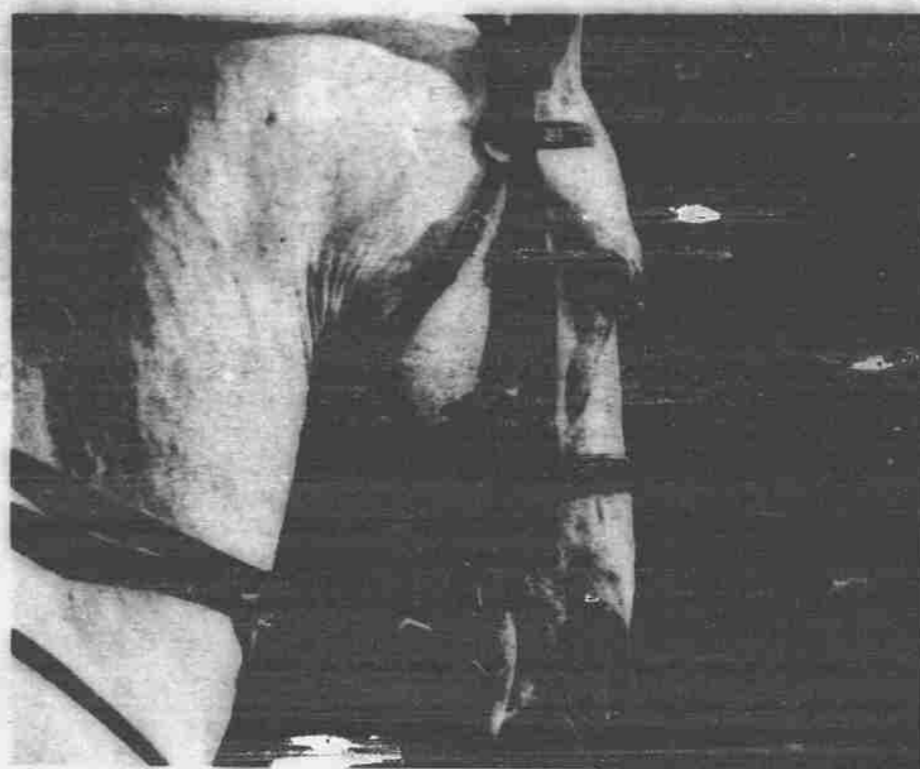


## EQU



American schoolchildren voted the horse the official American bicentennial animal. Several Lippizan stallions, proving worthy of the title, presented a bicentennial show last weekend at Pershing Auditorium.

The Lippizan stallions are immigrants to the United States. The horses were bred 400 years ago by Archduke Maximilian of Austria. He bred the horses for use in a military riding school in Vienna.

The horses gained Americans' attention during World War II. During the war, the horses were hidden across Europe for safekeeping from the Russians and Americans.

At the request of a Spanish colonel, Gen. George S. Patton, commander of the American Army at the time, sent a tank battalion across Europe to round up the horses and return them to the riding school.

The stallions caught the attention of many younger Americans through Walt Disney's movie, "Miracle of the White Stallions".

The horses have been in America for the past 20 years, according to John Finley, director and general manager of the Lippizan Stallion Show.

American horse breeders and trainers buy them from Austria, he said, adding that there are about 800 Lippizans in the United States now.

Gary Lashinsky, who owns the Lippizan Stallion Show, maintains training stables for the stallions in Charleston, W. Va., Finley said.

Fourteen stallions and three Andalusian horses are on the road for the show, Finley said. Andalusians are Spanish-bred horses.

Finley said Lashinsky purchases the horses for about \$10,000 when they are four years old. After they are fully trained (at about eight years old) the stallions are priceless, Finley said.

The stable also provides training for many of the stallions' riders, he added. The horses and riders are taught the art of dressage—an intricate method of queuing the horse through imperceptible thigh, shin, knee and hand movements, Finley explained.

The result is a performance less showy but more disciplined and refined than circus horse shows, he said.

Finley said it takes about four years to train a horse in the art of dressage. Rider training time varies, he added.

One rider in the show, Jean-Marc Oppenheim, said he studied as an apprentice in dressage for three years in Vermont. He said he has ridden part-time professionally for the past six years.

"I am about one-third as good as I could be," Oppenheim said. He described ultimate training as being able to compete in dressage at the Olympic Games.

But horses are secondary to him, Oppenheim said. He explained that riding in the show is his summer job. During the year he is a student at Columbia University in New York.

Getting a doctorate degree in history is most important to him right now, he said, but added, "at \$225 a week, traveling with the show is not a bad summer job."

Horses are not secondary to at least one of the riders in the show. Edith Evans, owner and rider of the three Andalusians in the show, said as long as she works, it will be with horses.

Evans said she began riding horses when she was four years old. For several years in Mexico, she practiced the art of rejoneo, bullfighting on horseback, she said.

The dangerousness of the art and several injuries made her decide to ride her horses in shows, Evans said.

The Lippizan Stallion Show, 25 persons and 17 horses in all, travel 48 weeks of the year. The show, in its sixth year, travels throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and South America, Finley said.