



DVD If Horses Could Speak / Dr. Gerd Heuschmann

Introduced by Barbara Schnabel



DVD 'If Horses Could Speak' – what riders have to know to keep their horses healthy. Dr. Gerd Heuschmann – length, including bonus material 75 minutes. Publisher: Wu Wei, 2008

“We are all the advocates of the horses. We must be prepared to speak out and to let our actions speak for us. It is up to us to stand up for the horses and simply leave a tournament when the horses we see are tense and at the mercy of the reins.

Every one of us can make a contribution towards liberating horses from this vicious circle.

It would take courageous and energetic action to insure that equestrianism regains its rightful status a fascinating and favourable sport.”

These are the final words of the Dr. Gerd Heuschmann DVD 'If Horses Could Speak'. And thus we begin our introduction of this 75 minute plea for riding that is true to the horse and fair.

And no, it is not that easy for a rider to get involved with the

horse's biomechanics. It is an elaborate, tiring and difficult task. That is the reason why Dr. Gerd Heuschmann and the Wu Wei publishing company hit a homerun with this video. This well structured film should be watched more than once. The many pictures and fantastic digital animations – when have we every seen this before? – are readily understandable. They impress why wrong riding – no matter what discipline because the biomechanics of an Icelandic horse are the same as those of a warmblood – has to lead to permanent damage. Many riders will wonder about the anatomical facts they might not have envisioned quite like this before. The first part of the film shows us at length and with impressive three dimensional animations the anatomical basics we need to appreciate the pictures in the second half. There we see a young warmblood in walk, trot and canter. These basic gaits are first explained and evaluated, and then impressively demonstrated with positive and negative examples. The rider does not shy away from using his hands to show how bringing the horse in too tight, causing it to go lateral, explains how and why collection is often misunderstood. A déjà vu we have unfortunately seen too many times already.

Well known horse people, such as Johann Riegler, Peter Kreinberg and Prof. Heinz Meyer are given a voice at length. Their voices are not loud; they are soft spoken and reflective, and also consider their own actions critically. And because of that, they are that much more impressive.

The **Tölt.Knoten** conclusion: This film has to be seen. It should be recommended to every horse friend, and every rider – beginner and advanced alike, every teacher, trainer, coach and every judge. Especially our young riders who often demonstrate a natural shyness towards difficult topical books – they often have to read and learn enough for school after all – may find a repeatable access to more horse friendly riding via the animations. The final word we give to the great and honoured hypnotologist Hans Heinrich Isenbart who unfortunately passed away Christmas 2011. He also narrates the introduction and epilogue in the film:

And please, do not forget the horses!

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