

FRANK GRELO

Book Review

Frank Grelo, the riding master of Cedar Mills Riding School, is elegantly portrayed in this 160-page book with full color process photos. Over 35 wonderful photos grace the pages of this well-written and creatively constructed book. As a passionate Iberian Horse supporter, I am always thrilled to find additional information in print or on film on these magnificent horses and aspects of their training. This book though NOT about Iberian horses, met and even exceeded my expectations. I would say that most of the lovely photos feature Lusitanos, but this book was not actually about horses of Iberian decent. From the very first chapter, Bit By Bit reads as a story – not as a “how to” book. The rhythmical and humorous style the author uses in conveying her experiences at the Cedar Mills Riding School keep the reader entertained while also educating the mind. I got my hands on this book during a very busy deadline, so did not have much time to sit down and read it cover to cover – which is how I prefer to review books. With my schedule and all the meetings I had, I found myself dragging the book all over the countryside until it has become dog-eared and worn out. But I just can not leave it alone! Every single time I picked it up and read a chapter I’d end up kicking myself in the behind for not getting out to the barn and putting some of what I was reading about into practice. I became impatient with my deadline and wished I could be out “communing softly” with my own beasties. This book is inspiring. Living in California with plans to move to Pennsylvania in the near future I am looking forward to being closer to Cedar Mills and maybe getting the opportunity to go up and watch Mr. Grelo ride and perhaps even take a lesson.

The video is equally inspiring, but I hope that the people at Cedar Mills will make more in-depth videos in the future. Both the video and book work well together to tell the story of what Frank Grelo is all about. Both inspire the viewer to ride with more “feel” and less force, and both are very worth adding to any horseman’s collection of fine reading and viewing materials.

I do not believe in gurus, but I do believe that there are a VERY small number of men and women out there who do ride with such an inner peace and grace that they become artists. An artist produces their best “work” only when they are creating for themselves and not for capitalistic fulfillment. These rare individuals are breathtaking to watch and behold – no mater what their medium should be. It is just possible that Frank Grelo is one of these artists. I look forward to finding out someday. Until that time, I will continue to carry around my beat-up and dog-eared copy of his book.

-Heather Orton (published December 2007)