

Morgans In Snow

By Andy Illes

We are honored to have this photo essay, our fourth by Andy, to share with you in this winter issue of *TMH*. When we approached Andy in the winter of 2015 to ask if she'd be interested in shooting this for us she graciously accepted the assignment. The result is this collection of stunning images that capture joyous and playful Morgan spirit.

We asked Andy to share a few of her thoughts and experiences photographing Morgans in snow with us.

TMH: What's magical to you as an artist about snow and horses?

Andy Illes: Well, for me, anytime a Morgan is in front of my lens, I feel like magic is about to happen! Snow is such a wonderfully different medium to shoot in. I love a Morgan who is covered in layers of winter hair and furry ears. I love the off-season because so many in our breed truly enjoy the winter—trail rides, turn-out and just being a horse. It's so relaxed and fun.

TMH: We live in the Northeast. Snow is part of our life, but it's underused in equine photography. Why is this?

Andy Illes: I think for many, photographs are reserved for perfect temperatures, a sleek and shiny coat and a fully clipped show horse ready to hit the ring. Of course that lends itself to a gorgeous image and let me tell you—winter shooting is not for the faint-hearted. It's freezing cold out, windy, and with sun bouncing off the white snow acting as a reflector. It can be tricky to get the lighting just right. There have been shoots where I am standing thigh-high in snow for six to eight hours. For me, the results are well worth the frostbite.

TMH: What are the challenges of photographing horses in snow?

Andy Illes: The challenges are very interesting. The sun is a big one—the reflection off the snow can be very challenging, so picking the right spot and angle is paramount. The other big one is the cold! Standing in deep snow for hours on end is tiring. Even with layers on layers of clothes and special shooting gloves, I still freeze!

TMH: Does shooting in the snow demand any special considerations for your equipment? What equipment do you use? (Photography groupies will want to know.)

Andy Illes: The biggest consideration for equipment is the cold and wet. The lower the temperatures the more careful you need to be. When I shoot in temperatures that are in the teens or even below zero, you need to pay special attention to transition from the uber cold to the warmth of your house or car. When I shoot at a farm, I leave my camera out in the same temp between horse sessions. If you bring your camera inside, condensation will begin to build up inside your lens and you will be unable to use your camera until you regulate it. When condensation builds up, I usually keep

a hair-dryer handy so I can dry if needed. Another consideration is that your camera's shutter will begin to slow down when it gets below zero. Just be prepared to accommodate that in your action shots when shooting in sub-zero! If it is snowing while you are shooting, be sure to get your camera a rain hood to protect it. It will be a go-to for you when shooting in snow or rain.

Winter shoots also demand the right gloves! Be sure to invest in a good pair of shooting gloves to protect your hands from frostbite.

TMH: Do horses with different personalities act differently in the snow? (Like did some aged gelding act like a three-year-old, that kind of thing.)

Andy Illes: Yes! Every horse is different when they are cold and when the footing changes. Some are super-careful in the icy footing and some are like little kids—running, rolling, and playing in the snow. I love the spunk that you can see in most Morgans in the cold and snowy conditions! They love it as much as little kids do!

TMH: You're a fun, enthusiastic, sometimes silly, always irrepressible personality. How is it that you manage to have that come through so clearly in these snow photos?

Andy Illes: I think it comes through because I am up for anything on a photo shoot. I truly love what I do and when you mix the beauty of the Morgan horse with playing in the snow, magic is bound to happen. I live my life with wild abandon and that seems to lend itself to those in front of my lens to do the same. I feel that photography should never have boundaries. Your intent when shooting always comes through the lens.

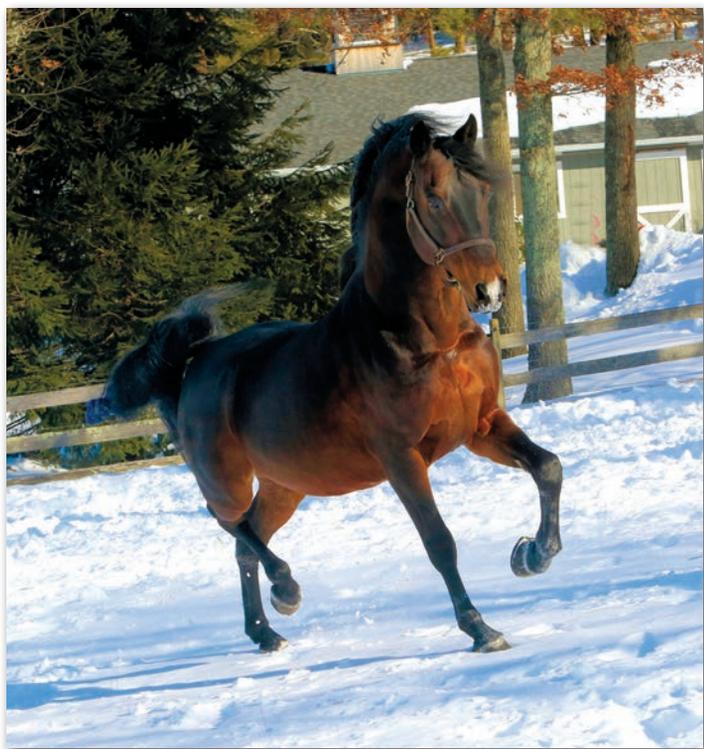
TMH: What can people expect when you show up for a photo shoot? How should they prepare?

Andy Illes: I always tell people it is up to them as to how they want their images to look. Some people show-clip their horses and some keep them fuzzy—some people wear jeans and a shirt and some wear formal attire. It all depends on what they picture in their minds. The only thing I ever recommend is that their horse is clean. The rest is subjective and up to them!

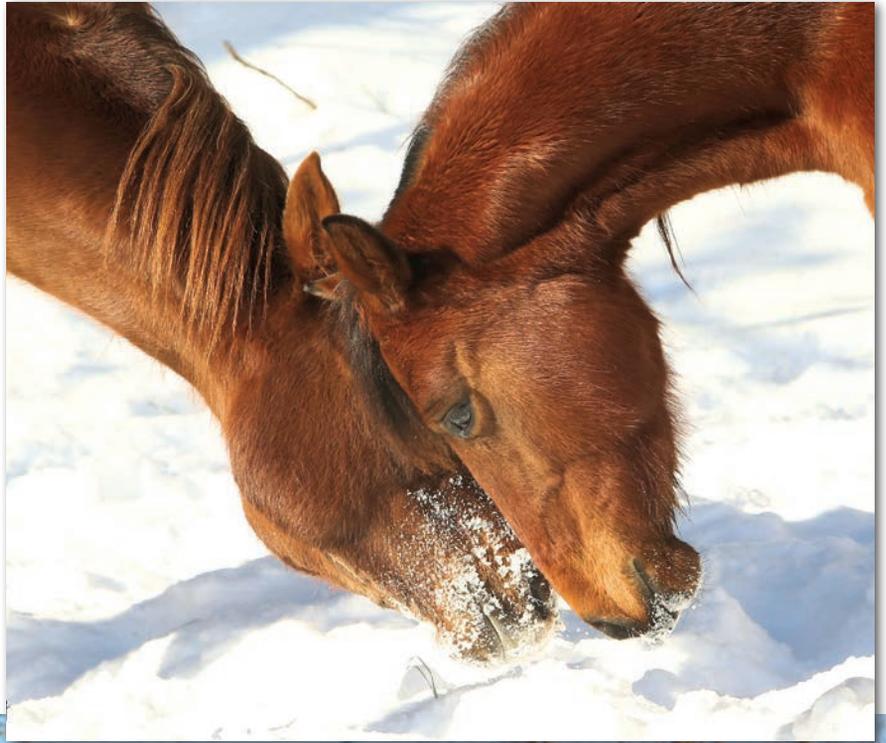
TMH: You are such a Morgan booster, why does Andy Illes love this community so much?

I have been blessed to be able to meet and become friends with so many amazing people in this industry. My home farm is Taylor River with the Goves, Richard Boulé, and Kristin Farley. My photography has allowed me to travel all over the country, and I have to say the passion and love for this breed and those that share in that love is absolutely amazing. I will do anything to support this breed—and this breed has done the same for me. I hope to continue to share my passion and love for the Morgan horse for as long as I live!

PHOTO ESSAY ≈ Morgans In Snow



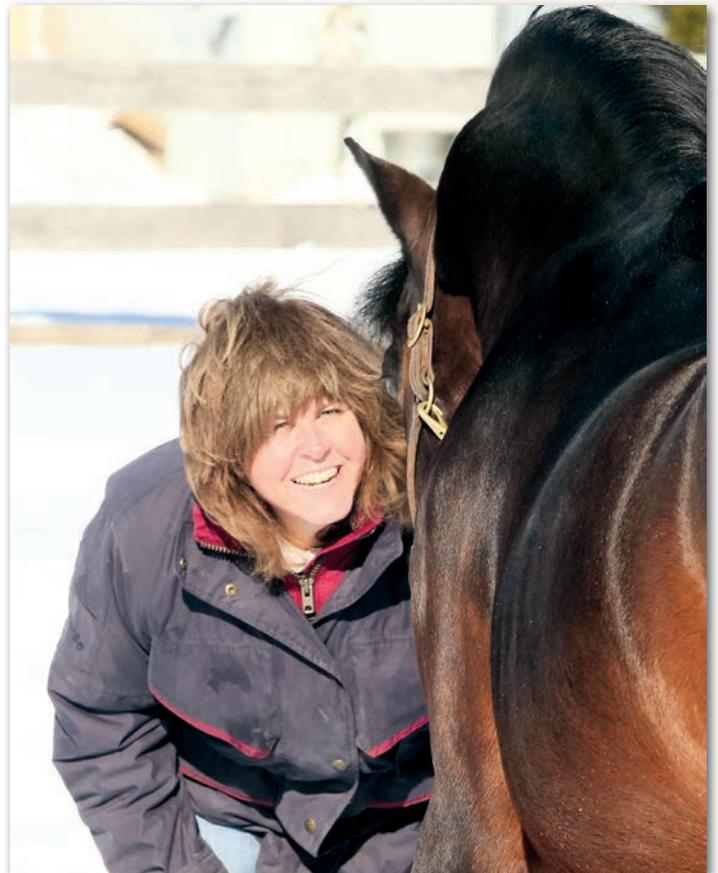
TOP LEFT: Equinox Bossanova.
TOP RIGHT AND BELOW: DRF Take Me Down Town.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
DRF Spice Girl; DRF Spice Girl and Armada
Fine Line; Woodynd's First Edition.



TOP: Manchester In Demand and GW Devil In Disguise. BOTTOM (LEFT TO RIGHT): EQN Lady Cordiva and Erin Scanlon; Paddington and Carla Greenside.



BOTTOM (LEFT TO RIGHT): Ledyard's Scootin' Man and Jessa Dandurand; Equinox Bossanova and Christine Nava.

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ABOVE AND RIGHT COLUMN (BOTTOM): CBMF Class Action. **RIGHT COLUMN (TOP TO MIDDLE):** Sydney Penny BHF; Jeff Morse and Lyn Howard. **BELOW:** Syndicat Deuces Wild and LSF Nevermoretal.





ABOVE: Sky Farm Mae Star and Christina Alsop. **BELOW:** Dumar's Delorian and Erin Scanlon. **LEFT COLUMN (TOP TO BOTTOM):** Meadowmere Curiosity and Kyle Sewing; EQN Lady Cordiva and Kyle Sewing with SBS Sincerely and Erin Scanlon.



Andy



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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Battersea Saratoga and Caroline Linscott; Blackthorne Bonny Laire and Trailhead Tuscan; Paddington and Zurich the dog; Blackthorne Charlemagne.



Erin and Ellie Van Steenburgh with Gus the dog and Syndicat LegalTender.