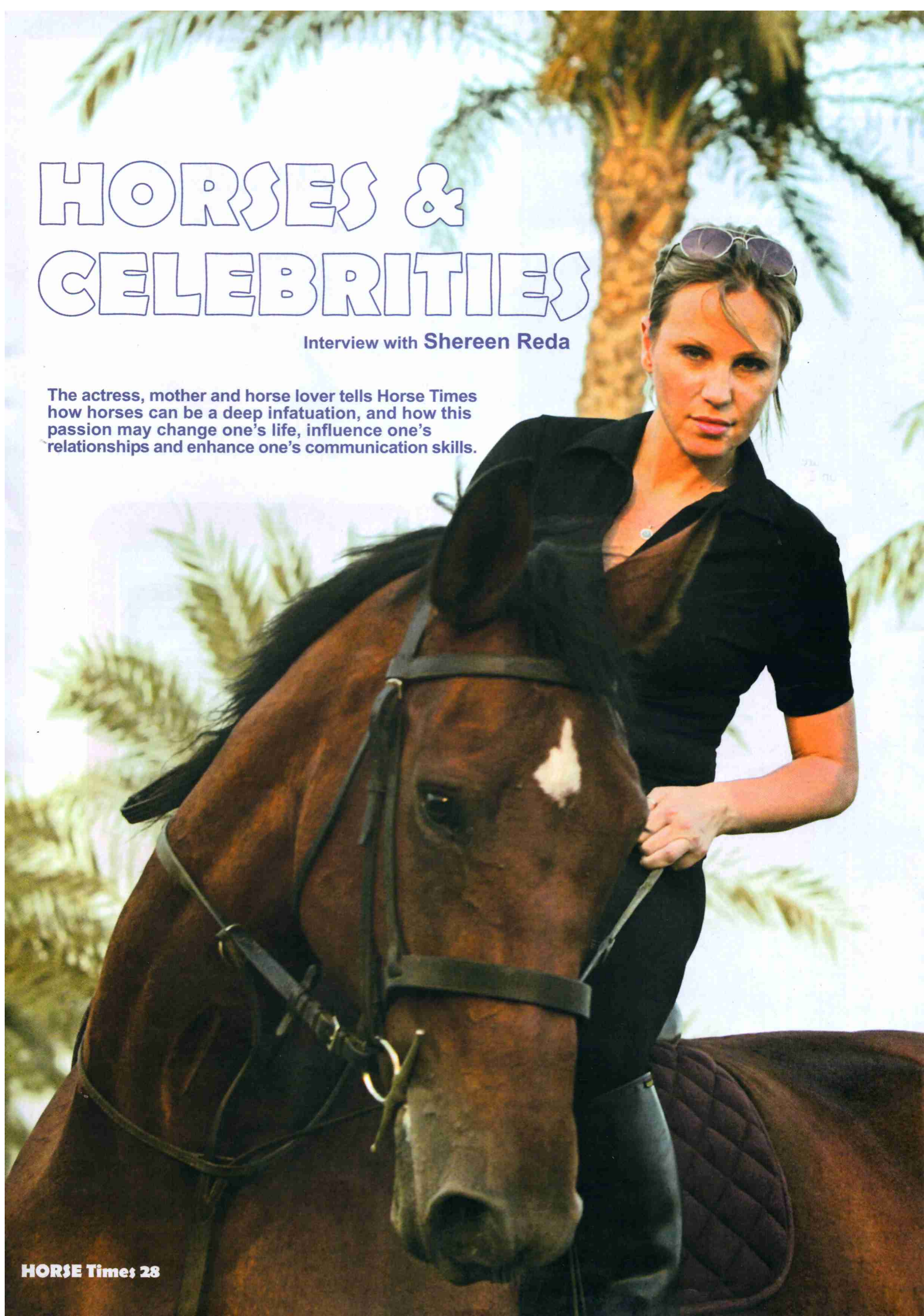


HORSES & CELEBRITIES

Interview with **Shereen Reda**

The actress, mother and horse lover tells Horse Times how horses can be a deep infatuation, and how this passion may change one's life, influence one's relationships and enhance one's communication skills.



“The experience of being around a horse is what teaches us how horses feel. It’s simply a deep worthwhile feeling”



By Nada H. Abdelmoneim
Photos by Cris Bouroncle

How did your passion for horses start?

It all started through my father actually. He loved photography and he would take me to the Gezira Club for photo sessions. He would take pictures of everything including me on a horse or a pony. From there on, I started to ride and I never stopped.

Did your passion develop into serious riding or was it a hobby?

It was never about competition because I never liked competition! It was all about passion. I tried however to make a business out of it by breeding just for the sake of the joy of owning a horse, although I didn’t invest much time in this course. I had a foal that died and it was very disappointing and heart breaking for me and I couldn’t handle the pressure after that.

Does your daughter ride?

I used to take her to the club since she was 2 and had her wonder around the tracks just to get a basic idea. When she was old enough to start riding, I made the mistake of coaching her myself, wanting to teach her everything too soon, so she hated it. I’m not so sure what I completely did wrong, but it was a “no” for her.

Are you carrying out any movie roles that are related to horses?

No not really. But at the moment I’m doing a role where I’m supposed to be a cop (smiling), so in this movie I’ll be riding. It’s very hectic, but it’s so much fun.

How do you feel about local film productions with horses in them?

Sadly they are a bit disappointing. If someone will take on a huge production then they might as well do it right. For example, I am not going to pretend that I am a painter, so why not get someone else to do it. It really looks bad on the screen when someone is riding and you can tell that they don’t know how to ride. And the qualities of the horses used are bad, because they just do not know what lies beyond bad. It can be done abroad with the tip-top actors where they spend years training. Tom Cruise moved to Japan 2 years before he started filming ‘The Last Samurai’ in order to learn the language and see how the Samurai lived. So, much training is

required in order to produce something that is rewarding for the audience.

What about Syrian productions with horses? Aren’t they good?

They put a huge effort into making extraordinary series that would be something to watch. The actors don’t seem like expert riders, but they chose their horses well and I wish this can be done here.

Do you have a favourite horse?

Yes I did, I had a beautiful white horse called ‘Waleed’ that I took from a friend of mine. He was neglected so much so I took care of him and groomed him well. He was so beautiful I can’t even describe his beauty! I kept him for a long time then all of sudden he died, and I watched him die; it was tragic!

Would you like to be more involved with horses?

I’d love to, but I can’t press on that because like I said, horses are a passion. Nobody should get involved with horses because they think they can ride or win a trophy. On the other hand, I just have 2 horses and I will not sell them unless I know the buyer very well. It’s all about the love of breeding, which is even better than competition.

Has your passion for horses had any kind of influence in you?

Yes. I have a 20 year old horse, ‘Adham’ who is so mischievous! He bites me! This is why I bought him though. I was looking for a beautiful horse to buy and I saw this beautiful mare, but I didn’t like her character. ‘Adham’ was naughty, and I liked that. The first time I tried to ride him he knocked me off in the air. But I still liked him so I decided to literally live with him in the stables for 3 days. After that, this devil would do nothing but rub his face on mine. Horses feel us, and they know what’s going on. The experience of being around a horse is what teaches us how horses feel. It’s simply a deep worthwhile feeling. ■

