2002 in Italy, the wonderfully beautiful 'Bahrija Bint Bukra', and the extraordinary elegant 'Nahma Bint Ibn Halim Shah'.

The great pride of Gaughof is the 1999 Egyptian Supreme National Champion and Egyptian International Champion 'Mobarak' (Adl x Ghazalet Albadeia), one of the few purebred Arabians to leave the land of its origin, Egypt, in order to conquer Europe. His son 'Bashir al Gaug' out of Bahrija Bint 'Bukra' has won the title of Champion Stallion Reserve 2006 at the Egyptian Event Europe at only 1 year of age. In 2008, he was

crowned as Junior Champion Stallion at the Egyptian Event.

#### **When and how did your passion develop for the Arabian horse?**

Horses have been with me since I was 4 years old. My father started with a Haflinger mare, a local horse breed, typical for our mountain area here in the Southern Alps. In 1978 my father visited the Equitana Equestrian show in Essen, Germany and there he fell in love with the Arabian horse. In the same year, he bought two mares, both as foals; this is how our story as Arabian horse breeders began. In 1981 we imported our stallion 'PAKS 7' from Tersk, Russia and he became one of the most successful stallions in Italy, producing almost 300 offspring. My father was breeding Russian-Polish lines and I shifted to Egyptian bloodlines nearly 10 years ago.

#### **Why did you shift to breeding the Egyptian Arabian?**

Well, it is quite simple...it is the purest and oldest Arabian bloodline...more or less all other bloodlines are descending from Egyptian horses. As breeders of this specific line, we think is the finest and most beautiful Arabian horse today. Moreover, the Egyptian horse is not too

big, it's ideal for our small mountain paths, very resistant and above all very sensible. All Egyptian Arabians have a very strong character...they are not for everybody!! Only for true horsemen.

**What can you tell us about your horses and your Gaughof Stud?**

We currently have 15 horses at our farm the Gaughof Stud. In 2004 we imported from Cairo 'Mobarak Iknatoon' multi-Champion in Egypt, son from the famous Al Zahraa head sire 'Adl' with his motherside tracing back to Albadeia Stud owned by Dr. Nasr Marei, 'Gazalet Albadeia'. We also have wonderful mares with the finest pedigrees; daughters from 'Ruminaja Ali', 'Ansata Hejazi', and 'Mishal HP'



▲ *Maydana-Madheen*

▼ *Gaughof Farm*



(Ansata Sinan son). Please visit our website [www.gaughofaraber.com](http://www.gaughofaraber.com) where you can see pictures of all our horses.

**Are you involved in breeding as a lover for the breed only, or as a businessman?**

The world of furniture and interiors is my business, horses are my passion. We have sold many horses in our 30 years breeding history; this is a positive aspect but not the aim.

**Do you participate in any national or international Arabian horse events?**

Yes, we do actually. The farm has won many shows. The most recent success is a fantastic 4-year-old stallion, son of 'Mobarak' who has won several titles in Europe, one of which is Champion Stallion at last year's Egyptian Event in Italy.

**Have you ever visited Egypt and have you ever attended Al Zahraa Egyptian Agricultural Organisation annual horse show & championships?**

Yes, we have been to Cairo a few times, for business and of course to see horses. We have also been to Al Zahraa to visit the stud but not for the championships. As mentioned, the lovers of Arabian horses will know 'Mobarak' who has won there several times. **HT**



▲ Karim El Gaug

▼ Bashir El Gaug

