

"El Zahraa is regarded by the Egyptian breeders in Egypt and I am sure any other Straight Egyptian Breeders in the world as the source and the mother stud farm. El Zahraa is keen to stay as such, the "source". " (Nasr Marei)



THE EGYPTIAN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP & 19TH INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ECAHO-B-SHOW **EL ZAHRAA STATE STUD** CAIRO

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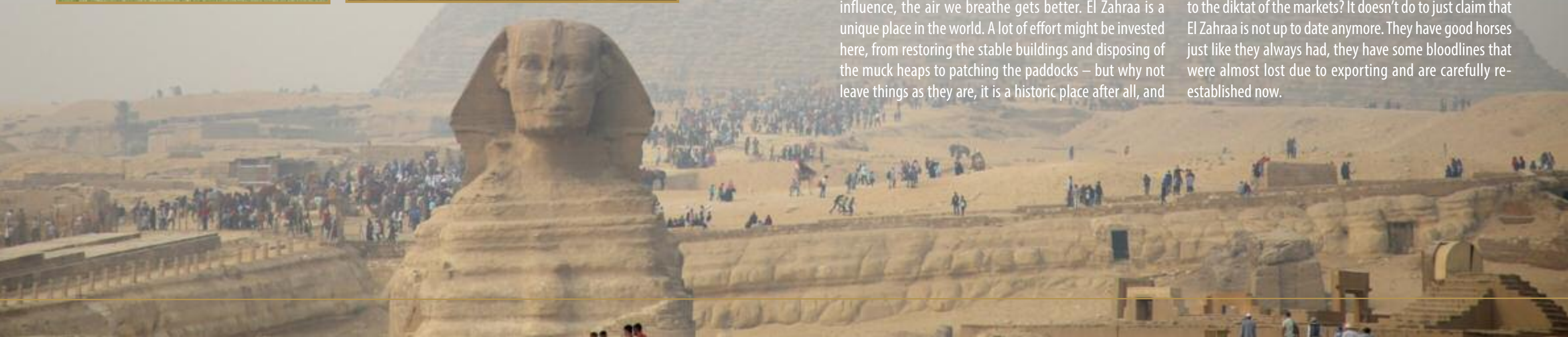


El Zahraa Stud and the Egyptian Agricultural Organization (E.A.O) invited for the 19th Egyptian National Championships and for the International B Show for Arabian Horses.

As soon as the bus with the international visitors in it has finally succeeded in escaping from the gigantic city of Cairo with her many people, the noise, and the ring road, instead taking the turn into the central alley of the state stud of El Zahraa shaded by venerably old eucalyptus trees, everybody is gripped by an oasis feeling. People become quiet, the horses in their paddocks have a calming influence, the air we breathe gets better. El Zahraa is a unique place in the world. A lot of effort might be invested here, from restoring the stable buildings and disposing of the muck heaps to patching the paddocks – but why not leave things as they are, it is a historic place after all, and

the traces that the ravages of time leave so inevitably are part of the image, somehow.

Even in moments like today, when the yearly national championships are opened – sponsored by great names, furnished with a VIP arena, good food, and 250 participating horses – it is fitting that in the surrounding paddocks, life for the horses goes on as if nothing were happening. Even if it's exactly those horses who are the original gene pool of today's modified horses in the show ring. Shyly, doubt rises its head: do we really like the „improved“ show horses better, or do we just feel obliged to the diktat of the markets? It doesn't do to just claim that El Zahraa is not up to date anymore. They have good horses just like they always had, they have some bloodlines that were almost lost due to exporting and are carefully re-established now.





El Zahraa is the source of all those different lines of SE horses, and even if some national and international breeders wish for it, the state stud cannot specialize in just one direction. El Zahraa is obliged to breed horses for everybody. After all, there are also many in Cairo who look for endurance or racing horses. Some of the horses of El Zahraa do win shows and the great breeders from all over the world fell back on horses from the state stud's stock time and again. Be that Al Rayyan Stud in Qatar, Dr. Nagel in Germany, or Judith Forbis in the USA and many others: the most successful foundation horses of the last century came from this dustily green oasis right in the middle of Cairo. And everybody still has that opportunity. Every breeder can take advantage of the auctions in El Zahraa in order to get an EAO horse for his stud and use the cross to improve his own breeding in certain points. In this stud, all the important dam lines are still maintained in big families. Certain groups are particularly suitable for endurance or track racing, others display their show horse qualities. To be counted among these, there are the excellent gaits that the horses here have throughout, but also their nice tail carriage; they don't have pigmentation problems, no white in their eyes, and many have that short typey head everyone craves. And as to their character, the El Zahraa horses are noble and sweet at the same time, as the youngsters and the mares are kept in large herds and don't get to experience stress or violence, even surrounded as they are by a metropolis of more than 25 million people.



This atmosphere, what rises when the origin and the modern times of Arabian horses meet – this is the only place where you can experience that. Breeders in Egypt seem to feel the same way, as the grandstands are always full of people and the passion that even children and teens display when visiting the show can give you some idea of what they hope to see in their future lives.

Anybody knowing El Zahraa can imagine the difficulties of putting up not just one, but two shows here. There is limited room for the 450 horses of the farm as things are – so for the days of the shows, additional box stalls and room for 250 horses need to be created. Which is why many of the El Zahraa stallions were re-housed in stalls and paddocks cleverly created on the premises from straw bales.

The EAO team worked on the preparations for months, supported by the new EAO chairman, Eng. Sami Abdel Hamid, and the stud's director, Mr. Hesham Fekry. Many Thanks also to Dr. Mei Magdy and Ms. Noha Saber and all the team who did a perfect job.

EAO as well as El Zahraa are undergoing changes now under the new leadership and reforms are to be expected. However, it will take some years for significant changes to become obvious.

By now, in the year 2017, EAO officials count 1170 breeders in Egypt, meaning that there are probably well over 10.000 purebred Arabians as recognized by WAHO living in the country. Last year, 1800 foals were born. This in itself is a vast management challenge for the offices of El Zahraa Still, both shows were organized as we have become used to them: successfully and professionally.



Photos: Mohamed Adel



The Egyptian National Championship 2017

The national championships, which only horses of pure Egyptian bloodlines were eligible for, saw a high number of participants and also of visitors, just like we are used to. 177 horses had been entered and obviously all took part, too. The majority of them made up the filly and colt classes for horses up to three years of age, with a total of 99 youngsters starting. The panel of judges comprising Nelly Hermanne from Belgium, Mahmood Faraj from Bahrain, Koenraad Detailleur from Belgium, and Dr. Marek Trela from Poland, was quite a harmonious team overall. The quality of the horses was somewhat polarizing as partly, they were excellent in their type and movements while partly, they did not fully correspond to the standard requirements for a show of this importance.

Most of the handlers are Egyptians by now. It was only occasionally that studs had invited a European to handle and present their horses – that's different from earlier times. The Egyptian handlers would present their horses with great passion, some literally risking their necks during the presentations, running at an incredible speed in their endeavor to motivate their horses to display their floating gaits. Harsh use of the whip for the stand-up and even at the horses' heads, the way it is unfortunately often seen in Europe, was completely absent in Cairo. On the other hand, the spectators would enthusiastically and ad nauseam produce noise with plastic bags and vuvuzela horns. Overall, the show was a great success and while the Jefara Al Shennawy, Senior Gold Champion, was not a perfect horse, he had so much presence, charisma, and elegance of movement that everybody got goosebumps. He was deservedly crowned "King" at the end of the show.









National Egyptian Show Cairo, Egypt November 16-17, 2017

Champion Filly:

Gold: Amina El Gabry (Jamil Al Rayyan x Maymouna Al Qusar), El Gabry Stud, Ägypten
Silver: Zina El Sheruk (Amirhom El Sheruk x BH American Girl), Al Qasr Al Malaky Stud, Ägypten
Bronze: Badawia Oony (Al Pasha Oony x Nourhan Al Sedeeq), Oony Stud, Ägypten

Champion Colt:

Gold: Amour El Sheruk (Mirajh Rca x Ammourah), Al Misk Stud, Ägypten
Silver: Magd Ezzaman (Malek Al Nil Al Sharbatly x Majara Al Qusar), Al Abhar Stud, Ägypten
Bronze: Morgan Al Asil (Ameen Iknatoonx Morgana Al Asil), Al Asil Stud, Ägypten

Champion Mares:

Gold: Gasoura Abou Hendy (Kenz Noor x Tohfa Abou Hendy), Desert Wind Stud, Ägypten
Silver: Manar Rahim (Bouznika x Maram Nebeishy), Rahim Stud, Ägypten
Bronze: Riham Gawdat (Al Zaeem Gawdat x Hana Hoda), OonyStud, Ägypten

Champion Stallions:

Gold: Jefara Al Shennawy (NK Mijamin x Eshk Al Mamlaka), Al Shennawy Stud, Ägypten
Silver: Ghazal Adel (Tabayan Al Qusar x Dahmaks Rawa), Abou Faisal Stud, Ägypten
Bronze: Hafid Al Lahab Al Mohandes (GR Lahariy Jumana Al Sharbatly), Al Mohandes Stud, Ägypten



THE 19TH INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ECAHO-B-SHOW



Photos:
Sabine Lens, Bettina Bost

Traditionally, the B Show in El Zahraa has a more international flair. This year, however, out of about 120 participants there were only five horses that were not Egyptian citizens, even if there were some more who had been imported from abroad and are now Egyptian-owned. Horses from all bloodlines are eligible for participation in the B Show. However, as almost 80% of the starters were from straight Egyptian bloodlines, the panel of judges consisting of Christiane Chazel from France, Christian Moschini from Italy, Janet Court from Great Britain, and Jaroslav Lacina from the Czech Republik, faced a not overly mixed range of types. Seen overall, the imported horses, mostly from Polish show lines, took the lead.

In spite of that, it was again the "King" who would have his triumph as a winner: Jefara Al Sennawy (registered as JEFARAA AL SHENNAWY in the Allbreed database) is a son of NK Mijamin, who in turn is a son of the Nagel-bred NK Hafid Jamil. Jefara went to Italy as a colt and was later exported to Egypt. His dam Eshk Almamlaka is a Kuhailan Rodan mare tailing from EAO lines, with her grandsire being Gad Allah. In Cairo, Jefara has been a star for some time, as these two shows are not the only occasions when he left the ring, much applauded by the spectators, as Gold Champion.



The Champions of the 19th International ECAHO -B- Show



Fillies Championship:

Gold Medal:	Eleaan Al Mamlaka (Edison x Ajendaa) Owner: Al Mamlaka Stud, Egypt
Silver Medal:	Heaven Negm (Mazim Al Bidayer x Nesma) Owner: Negm El Saharaa Stud Egypt
Bronze Medal:	Zina El Sheruk (Amirhom E. S. x BH American Girl) Owner: Al Qasr Al Malaky Stud, Egypt

Mares Championship

Gold Medal:	Ajendaa (Arbiteur x Gwynne) Owner: Al Mamlaka Stud, Egypt
Silver Medal:	Mystica Panama (WH Justice x Camaya) Owner: Abdel Seka, UAE
Bronze Medal:	Dahma Al Mohandes (G.R.Mostafa x KF Bold Lass) Owner: Al Mohandes Stud, Egypt

Colts Championship

Gold Medal:	Fawaz Al Mamlaka (PCF Vision x UL.SID Parma) Owner: Al mamlaka Stud, Egypt
Silver Medal:	Amour El Sheruk (Mirajh RCA x Ammourah) Owner: Al Misk Stud, Egypt
Bronze Medal:	Bebars Athbah (Eden C x Pomerania) Owner: Al Mamlaka stud, Egypt

Stallions Championship

Gold Medal:	Jefara Al Sennawy (NK Mijamin x Eshk Al Mamlaka) Owner: Aal AlSennawy Stud, Egypt
Silver Medal:	HA Justin (WH Justice x Bint Fariha Magidaa) Owner: Khattab & Tahany Stud, Egypt
Broze Medal:	Thee Epitome (The Seguel BCA x Imdala BCA) Owner: Al Bashawat Stud, Egypt



BREEDING HORSES UNDER THE PYRAMIDS OF GIZEH

Text and Photos: Monika Savier

Some of the international guests had never seen the pyramids. Unbelievable, as these are among the most well-known and oldest buildings that mankind ever erected and succeeded in preserving. They have been in place for about 4500 years, they are an UNESCO world heritage, and also the working area of many Arabian horses and camels. So we got on our way to Gizeh, located about 20 km west of the inner city of Cairo and on the opposite bank of the Nile river. The city of Gizeh counts almost four million inhabitants, so together with Cairo, this metropolitan region along the lower Nile sums up to almost 20 million people – not an easy task indeed for government and city administrations. At the time when the pyramids were built, Gizeh was a vast necropolis including the famous burial site that is marked by the statue of the Sphinx – a place that even today contributes to the fact that the region can make quite a part of its living from tourism. Arabian horses are part of this business, as the pyramids are surrounded by desert that lends itself for great riding tours on camels and horses. Not all the horses have a good life with that, so some of the riding centers there have experienced official interventions, but it's not rare to see well-kept Arabians for hire. Riding stables have a long tradition in Gizeh, as a hundred years ago, numerous horse breeders from the Cairo area re-located their studs into the fertile Nile river valley along the margins of the Gizeh desert so they would have more space and also the opportunity to go riding into the desert with their horses. Badeia Stables of the Marei family, Mrs Barbary, Khaled Bin Laden, El Badrawy Stud – to name just a few – and around a hundred more big and small breeders keep their horses there today, some in luxurious estates, some in simple stable buildings. Whatever the size of their premises: The connecting factor between all of these people is their passion for Arabian horses.



Shaikh Al Arab Stud in Gizeh: “The horses are part of our history and our Egyptian traditions.”

Raouf Abbas, the owner of Shaikh Al Arab Stud, is an old friend, and not just because he speaks German fluently, having earned an engineer’s qualification in mechanical engineering in Germany. He has also been an international ECAHO judge for years, attending shows in Europe and the Middle East and acting as a kind of interface, culturally speaking, between the European breeders and Cairo. His small stud in Gizeh, right on the margins of the desert, is his one great hobby and his passion, last not least because he loves to ride.

“I was born right between horses. My father, and my grandfather before him, had an Arabian horse stud in the northern part of Cairo. I spent all of my youth with horses. We breed, we break the horses to riding, we used to attend sports shows or to just go riding in the desert. That’s why we have always put our emphasis on athletic Arabians. I am also interested in shows, but not exclusively so. Horses are part of our history and of our Egyptian traditions.”

Some breeders from the Gizeh area join our group, we are served excellent home-made cake and an Egyptian breakfast. Next thing, the horses are presented and expertly commented on. It’s a pity we need to leave and visit the next stud.



Iman El-Essawy: a Lady Rides and Breeds Horses on the Edge of the Desert

Iman stables her horses in Raouf Abbas’s stud.
“I bought my first Arabian mare in 2007, just for riding. Eventually I decided to breed her, and from that, there was a growing desire to build up a small stud of my own. I am a banker, a Head of Division for a Kuwait bank, so unfortunately, I seldom have time enough to ride into the desert. I like breeding very much, and my mares have their origins in El Zahraa.”

AL AMIN STUD: “YOU CONTINUE TO LEARN FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION”

The jeep left Cairo, rapidly taking the Highway 6 in an eastern direction. Big cars on the fast lane, at high speed and apparently with the right of way built in, turning off into the country residence areas that are scattered through the sand desert along the highway here and there. After about 20 minutes, we leave the highway, taking a dusty road several kilometers through the Ahmed Oraby Resort, a protected oasis for wealthy people that houses, among others, several bigger studs. We are on our way to Al Amin Stud, the stud of Mr Mohamed Al Amin. We turn into a palm-lined road and see the vast premises ahead: a garden filled with palms, cacti, blossoming bougainvilleas and a lot of other exotic plants, all surrounded by stables and paddocks out of which many, many Arabian horses look at us with friendly faces. The stud was established in 2002. Mr Amin tells us: „I love Arabian horses, they are a cultural accomplishment of my ancestors and I want to continue this tradition. There is so much we owe to our horses. They have made our culture known to the world. This is why I decided 15 years ago to build a stud here that is really appropriate for horses.“ This is a promise he kept. He continues: „There are too many horses here, but of course, things go on being exiting. We continue to learn from generation to generation. I am glad I succeeded in more or less preserving those old Dahman Shahwan lines which El Zahraa had to sell almost completely, and I see that there are many breeders interested in those lines here in Egypt again.“ Since Mohamed Al Amin integrated the horses of Peter Gross, a German breeder of Arabian horses, and since both of them cooperated in defining a joint breeding program aimed at combining the classical EAO Arabians from El Zahraa with Peter Gross's type-selected Dahman Shahwans, Al Amin stud has gained recognition even outside of Egypt. Meanwhile, many years have gone by. There is no doubt that the fusion created a new, interesting type – horses that were already successful at shows – but the stud is bursting at the seams. Unfortunately, the passion for breeding was not regulated by a corresponding demand for horses. Now, a great auction is to be prepared for offering 50% of the almost 200 horses of the stud for sale. So we are going to get back to you soon, reporting the latest information on Al Amin Stud.



AL TAREK FARM: BREEDING WITH CRITERIA

Tarek Hamza is a member of a family that has successfully bred horses for generations. His great uncle Ahmed Pasha Hamza used to be minister of agriculture and supply during the regime of King Farouk. He owned the famous stallion Hamdan (Ibn Rabdan x Bint Radia). But his horses were sequestered at that time, after the coup d'Etat under the Nasser regime. Fatma Hamza, an aunt of Tarek's, has been heading her father's famous stud, Hamdan stables, still flourishing until today. His cousin Ahmed Hamza is a breeder of Arabian horses and was chairman of the EAO in El Zahraa state stud for several years. Tarek himself obtained the opportunity to study law at the Sorbonne university in Paris. Today, he is the Executive Director of the governmental program "Enhance business environment through better regulations". His horses are stabled in one of the most beautiful studs of Egypt, with Shaarawi Arabians of Yasmine and Ali Shaarawi on the Alexandria Road, to the north of Cairo. When we met, he told me: „I have been breeding Egyptian Arabians for ten years, but it's only just now that I got clear about the breeding goal I have, and what's the concept I can achieve it with.“ So I asked him:

Can you explain your concept to us?

“It took me some time to develop what I consider my breeding concept today. I am still learning and discovering something new everyday in this world of Arabian horse breeding. However, I have to acknowledge that while developing my own breeding concept, I have been inspired a lot by the renowned role model of El Zahraa state stud that has been able to breed and preserve Arabian horses for so many decades in a way that certain breeders would describe as a closed population breeding program. I have been very lucky and had the big opportunity to follow this breeding program closely and to study carefully the horses of El Zahraa State studfarm. I was able to see annually the new-born foals and observe their development later on, since I had my own horses kept at the boarding area of the farm for many years, which allowed me to become very familiar with numerous horses of the farm. Meanwhile, I have been visiting a lot of private breeders’ farms in Egypt and abroad and comparing various breeding concepts until I reached the idea that I would like to adopt a closed population breeding program as the one employed by El Zahraa state stud and some other private breeders like the famous Katharinenhof stud of Dr. Hans Nagel in Germany. I knew of course from the beginning that this may constitute a big challenge, but I feel a lot of attraction for this idea. Hence, I decided to select some mares to become the foundation of the herd, mares which I believe can contribute to the fulfillment of my own vision.

The essence of my breeding is based on four root mares from four different important families. They are El Khansaa tracing back to Venus; Omneya El Hayah tracing back to Halima; Bint Azziza Princess tracing back to Shahbaa by Hamdan; and SF Moon Maiden tracing back to Bint Maysa El Saghira. They are carrying three different coat colors - with two of them grays, one a chestnut and one a bay - so as to prevent, as much as possible, pigmentation problems later on. It should also be emphasized that three of these selected mares are by the same stallion, Rebat Al Tarek, who was a very special and correct stallion whom I lost at a very early age due to an accident. But he has been able to pass, in my opinion, certain good traits to these fillies that I would like very much to preserve. Additionally, one of the cornerstone mares of this breeding concept is a gray Hadban Enzahi mare, Al Gazyah, whom I bought as a young filly from the EAO auction. She traces back to the El Khansaa family which is the dam of Rebat Al Tarek. She proved herself a very good broodmare since she would always produce very good colts. The aim of my breeding concept is to breed within this group of horses to be able to maintain certain traits they have in common, to increase the homogeneity and the desirable characteristics among these horses which I personally admire as a breeder of Arabian horses. At the same time, I will keep a very alert eye on any undesirable trait that may emerge from time to time in such a closed breeding population, in order to either try to fix it quickly, or to eliminate it immediately out of the breeding herd.”

Thank you very much! This is an exciting concept. We are going to keep track of your approach and will go on reporting about it.



Badria Shaarawi



Asrar Al Amin



Fadeel Al Tarek



Al Gazyah EAO

Night Show with horse presentation of the Al Tarek Arabians.



Night Show at Yasmine and Ali Shaarawi Arabians

Beauty is not everything, but beauty is more important than is generally assumed. Eventually, it is what carries us, the breeders, and brings us together. The stud buildings of natural stone, encircled by a green oasis filled with trees carrying blossoms and fruit, with shrubs and flowers, and the Arabian horses of Ali and Yasmine – all of them display an impressive natural beauty and rich diversity that is hardly to be expected from a farm located along the margins of the desert. Most of the horses here have their origins in El Zahraa. This historic state stud is near and dear to Ali. For five years, together with two colleagues, he developed and put into practice a structured approach to breeding intended to carry out selection among the established breeding horses and their offspring, and to bring them into closer contact with the challenges of contemporary Arabian horse breeding – without extending or altering the closed breeding concept of the stud. The results are convincing and served to silence many of the critics of the historic institution. Ali Sharaawi is an international ECAHO judge and a member of the Executive Board of WAHO. His goal in breeding is to maintain the Straight Egyptian Arabian by means of a holistic approach. In Ali Sharaawi's own words: "El Zahraa is how I started my breeding, I acquired several horses from there. Now I keep two lines from El Zahraa. El Zahraa horses were the source of all Egyptian Arabian horses. This heritage we should cherish and preserve, it's our history. It's from EL Zahraa horses where all the famous stallions came from that changed the world of Arab horses. For me, this place is sacred! It is very important and needs to be protected. The horse lines need to be preserved, too, so everybody can make use of them and get help in his own breeding – they are the source, the wellspring of the Arabian horse that has spread everywhere like a river."



Nael Shaarawi



Sukkara Shaarawi



Mansoura Shaarawi



Isis Al Fouad



Banoura Shaarawi



Savir