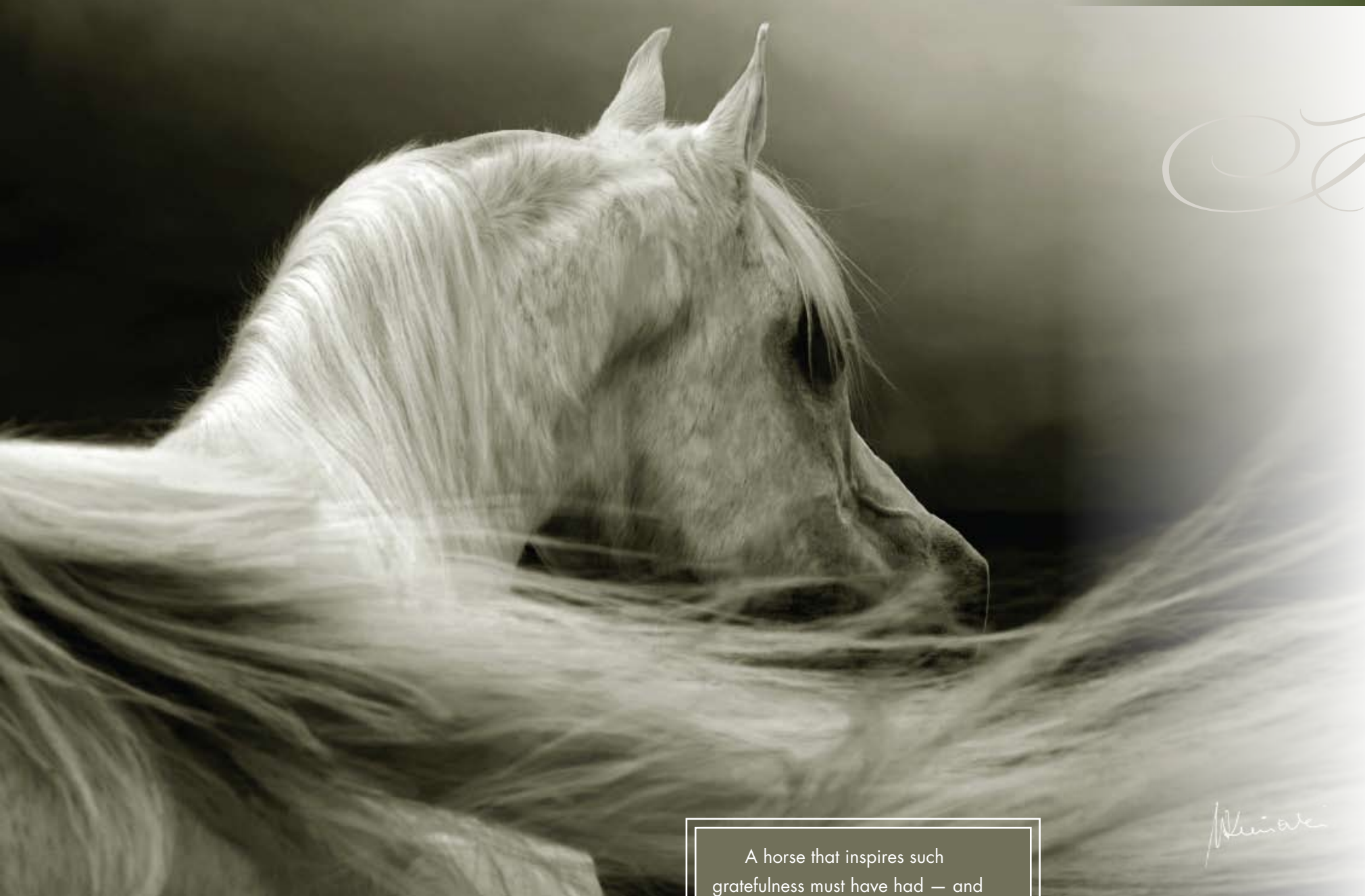


*SANADIK EL SHAKLAN

and OM EL ARAB INTERNATIONAL



THE END AND THE BEGINNING

He rests high on a hillside, under the delicate veil of branches of a California pepper tree, enveloped in eternal peace. Most days he walked here on the way to his turnout. Free your mind and you may envision the breeze catching wisps of his long white tail, tossing his mane above a perfectly arched neck, as the sun skips across his flawless silver back. No one can deny that *Sanadik El Shaklan has earned his peace. When he passed away late last summer, shock waves rippled throughout the world and many hearts were broken. How small this final resting place seems compared to the map of his influence. Because few, if any, stallions have touched as many human lives around the world, or advanced the breeding of so many horses.

Yet this is not a requiem, but a celebration of a proud stallion's life, purpose, and legacy. A stallion whom many call a legend.

THE BEGINNING

Where else would a proper fairy tale begin, but in the legendary Black Forest of Germany? The story began more than 25 years ago with the birth of *Sanadik El Shaklan on April 8, 1983, in Germany. Sigi Constanti (Sigi Merz at the time), with her husband Heinz, owned and operated the small but elite Om El Arab breeding facility, started with her parents. From these beginnings, a monumental name in the Arabian world emerged: the great grey stallion *El Shaklan (Shaker El Masri x *Estopa) — a revolutionary cross between the *Morafic son Shaker El Masri and Om El Arab foundation mare and Spanish-bred beauty *Estopa. A European and World Champion several times over, *El Shaklan by the age of eight, was already one of the leading sires in Arabian horse breeding. When he was bred to *Mohena, the daughter of another golden cross (the Egyptian stallion Hadban Enzahi and the Spanish mare Morsica V), the result was *Sanadik El Shaklan.

“When I saw his magnificent face I thought he was a filly because he was so pretty,” recalls Sigi. “He had a balanced body, great legs, and a long, elegantly shaped neck. He had a very fine feminine look as a foal, but his personality was all boy, and sometimes a little obnoxious. I knew *El Shaklan had a worthy son when I saw this colt.”

Enamored with the weanling *Sanadik, Sigi wanted to show the world, and entered him in the foal class at the Salon du Cheval in 1983. The decision to attend that event changed the course of Arabian horse breeding. “Doug Dahmen showed him for us in the colt class and won the prestigious title of World Champion Colt Foal,” continues Sigi. “Then a breeder from the U.S. saw *Sanadik at

A horse that inspires such gratefulness must have had — and likely will have forever — a profound bond and meaning to its human companions.

Therefore, although we are strangers to you, we wish to express our sympathy and hope gratefulness will win from sadness.

— Wim Helmink and staff, The Netherlands

PHOTO: WOJCIECH KWIATKOWSKI

Sprinkled throughout these pages are a few of the letters, calls, and text messages that Sigi and Janina received from around the world after *Sanadik El Shaklan passed away:



BY NANCY RYAN

the show and made a huge offer, \$175,000, to buy him. I remember we were sitting in our entertainment room and we were never offered so much for a foal. That was unheard of for any German breeder. But I am very emotional about my horses, and they were very surprised when I declined the offer. I decided to keep him for our breeding program.”

Not even a year old, *Sanadik followed his famous sire and was flown to the United States in April of 1984. “*El Shaklan made it possible for us to buy this beautiful farm in Santa Ynez, California, in 1983 where we still live today. Doug showed him at Nationals in Albuquerque in 1983, and we said if he went Top Ten or better we would buy the farm, and he went Top Ten — he was third. That was the year Arn-Ett Perlane (Perlezon x Shadylane Jupiter) was Champion and Ruminaja Ali (Shaikh Al Badi x Bint Magidaa) was Reserve Champion.”

Before *Sanadik’s arrival to the U.S., Sigi says, Doug Dahmen had been spreading the word about him. “Several breeders tried to buy him in this country. Then Sheila Varian came to see him at Santa Ynez and offered to buy half interest in *Sanadik. I agreed to share him with Varian Arabians. He stood at Varian’s every other year for a while.”

Right and below: *Sanadik El Shaklan (*El Shaklan x *Mohena), photographed in March of 2008, at the age of 25.

Bottom left: *Sanadik’s dam *Mohena (Hadban Enzahi x Morisca V).



PERSONAL UPHEAVAL

Life was good, until Sigi and Heinz parted ways. A bitter period of divorce followed. Heinz returned to Germany, and *El Shaklan was sold to Brazil in 1985. That’s also about the time when Sigi met Jay Constanti, and the couple added the suffix “International” to Om El Arab to create Om El Arab International in Santa Ynez.

*Sanadik resumed his show career. “We entered him in the Santa Rosa show in 1987 — that was Bey Shah country in those days — but we showed him anyway and he was named Supreme Champion,” says Sigi. “And the next show we took *Sanadik to was the West Coast Egyptian Event where he was again Supreme Stallion.”

*Sanadik went on to earn two Top Tens at Scottsdale, yet it was his value as the sire of national champions across the globe that set him apart. With 390

So many of the world’s best horses would never have been born without you and fantastic *Sanadik. *Sanadik is not gone, it’s just that we cannot see him. He is looking out through the eyes of all of his sons and daughters. It’s a look that no other horse has, with pride, gentleness, intelligence, and strength at the same time. You were the absolute right people to care for a stallion like him, to let him keep his magic way of looking in to the world! He has touched the hearts of everyone he met and we will never forget his gentle, calm, beautiful face, still with lots of fire and temperament.

— Johanna Ulstrom, Belgium

registered get around the world, his sons and daughters hold national championships in the competitive arenas of the U.S., Poland, Sweden, Germany, France, The Netherlands, Spain, Belgium, Finland, the Middle East, throughout South America, Australia, and New Zealand. They’ve won World, European championships, and Nations Cup championships, as well as Scottsdale and Regional titles.

“We sold frozen semen from *Sanadik to Europe,” says Sigi, “including the Polish studs of Janow and Michalow, a huge honor. One of the best to come out of Poland is *El Dorada PASB (*Sanadik El Shaklan x Emigrantka), one of the the world’s most decorated mares and most valuable Polish mares.” *El Dorada was European and Polish National Junior Champion, Polish National, All Nations Cup, and U.S. National Champion Senior mare, and European Senior Reserve Champion.

Greg Gallún showed *El Dorada to her U.S. National Championship in 2006. “*El Dorada is one of the finest mares in the world and one of the best horses I have ever been around,” he says. “*El Dorada has done a beautiful job of producing for Manny Vierra at Valley Oak Arabians who leased the mare, and there is a beautiful filly out of her at Lenita Perroy’s farm in Brazil by Enzo, and then there is the *El Dorada son El Palacio VO by Al Lahab, who has been champion or reserve every time out in Europe, Egypt, the Middle East — everywhere. I also showed Om El Jimala (*Sanadik El Shaklan x Om El Jazira), who was twice U.S. National Reserve Champion Senior Mare.” Greg has other *Sanadik-bred horses in his training barn, but more on that later.

In the U.S., *Sanadik also sired several Top Ten halter winners, plus two National Champion sons. One, Om El

Shahmaan (x Om El Shaina), was 2004 U.S. National Champion Stallion AOTH with Sigi’s daughter, Janina Merz, a follow-up to his 2003 Reserve Championship in that division. Shahmaan also has a U.S. National Top Ten Stallion title (third on the cards).

The *Sanadik son Kameron Bey (x Katrina Bey V) was U.S. and Canadian National Champion Gelding, owned by Tim and Cris Fissori, who purchased Katrina Bey V from Sheila Varian in foal with Kameron Bey. Kameron Bey also had Regional and Scottsdale wins in western and hunter pleasure. “Tim and I first encountered *Sanadik at Varian Arabians,” recalls Cris. “I fell in love with him from the moment he was turned out.” The Fissoris also bred the *Sanadik son Ffatal Attraction (x Falling In Love), who was exported to England and became 2004 British National Senior Champion Stallion for owners Delyth and Mark Gamlin.

Sigi points with pride to other international winners sired by *Sanadik. “Om El Extreem (x Om El Bint Shaina), is owned by Complutum Arabians of Spain and on lease to Sheikh Ammar bin Humaid Al Nuaimi. He was the Supreme National Champion Stallion of Spain, World Champion Most Classic at

*Sanadik El Shaklan



the Salon du Cheval, Reserve Champion Senior Stallion at the Al Khalediah Horse Festival, and International Junior Champion Stallion Elran Cup.”

Janina also notes that HRH Prince Khaled bin Sultan bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud’s Al Khalediah Farm owns the full sister to Om El Shahmaan, Om El Shadina, U.S. National Top Ten Mare, Elran Cup Reserve Champion Mare and Senior Champion Mare, Menton, France. And Al Khalediah also owns the Shahmaan daughter Om El Bernadette (x Om El Benedict), who won the Las Vegas Breeders Cup Junior Mare Championship, and was promptly named Junior Champion Filly at the International ECAHO A-rated Sharjah, UAE, show.

Another big winner in the Middle East is Ajman Stud’s

Eagleridge Passionata (*Sanadik El Shaklan x River Oak Dimity), 2007 Elran Cup Senior Champion Mare, 2008 Al Khalediah Arabian Horse Festival Reserve Champion Mare, and 2008 Qatar International Reserve Champion Senior Mare.

Sigi and Janina revel in the knowledge that *Sanadik get are establishing new programs for breeders around the world. “For example,” says Sigi, “we sold a mare named Om El Sanadiva (*Sanadik El Shaklan x De La Reina) to Ralf Heckenbuecker in Germany, and with that mare they have created a legacy.” A World and European Champion in her own right, Om El Sanadiva is also the dam of many champions including *FS Bengali (by Kubinec), a Scottsdale Champion and U.S. National Champion stallion in 2003. “She is impressive,” says Sigi. “She is a big, big mover, and a beautiful mare.”

Breeders around the world cherish their *Sanadik daughters. “They’re not for sale!” says Sheila Varian of her *Sanadik daughters. “I owned *Sanadik in partnership when he was young, and I kept those daughters and they have been wonderful mares. Sweet Sanadika V, Magdalena V, and La Kelila all produced national champions when bred to our stallions.” Sheila lost the beautiful La Kelila (x Keepsake V) last year, but three *Sanadik daughters remain. “I have Magdalena V (x Marigold V), Maya V (x Marigold V), and Sweet Sanadika V (x Sweet Inspiration V).” Sheila has nothing but praise for *Sanadik. “He certainly brought huge quality to all the breeding farms. He was a gentle horse and a very beautiful horse, and he mixed well. *Sanadik did not have to be bred within his own breeding lines. *Sanadik was a wonderful, beautiful horse, and his dam *Mohena really gave him such a warm personality.”

Down under in Bunyip, Victoria, Australia, Maria and Frank Daraio base their breeding program at Dara Park farm almost exclusively on *Sanadik El Shaklan. “Our senior stallion, Kublai Khan, is by the *Sanadik son SK Shakla Khan, imported from the U.S.” says Maria. “He was successfully shown as a youngster and is the sire of class-A supreme champions and Australian Top Ten horses as well as an Australian Reserve Champion saddle horse. Our junior sire is Om El Akid who is by the *Sanadik El Shaklan son Om El Shahmaan, and out

I have a *Sanadik son who is the love of my life. He is beautiful, smart, charismatic, talented; I could go on. I remember when I bought him, his breeder told me that she believed *Sanadik El Shaklan to be the sire of the century. I believe it, too.

— Peggy Shea, Otis, Oregon

Right: The 1999 stallion Om El Shahmaan (*Sanadik El Shaklan x Om El Shaina), U.S. National Champion Stallion AOTH and U.S. National Top Ten Junior Stallion.



of the Estopasan daughter Om El Akiva. Om El Akid is already a class A champion. We are certain that he will be a worthy progenitor of the *Sanadik El Shaklan line here in Australia.”

Erik Bjorksten of Lustigkulla Arabians, Helsinki, Finland, owner of the 2006 Finnish National Champion Mare Ferrara (*Sanadik El Shaklan x Fera), remarks: “When I sold my homebred show jumper in 1982, the money just covered a purebred weanling filly, but she combined the stallion Shaker El Masri and Hadban Enzahi and her dam line was related to *Carmargue. When covered with *Sanadik’s full brother El Mokari, she produced the unforgettable Fera, who, with *Sanadik El Shaklan and Estopasan, had three lovely daughters. After three generations of National champion mares, I can but wonder of the strength of the Om El blood, as when I now outcross with Russian stallions, the mares produce enormous riding horses oozing with type, which make head hunter and rider go wild.”

BEYOND HALTER

“*Sanadik’s get are so great under saddle in every discipline,” Sigi says. “We have English pleasure champions, endurance race champions, hunter champions — whatever we ask them to do, they do it.”

“These horses are not only beautiful and athletic, but they are family members,” adds Janina. “They are smart and intelligent and they are so much more. *Sanadik was the steadiest riding horse imaginable. He was sure-footed, smart, athletic, and had stamina. My personal riding horse is Om El Shahmaan. To be able to ride that horse every day is so wonderful. He is such a sure-footed, smart horse, and he just loves to go for a ride into the mountains.”

“Our horses are our life,” continues Sigi. “Everything we have or own they earned for us. We don’t treat them like commodities or things to sell. We have a close group of horses with us that we

This is the hardest part about this business — losing such important horses, whether they be important because they are so dear to us, or because they are so important to the breed. In the case of *Sanadik, he was clearly both.

— Bernie, Deena, Rich, Jeff, and Andrea Sloan, Birmingham, Michigan

It is with heartfelt sadness that I learn of your loss of your beloved *Sanadik El Shaklan. I’m so sorry I never got to meet him personally; it would have been a dream come true for me. From the first days I became involved with Arabians, I knew who HE was. He will never be forgotten.

— Susan Taylor, Houston, Texas

Top: The 1998 mare Om El Shadiva (*Sanadik El Shaklan x Om El Shaina).

Bottom: The *Sanadik El Shaklan son Om El Exquisit out of Om El Bint Shaina (*Sharem El Sheikh x Om El Shaina).





*Sanadik was a very special horse. The kind you meet and never, ever forget. He was not only the epitome of what an Arabian stallion should look like, or the most influential stallion of all time, but he was also a friend and a pleasure to those who had the privilege to meet and work with him.
— Ilze Beukes (van Dyk), South Africa

*SANADIK
EL SHAKLAN
CHAMPION GET AND
GRANDGET:



Om El Sanadiva (x De La Reina), World Champion Mare, Elite Mare of the German Arab Horse Society, and European Champion Mare.



*El Dorada (x Emigrantka), European and Polish National Junior Champion, Polish National, All Nations Cup, U.S. National Champion Senior Mare, and European Senior Reserve Champion.



Om El Jimala (x Om El Jazira), twice U.S. National Reserve Champion Senior Mare.

Om El Shahmaan, left, and below with Janina up.



DARRYL LARSON PHOTO

would never, ever, think of selling. We have sometimes great prices offered and sometimes the offers are just crazy, but we have to say ‘no.’ I can say ‘no’ very easily, even to very high offers.”

Adds Janina, “We can look at each other at times like that and we know exactly what to say.” Sigi and Janina are fiercely loyal to their broodmares. “If a mare produces well for us,” Sigi says simply, “she will die with us.” At times Janina has found it almost unbearable to part with horses. “At times it is very difficult not to burst into tears, but then I’ll see them in their new homes, and see how happy they are and how happy they make their owners.”

“You get a very good value when you buy a horse from us,” says Sigi. “Especially when you think of how many Om El mares have created dynasties of their own for their new owners. It is gratifying to see the extent of the Om El influence. For instance, even the reigning U.S. National Champion Stallion DA Valentino (Versace x DA Love) has *El Shaklan in his bloodlines, through Precious As Gold, the dam of his sire Versace. The 2007 World Junior Champion Mare Venetia (Versace x Giavanna), bred by Rojo Arabians and owned by Al Shaqab Farm, is double *El Shaklan. And WH Justice, a champion across Europe and a successful sire of champions — is out of an *El Shaklan-bred mare, Vona Sher-Renea.”

Besides their obvious deep feelings and sensitivities toward the horses, Sigi says she is a believer in unspoken communication, telepathy, and has even



Om El Extrem (x Omel Bint Shaina), Supreme National Champion Stallion of Spain; World Champion Most Classic at the Salon du Cheval; International Junior Champion Stallion, Elran Cup; and Orientalica Supreme Champion Stallion.



Fatal Attraction (x Falling In Love), Senior Champion Stallion, Malvern.



Om El Bernadette (Om El Shahmaan x Om El Benedict by *Sanadik El Shaklan), Las Vegas Breeders Cup Champion Junior Mare; Junior Champion Filly at the International ECAHO A-rated Sharjah, UAE, show; and first place Three-Year-Old Filly, Qatar Championships.



Om El Shadina (x Om El Shaina), Elran Cup Reserve Champion Mare; Senior Champion Mare, Menton, France; and first place 11 Years Old and Older Mares, Qatar Championships.



Eagleridge Passionata (x River Oak Divinity), Elran Cup Senior Champion Mare, Al Khalediah Arabian Horse Festival Reserve Champion Mare, Qatar International Reserve Champion Senior Mare, and Dubai Reserve Champion Senior Mare.



Ferrara (x Fera), Finnish National Champion Mare.

My first introduction to *Sanadik was in 1992 when I was an apprentice at Om El Arab. I would walk past his stall 100 times a day and admire his beauty. Little did I know that less than ten years later I would become the proud owner of one of his daughters out of my own mare. She is called El Nadika Rose and is my pride and joy. She not only is a stunning mare herself, but she has also turned into a phenomenal broodmare producing quality foals every time.

Not only was *Sanadik a special and kind stallion, but he was also a phenomenal sire.

— Liezl Els, Agmal Arabians, South Africa



Left to right: Om El Shaina (*Carmargue x *Estopa), Om El Jimala (*Sanadik El Shaklan x Om El Jazira), and Om El Beneera (Sharem El Sheikh x *Estopa).

employed animal psychics to better understand her horses. Not one to believe in mere coincidence, she finds a certain significance surrounding some of the events that happened at the time that *Sanadik passed away last year. “It was a very difficult day,” she recalls. “It was August 23 and Jay had just told us that he was leaving the program and would not be coming back. That same night, *Sanadik was down and dying. And he died the morning of the 24th.”

THE BEGINNING AGAIN

The pair have put all the tears behind them and are moving on. Fifteen *Sanadik daughters, four sons, Sigi’s riding gelding, and many grandget help them carry on. In 2008 *Sanadik blessed Om El Arab with seven daughters. “His gift to us was all these fillies,” says Sigi. “Looking ahead, Shahmaan is our

I met *Sanadik El Shaklan ten years ago and started an amazing journey that would set my life around a family line that to this day excites the inner core of my being. Meeting and working with *Sanadik changed my liking into a deep passion. He was incredible to look at, the way he always held himself, with so much authority and yet a disposition that made you as a mere groom, his friend. Genetically he mastered the art of Arabian type and his foals have all inherited that special charm.

— Pauline Mostere, South Africa

main stallion, and we have a colt who will be two at the end of June and we named him Om El Bellissimo (Om El Shahmaan x Om El Benedict), and he has all the attributes we like. I would have to say this is a colt like no other for our breeding program. He has a gorgeous face, beautiful big eyes, very correct legs, and a nice upright long neck. I call him the universal colt. He has *Sanadik on both sides. Bellissimo is unique and valuable to us because he is not replaceable.”

Greg Gallún, who has Bellissimo in training, agrees. “They’re telling me that Bellissimo is the best colt they have ever produced,” remarks Greg, “and I see that. He is a beautiful colt. He has a beautiful long, arched neck, a great ‘Om El’ topline, and a very pretty head. I have really high hopes for him.”

Also with Greg is Om El Shahmaan, who was recently named Arabian Breeders World Cup Champion Stallion AOTH with Janina. “Shahmaan is one of the most correct horses I have ever seen,” says Greg. “He looks beautiful standing in front of the crowd, beautiful walking out of the pool — he is just a wonderful elegant stallion with a great, great temperament.”

But Greg is head over heels in love with a filly Sigi and Janina sent him. “I have Om El Excella by Al Lahab out of the *El Shaklan-bred mare Omel Bint Shaina. I love her. She has a ‘20’ head, that Om El size — at two, she is bigger than all of my three-year-olds. She is going to do great things. Everyone who sees her is just blown away by her look. She is the kind of horse that will do well anywhere in Europe and could show here with equal results.” So the future is as bright as the Southern California sunshine.

“I wish Sigi and Janina well,” says Sheila Varian. “They have been always wonderful to work with — always first class.”

Greg Gallún sums it up this way: “I have traveled a lot more around the world the last five years than I have in the past 20, and at just about every farm I go to, there is some horse that traces back to Om El Arab International. And 100 percent of the shows I go to, have a horse with an ‘Om El’ in its pedigree. What greater testament is there to a program’s popularity and influence than that?”

“It is a whole life,” says Sigi. “I don’t call it a job — it’s a whole life, a *way* of life. But there’s nothing else we’d rather be doing. We’re grateful to all our horses, and especially to *Sanadik, for making so much beauty possible.”

We are honored to have so many of *Sanadik’s sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters at our farm. They are a joy beyond compare and are the cornerstone of our breeding program. We will say our humble prayers and know he is in heaven with those that went before and yet I know he will keep watch over you and yours from above, and will always hold a special place in our hearts.

— Tiina Burkhart and family, Classicala Farm, Inc.,
Ottawa Lake, Michigan

