

Press Information

Vienna, December 1st, 2022

The Spanish Riding School and its Lipizzan Stud Piber, birth place and home of the world famous white stars, are honored by the UNESCO for a second time: The knowledge concerning the breeding of Lipizzan horses has been added to the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on December 1st, 2022.

During the meeting of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage held in Rabat, Morocco, the knowledge concerning the breeding of Lipizzan horses has officially been recognized as intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

In December 2015, Classical Horsemanship and the High School of the Spanish Riding School have already been inscribed into the UNESCO list. With this second listing, the Spanish Riding School and its stud farm Piber have become the only institution worldwide that is represented twice, with two separate cultural elements.

[UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity: “Knowledge concerning the breeding of Lipizzan horses”](#)

[Knowledge concerning the breeding of Lipizzan horses - Österreichische UNESCO-Kommission](#)

The knowledge concerning the breeding of Lipizzan Horses

The multinational submission of the practised tradition and proficiency in breeding the oldest cultural horse race together with Slovenia, Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania and Italy proves once more the connecting element of the unique Lipizzans.

With the world-famous performances of the High School in the magnificent Baroque Winter Riding Hall in Vienna, the Spanish Riding School’s Lipizzans are the most widely known horses of the breed.

“The Lipizzans unite people from all over the world in admiration of their elegance and talent, but they are also a symbol for the overcoming of conflicts and for the collaboration of nations. The most recent proof of this beautiful ability is the successful inscription into the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity“, says Alfred Hudler, Chief Executive Officer of the Spanish Riding School.

For more than a hundred years, all School Stallions of the Spanish Riding School have unanimously been bred in the Lipizzan Stud Piber, which offers a unique landscape for a unique horse. The west-styrian hills have proven to be peak quality for breeding horses. Soil properties, climatic as well as the structural conditions create ideal circumstances for the upbringing of the horses.

The original studbooks are kept in the stud farms archives and date back to the year 1827. For safety reasons, they have always been written in duplicates: One was kept in the Bureau of the Stable

Masterin Vienna and the other in the Imperial Stud Farm Lipica. Thanks to the written memories of one of the former heads of the stud farm in Lipica, the Spanish Riding School has breeding records going back even further, up until 1740. Erwin Movia, stud manager of Piber, as well as the state stud farm of Monterotondo continue these traditional studbooks. Thanks to these records every Lipizzan horse's lineage can be traced back for more than two centuries. Each horse (stallion and mare) can be connected back to one of the founding horses of the Lipizzans. The studbooks are carefully handwritten to this day, since the 1980s they have been digitalized as well.

“We collect and archive all relevant information that help us achieve our breeding objectives. The goal is to generate healthy, high-performance horses that represent the traditional Lipizzan breed type while ensuring maximum genetic diversity”, Erwin Movia explains.

The collaboration of nations is an integral part to achieve these goals and maintain the breed's uniqueness.

Nowadays the Spanish Riding School counts almost half a millennium. Its creation and blossoming have always been a result of passionate horse lovers and proficient riders. Everyone who has ever witnessed its beauty and culture that has been passed down for centuries understands why this unique equestrian institution still fascinates people from all over the world.

For further information

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