

## Mecklenburger Pferde - September 2017

The State Stud Redefin in Mecklenburg West-Pomerania is not only a fertile soil for horse breeding - other talents thrive here as well. One of those talents is the artist Wietje Nolte who still has close ties to the stud. In August 2013, shortly before the annual stallion parades, she found her way to Redefin and along with her a suitcase packed with pencils, sketchbooks and lots of creative ideas. The reason behind it all was an internship in the stud's administration as part of her Bachelor studies at the Dutch University of Applied Sciences Van Hall Larenstein. In January 2014, the official internship came to an end but Wietje decided to stay and wrote her Bachelor thesis in Redefin. A visit with the artist...

Doctoral candidate at the Leibniz-Institute for Farm Animal Biology in Dummerstorf. That sounds more like lab work, tests, white coats and somehow like fever thermometers - like science, but not oil paint, water colours, charcoal and art. Wietje Nolte has a full-time job in the research institute. She did her Master's degree at the University of Rostock and wrote her thesis about the *Computation of population structure of the German Warmblood based on genomic data*. Her Bachelor thesis at Van Hall Larenstein orbited around the *Botanical composition of continuously grazed horse pastures in Mecklenburg-West Pomerania in relation to stocking density*. Final grade: A! In a nutshell, the young livestock researcher is hardworking. And she draws...and, oh boy, she does!

Between research, result evaluation and equestrian breaks on horseback, Wietje started to draw ever so often and let her creativity flow onto paper. She started to sketch equine motives that surrounded her - in the beginning mostly small pencil drawings but soon enough she started with water colours and other techniques. First motives were, amongst others, the stallion D'Olympic and scenes from the stallion parades. The art work became more and more skilled and rich in detail and so it happened that the first commission pieces were ordered. Together with her former room mate the first website was built and within months more and more riders and horse owners showed interest in her work. At first she mainly completed horse portraits with pencil, charcoal, pastels or water colour and over time other commissions came in, mainly for dogs, cats and occasionally people.

In September 2014, Wietje Nolte moved to Rostock for her Master's degree. There, she acquired new techniques and had her first go on the easle with oil paints. Again, the first piece was a state stud showstar: the stallion Sergeant Pepper.

Wietje Nolte started to compile her first calendar with equine motives and designed postcards for the State Stud Redefin while painting one commission piece after the other, naturally. Next to that, also to get a change of scenery, the young artist started to draw landscapes and wildlife animals. Again, much to the pleasure of her customers.

Recently, Wietje Nolte has made one coloured pencil drawing of a bird per week with the goal to set up a calendar for 2018. Since 2014 she has made over 130 commission pieces. At first mostly for regional clients, but soon enough her paintings found their way to the south of Germany and by now „original Noltes“ can also be found in Switzerland, Austria, Norway, Ireland, the United States and England.

(original text by Alexandra Wegner)