

# **Vanessa Voltman**

## **Early life**

Vanessa Voltman, born in the Netherlands on June 6th 1972, started riding horses when she was 11 years old. Her parents gave her a first pony at the age of 13, for which she had to do all the chores and was responsible completely by herself.

## **Education**

After high school Vanessa started her career in business with a bachelors degree in Public Relations and Communication and Economy. She also pursued a business degree in Horsemanship. After working in the business of her father for a while, Vanessa decided she wanted to work full time with horses. She successfully completed a 3-year course of the Dutch National Equestrian Association for the discipline dressage and became a licensed instructor and trainer in 1996.

During this education she worked and was instructed by several well known Dutch dressage trainers such as Piet Oothout, Johan Hamminga, Ger Geertsen, and Rien van der Schaft, so she was able to experience a lot of difference training methods, all of them based on the traditional Dutch and German classical system.

## **Experience**

In 1992 she spend some time in Hong Kong at the equestrian facility at Kuolung Park (where the 2008 Equestrian Olympics was organized), part of a project to give Thoroughbreds off-the-racetrack a second career as a dressage horse under the supervision of Mrs. Allison King, FEI judge.

In 1996 and 1997 she worked with Ger Geertsen at De Molshoop, a dressage training facility with upper level horses. In the years to follow she worked with several trainers and dealers to train younger dressage prospects and young stallions to prepare them for the selection process for approved stallions in the Netherlands. Also, she competed at the FEI level with several horses, some of them owned by others, some of them her own. In this period she was trained by Mrs. Else Mouw, an FEI judge and judge at the Championships for Young Dressage Horses in Germany.

Starting in 2001, Vanessa started her own business, buying and selling young dressage prospects and preparing them for sale. At the same time she was fully employed at the Animal Control Service of the Dutch Society for Animal Welfare, first as incident room controller, later as Inspector in the field. However, most of the time was still spent with her horses and guided by Mrs. Else Mouw.

## **In the United States**

In 2005 Vanessa came to the United States with several Dutch horses, which she showed at local shows in Michigan. Many of the horses have been sold now to several dressage riders in Michigan.

Currently she lives in Fenton, Michigan, and is the resident trainer and instructor at Hunt Meadows Farm.

Finally, together with Albert Gesierich, a dressage trainer and native of Austria, Vanessa runs a training facility with their own horses, mostly imported from Europe.