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*Raphael with Emerald J
owned by Al Jalawiyah Stud - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*



Introduction

Questions by Urszula Leczycka, design by Eyecatcher-Advertising.com
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After spending almost five years in America learning from some of the best horsemen in the industry he's returned to Europe with his newly acquired knowledge. Raphael Curti is a young talented Frenchman who has had a love for horses all his life. When he returned to Europe a long-time friend Philip Looyens presented him with a great opportunity to work in partnership with Christine Jamar. Prior to this relationship forming, Raphael spent his early months after his arrival traveling around Europe, the Middle East, and Africa to show beautiful Arabian horses for several clients. In early 2011 Raphael met HH Prince Saud Bin Turki from Al Jalawiyah Stud, which proceeded from his close connection with Mrs. Jamar. Since this establishment Raphael has been able to train the Al Jalawiyah horses at Jadem Arabians in Belgium while also training for Mrs. Jamar herself along with his other pre-established clients.



■ Anoud Al Jalawiyah



■ Raphael with the Rivière family of France

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How did your experience with the Arabian Horse begin?

From a very young age my parents instilled a love for the horses in particular the Arabian breed. At the ripe age of 11 I went off to Jesuit boarding school and during that time I began my pursuit to obtain my French Equestrian degree. After receiving my degree I found myself back in my birthplace, the South of France, which lead me to spend most of my time in endurance competitions. I began competing with a great Arabian by the name of Altair Ibn Estopa purchased from the established French breeder, Mr. Didier Riviere. With this great Arabian horse I was selected for the French National Junior Endurance Team. From that time on Mr. Riviere became a true friend of mine and my first teacher of the philosophy of the Arabian horse. I spent many weekends with the Riviere family, learning and manifesting a genuine passion for Arabian horses. After a transfer in schooling I moved closer to the Rivieres in order to spend as much time as I could learning from them. During this time, Rivieres son Robin and I became very close friends and it was Robin that introduced me to the Arabian show ring. Robin was training and showing halter horses and we would travel to the various shows on the weekends together. In fact, the first halter horses I showed were those owned by Robin's clients. As time went on, I desired to learn more and the Riviere family supported me in doing so they sent me to Italy to apprentice with Frank Boetto. I spent a summer learning from him and returned to the Rivieres. I have the Rivieres to thank for arranging my voyage to America to work with Michael Byatt in Texas.



■ Ssantana by Gazal Al Shaqab winning the US National Championship

Which people and horses influenced your work with the Arabian Horse?

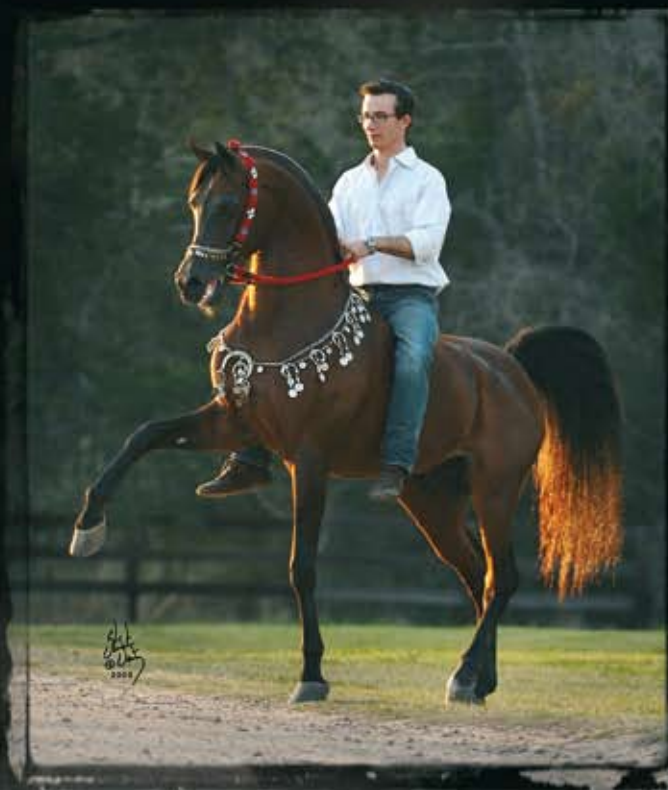
When I arrived in America there were many things to learn most of which stemmed from the differences between the European and American industries. Michael Byatt allowed me to capture and enhance my skills in schooling and conditioning thru his personal lessons in teaching me himself. This one-on-one time I truly have been grateful for because he took me under his wing and taught me the basics of training horses.

After building a strong foundation in the schooling arena Michael allowed me to show some of my first horses in America. One of the largest accomplishments was that I was named US National Champion Geldings with Ssantana, a Gazal Al Shaqab son from Michaels own breeding program. I worked from the bottom up, using my little knowledge to help me get through the beginnings and by the end of my experience at Michaels I had learned tremendously and was able to move on to other great things.

In March of 2009 I made another transition and began working at Gallun Farms for Greg and Nancy Gallun in San Ynez, California. I used my previously acquired knowledge from Michael to become a professional and begin training some of the great Gallun horses. Greg taught me much of what I needed to know in the show ring, when he found that I was ready he sent me to show for his clients around the world in both Europe and the Middle East. Greg gave me the liberty to create my own identity and truly become Raphael Curti.



Greg Gallun & Raphael at Vegas



Both Greg and Michael introduced to me to the business aspect of the Arabian horse industry, which is equally important as show ring. I'm truly in debt to both Michael and Greg for bestowing me with their knowledge. It was a privilege to learn and work with both of them and I can attribute much of my success on my own from the learning I did alongside them.

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Marwan Al Shaqab

As anyone who has a relationship with horses knows many touch you but there are some that mark you forever. The first had to be Ssantana in 2008 that brought me to my first US National Champion winners' circle.

Marwan Al Shaqab, is a name that resonates excellence, beauty, and sophistication. Michael gave me the astounding privilege to journey back to Europe with him and spend three months working to prepare him for the major European shows under the supervision of Giacomo Cappaci. Through my experience with him I was able to verify all of the opinions that Marwan is indeed, one of a kind. It was an honor to be able to say that I have been a small part of his legacy.

In Las Vegas 2009, I was given the great opportunity to show Embra for the Hennessey-oOne Partnership. She stormed in the ring and was honored with the win in her division. She went on to win Reserve Champion Senior mare behind her stable mate *Emandoria who was shown by Greg.

I still remember the day when Greg came into the stable to tell me that I would be the one showing Elandra in both Aachen and Paris for Mrs. Watts. For me this was one of the biggest honors I've ever received because as a young boy I remember sitting in the house of the Rivières looking through the various Arabian horse magazines and being fixated by Elandra's timeless beauty. Showing her and being apart of her legacy was a dream come true for me.

Currently a horse that has my heart is one that was bred by Mrs. Jamar, Emerald J who is by QR Marc and out of *Emandoria who is now owned by Al Jalawiyah stud. He is the first horse that I sold, trained, and showed myself. He has the potential for excellence and I believe it is through him that I really have the opportunity to verify the knowledge that I have acquired is great. He is the manifestation of what I desire my career to become.



Siram Athbah Res. Champion
Al Khalediah 2010 - owned by Athbah Stud



Embra - Res. Champion Mare Vegas 2009



Emerald J - Champion Colt Ströhen 2011

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What are the most important parts of being a trainer handler?

With every career there are certain responsibilities and expectations to be achieved. But the responsibilities and lifestyle of a trainer/handler are quite unusual in comparison to other ways of life. Some of the most important aspects of being a trainer/handler to me is the preservation of an honest relationship between the people that surround you, the pursuit of excellence, and to persistence on reality and humbleness.



Curti

What relationships and friendships have you made because of the Arabian horse that you are especially thankful for?

There is an abundance of gratitude for the many people who have believed in me, helped me, and guided me thru this young journey.

I must thank the people who helped me in America by welcoming me into their home and taking me in as family especially Michael Byatt and Greg & Nancy Gallun. I must thank you for not only providing me with endless hospitality but for the experience and opportunity to learn your craft.

When I returned to Europe there was much uncertainty to the future. Brad Gallun helped me with this uncertainty by aiding me thru his passion for my success by using his advice and knowledge of the industry.

You meet few people in your life that truly mark you, and Carol Steppe is one of those people. She gave me the opportunity to return to America and show her great horses in Las Vegas. She bestowed me with trust, friendship, and advice, which is something that can never be replaced. I thank Carol from the bottom of my heart.

A long time friend and confidant, Philip Looyens helped me during my time in America but was extremely helpful with my return back to Europe. He connected me with many people who would lead me to the success I have recently achieved; he supplied me with numerous memories, advice, and an amazing friendship. He has been a true friend to me and the reward has been insurmountable.

With her established connections and knowledge in the industry Christine Jamar has been a great aid to me. She has had confidence in my abilities and has provided me with possibilities, dreams, and great facility to work at. I cannot omit the great staff at Jadem Arabians, Dorien, Kaat and Monika - their work might not be visible to the public all the time but without them nothing would be possible. I thank them for their persistant hard work day in and day out.

After meeting His Highness Prince Saud in Saudi early this year we have created not only a great business relationship but also a true and honest friendship. The bond we have is special and the future is bright. Thank you HH Prince Saud and his family for the all the windows of opportunities you've granted me with.

To all the other people who believe in me on a daily basis and honor me with your friendship, especially BrookeMarie, Gregor, Axel, Tom & Eline and Nicolas. Your friendship is lasting ...

Merci



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