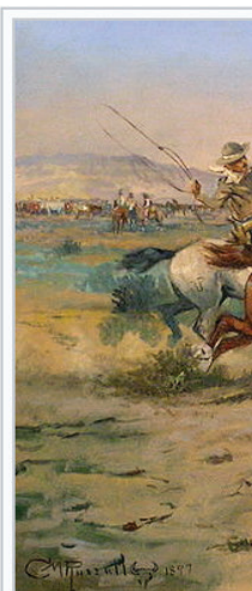




n).

ditionally on horseback, and often performs a multitude of  
arose from the *vaquero* traditions of northern **Mexico** and  
er, specifically tends the **horses** used to work cattle. In  
s, first defined as such in the late 19th century, had a  
e ability to work at virtually identical tasks and obtained  
many other parts of the world, particularly **South America**

ean settlers of the **Americas**. Over the centuries,  
multiple cultures created several distinct styles of  
o the modern world, the cowboy's equipment and  
preserved today.



Cowboys portr  
C.M. Russell



Cowboy, 2017





(disambiguation)





disambiguation

means to make something clear.

I want to make a few things clear.

I also want to give a few things the ambiguity they deserve.





Cowboys are not my heroes. Cowboys are people and in reality cannot possibly all be the same things that everyone imagines when they hear the word cowboy. I am not and can never be a cowboy. When I was eighteen I decided to try to be a cowboy. I worked on the weekends during high school and then moved to Montana because I wanted to work with horses on a ranch.

I want to be clear: I did not have some idea in my head about being a cowboy in the way that I understand cowboys to be now... I didn't really watch cowboy westerns or think about it all that much... I just wanted to work with horses and be outside... in a place where I wouldn't get poison ivy. I knew from a young age what it felt like to deeply love a piece of land

smell of dirt, of horse fur, of rain, creek, the feel of my face pressed into a velvety neck, soft muzzles with poky whiskers and hot breath

To know what I wanted to do, so clearly. At eighteen.  
To feel it in my body.





Previous spread:  
Self/portrait with Ellie, 2017



My body that felt it when I was probably around 10 the first time I went from the humid southeast to the border of Colorado and Wyoming

My oozing painful arms that finally got some relief– My small nostrils and chest that filled up with the sage smell of thin mountain air

My body that I learned at a young age to feel ashamed of... ~~of just because of the way it was when I was born.~~

How did I learn?

Country music, rock music, folk music, every other kind of music, movies, tv, church, school, my own family, men at the grocery store, posters in mechanic shops, neon signs

I didn't get to choose my body. If I did, what would I choose?

My great uncle posted an article on Facebook last fall about how Donald Trump's rise in power represented the resurrection of the American cowboy.

My other great uncle invited me to come work for a horse trainer he knew who was at the time under accusations of rape in another state.

This is my niece. Isn't she pretty? Wink.

When I was little I remember an old man used to wink at me at church. I winked back one day and all the adults laughed at me. It made me mad. I knew exactly why too. Yes I winked funny because I didn't know how, but also who was I to think that I could step into his position... into the position of the winker as opposed to the winkee.

Who was I to think I could become a horse trainer? Who was I to think that I could drive my stout female body out to Montana and get a job on a ranch and live out my dreams spending all my time working with animals, breathing in that beautiful air?

How about this. How about instead of me teaching you what you came here to learn... how about you get me off instead? How about that. Little girls all ride horses for the same reason.

No.

Low self-esteem combined with a strong desire, drive, work ethic

~~Lucky~~

~~Lucky for him~~

No, 2018  
Neon sculpture  
20x11.5 inches





Cowboys are not my heroes.  
Cowgirls are also not my heroes.



Video still from *My Heroes Have Always Been Cowboys*\*, 2018

\*This song was made famous by Willie Nelson. It was written by a woman named Sharon Vaughn and was first recorded by Waylon Jennings in 1976. It has been named one of the top 100 country songs of all time.

If I had to pick a hero? I would have to pick the horses.

But I don't have to pick one and neither do you.

I do not want to be sexualized.





I want to be treated as a person.

I came here to learn.

~~I can hear what you are saying. I can see what you are doing.~~

Country music taught me how I was supposed to be a woman

Country music taught me to romanticize my own abuse

Disrespect

...just like every other little thing that happens every day  
teaches us our places.

It's not a big deal except that it is.

Little things add up.

~~What we do matters.~~

Let's imagine for a second that I do after all these years find a way to live out the dream I once had and I do find a way to work with horses.... ~~Let's say I find a way to own my own ranch and people come from all over to learn~~

Let's say I do get to spend my days smelling sage brush and mountain river air and horse fur... what would I be called?









Previous spreads:  
Video still from *Pink Rope*, 2016  
Video still from *Ready to Work*, 2017



I've been doing research on cowgirls for the past year or so. There are plenty of women doing work on ranches; riding, roping, branding, putting up hay, etc.

Does this make them heroes?

Of course not. Because that is not what it's about.

From what I can tell, all of them are imperfect, ~~some even seem like shitty people.~~

My friend Carson tells me about the lead singer of the Sex Pistols who had a t-shirt of two cowboys fucking that he wore to play a concert in Texas. After the show, he got beat up. I tell him that I learned in my research that actually cowboys used to fuck each other all the time and it was considered perfectly normal.

Women used to be able to compete against men in the same rodeo events until somewhere between 1929 and 1941.

The history of cowgirls is a little hard to come by, a little unclear. ~~In 1929, at the Pendleton Roundup, Bonnie McCarroll was forced by the rodeo organizers to ride with her stirrups hobbled and she was killed. Her death was used as a reason~~

I'm out of practice, but I could rope a cow. I was the first person to get on every single two-year old quarter horse we started, no bridle, just hanging on.

Fourteen years it took me to realize that Sonora was sold to me because she bucked. You blamed Billy Rosewell. You blamed Burton. He doesn't care about you. That woman in Montana is a crazy bitch.

It took almost fourteen years to realize that I was 100% tricked. That buying a horse was never in my interest, that you never intended to teach me anything about training horses.









Horses are prey animals. Prey animal psychology. That was the one thing you had right, but instead of developing trust, you took advantage of fear.

Fight or flight

A horse will run for its life, and if it is trapped, it will fight for its life until it shuts down and stops feeling.

Previous spreads:

Video still from Sonora, 2017

Wolf Sweatshirt, 2018

On a cold morning I rode out on one of the two-year olds proud of myself in my boots and my oilskin jacket and then I saw John a cold heap in the middle of the gravel road. When I left the night before he was hot and sweaty, nostrils flaring, working a cow over and over and over.

A picture perfect cowboy rode him to death.

When I galloped back to the barn to tell you you laughed.

Certificate of Registration  
**AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE ASSOCIATION**  
 Amarillo, Texas 79168

NAME	REGISTRATION NUMBER	STATE / COUNTRY FOALED
MAGICS ROCKY LADY	4499091	TEXAS
COLOR	SEX	FOALED
SORREL	MARE	APRIL 26, 2002
BREEDER	AQHA ID NUMBER	CITY
ROSEWELL BILLY RAY OR KELLI	2297086	COOKVILLE
OWNER	AQHA ID NUMBER	CITY
ROSEWELL BILLY RAY OR KELLI	2297086	COOKVILLE

	SMART CHIC OLENA	SMART LITTLE LENA	1565822
SIRE		2283074	
MAGIC RIDE	3585575	GAY SUGAR CHIC	1103375
	FRECKLED BADGER	PEPPY SAN BADGER	1089924
		2366334	
		FRECKLE FACE GIRL	1541407
DAM	SONITA'S LAST	PEPPY SAN	0114978
SONITAS ROCKY LADY	2394448	0723006	
	ROCKIN KILEBAR	SONOITA QUEEN	0041022
		KING LEO BAR	0106089
		0532606	
		HONEST 2 ROCK	0169842

MARKINGS  
 STAR. SNIP. RIGHT HIND HALF PASTERN WHITE. WHITE HAIR AT ROOT OF TAIL. NO OTHER MARKINGS.



This is to certify that the above named and described horse has been registered in the Stud Book of The American Quarter Horse Association.  
**PROSPECTIVE PURCHASER** — Check the horse's markings, color and age, against this certificate. This certificate is issued in sole reliance on written application submitted by the owner at time of foaling, without further verification by the Association. Ownership of this certificate is retained by the Association, and issued upon express condition that the Association has the continuing privilege to demand immediate return thereof for correction, cancellation, or any other official reason under Association rules, and pending resolution of the matter, the Association may retain possession thereof.

DATE ISSUED  
 JULY 30, 2004

*Bill Boney*  
 EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

**TRANSFER RECORD**

The last name entered hereunder is the present owner of this horse as shown on the records of The American Quarter Horse Association. To transfer the within described horse, make transfer on a separate transfer form or bill of sale, which will be furnished free by the ASSOCIATION. Send it to the office of the American Quarter Horse Association—along with the registration certificate and the transfer fee. The transfer of ownership will then be made on this certificate and mailed as instructed.

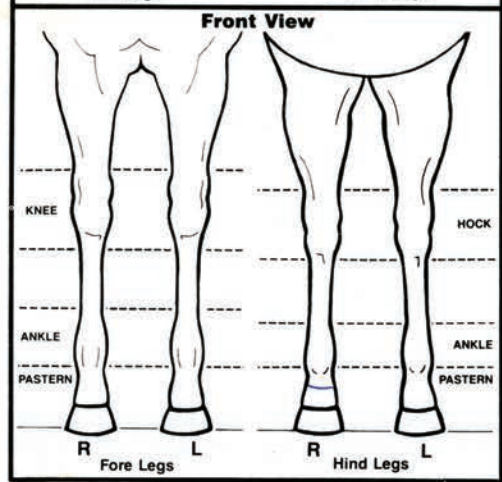
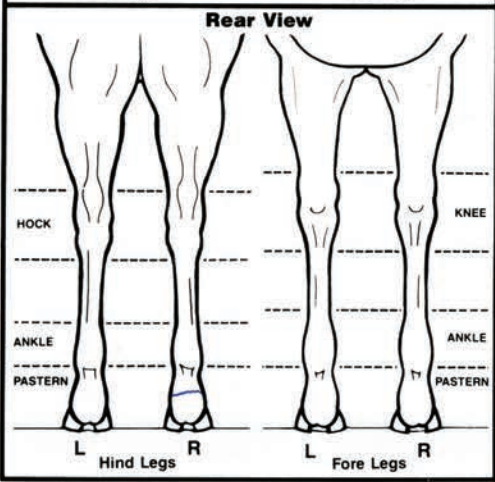
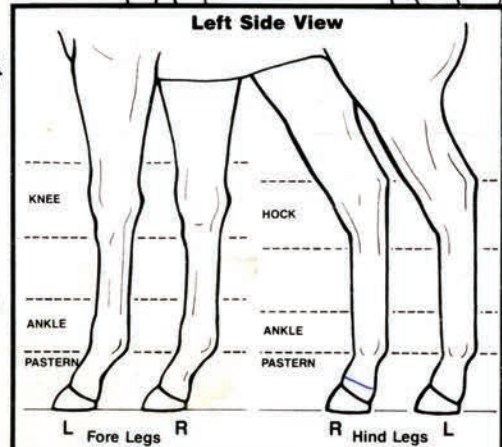
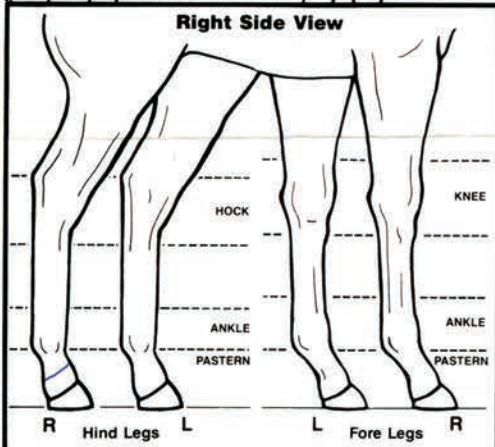
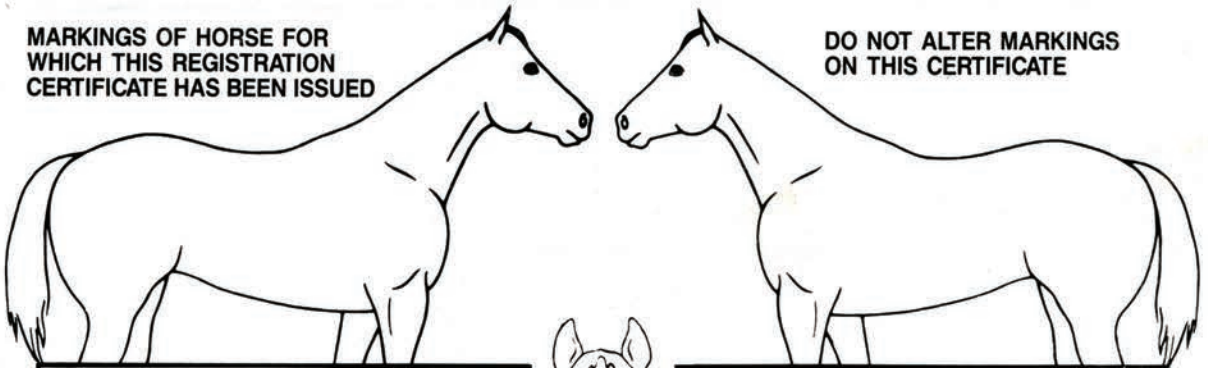
**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY - DO NOT WRITE ON THIS CERTIFICATE**

Date of Purchase	Name and Address of Owner as Shown by Transfer Record	Attest of Record by Executive Vice-President
4,499,091 02/25/04	JOHNSON AMY E ROSSVILLE, GEORGIA	3141138 <i>Bill Boney</i>



MARKINGS OF HORSE FOR WHICH THIS REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE HAS BEEN ISSUED

DO NOT ALTER MARKINGS ON THIS CERTIFICATE



**CERTIFICATE EXPLANATION**

THIS CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION IS ISSUED UNDER ASSOCIATION REGULATIONS WHICH ARE FULLY EXPLAINED IN THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK.

ANY HORSE RECEIVING A REGISTRATION NUMBER AND RECEIVING THIS CERTIFICATE SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR BREEDING AND PERFORMING IN RECOGNIZED EVENTS.

**AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE ASSOCIATION**

Amarillo, Texas 79168









Two Months of Healing, 2018

Previous spreads:

Sonora's AQHA Papers, 2018

Me in my "Nudie" Suit, 2018









When you are in something it is hard to see it.

I wonder sometimes about responsibility.

Definition of brainwashing in *Merriam Webster*: “persuasion by propaganda or salesmanship”

You don't know anything about training horses. You are a salesman.

I bought a horse and fourteen years of hard work—  
unlearning self-hatred.

Trying to reconcile my own participation in an ugly and unjust  
hierarchy.









How do you ask a horse for forgiveness?

For a while I looked for rituals, practices, gestures, offerings... but I have nothing like that  
~~and the culture I grew up in has nothing like that.~~

I will never hit you again. I will never again raise my voice in anger towards you.

Sonora, Trip, Cactus, Maverick, Charlie, Ruskin, Nilly, Ellie = will they know it now or  
will they know it from my actions over time?

Trust comes from the repetition of safety.

~~Its amazing actually that someone we hurt can actually begin to trust us again.~~



Crying in her stall on the floor Sonora puts her head on me  
Breathes her warm breath on the side of my face  
And I am so ashamed that I have ever hit her  
That I watched her sides get bloody from spurring, watched blood come  
out of her mouth from that awful bit with the sharp U in the middle.

That was years ago though and I'm not crying anymore.

Driving around Marshall Texas  
the summer I lived in the horse trailer  
gun under the mattress  
reading In Cold Blood  
alone  
bloody man knocking on my door in the dark  
thinking about whether or not I could actually use that gun  
but I never touch it  
Driving by stopping to watch an oil pump jack  
which for some reason makes me know in one moment that I want  
to be an artist  
or a writer  
Something where you share with people what you see, feel, know

Why? Why that moment and that thing

Another night I look out my tiny window and watch lightning strike  
a transformer and explode into flames

the electricity visible for a few seconds hissing up and down the lines

So here I am and I made myself a Nudie suit.

Nudie made Gene Autry a suit. Gene Autry was part of the reason women were kicked out of rodeo.

I put each rhinestone on the suit, each rhinestone representing a dollar, a part of an animal, an animal that was bought and sold.

Hoping maybe that with each rhinestone glued on by hand I absolve myself a little ~~A little piece of the guilt sewn or glued onto the jacket, onto the pants and then~~

When I put it on?

What happens then?







**Front cover:** Video still from Ready to Work

**Inside front cover:** Screen capture of wikipedia entry for “Cowboy”

**Inside back cover:** Screen capture of wikipedia entry for “Cowgirl (disambiguation)”

**Back cover:** Screen capture of painting from wikipedia entry for “Cowboy,” labeled with the following:  
“Cowboys portrayed in western art. *The Herd Quitter* by C.M. Russell”

Previous spread:

Sonora and Maverick, 2018



This catalog is in partial completion of the requirements for the Master of Fine Arts degree at the University of New Mexico. It accompanies the exhibition (disambiguation) at the CFA Downtown Studio gallery in Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 2-20, 2018.

My MFA catalog is dedicated to Maverick who passed away February 22, 2018 while I was working on my show. I wish I could have been there to say goodbye. I wish I could hug your big beautiful velvety fur neck forever.

Special Thanks to:

My Committee: I really can't thank you enough for your generosity, wisdom, and kindness.

Meg Gould (Chair)

Kirsten Buick

Szu-Han Ho

Jim Stone

Mary Tsiongas

Amazing friends who helped me make the suit: I couldn't have done it without you.

Cass Gannaway

James Gannaway

Alicia Halverson

Rachel Hobbs

Elsbeth Iralu

Diane Johnson

For general support and love and help with everything:

Angela Berry

James Gannaway

Thank you to Carlos Gabaldon (and David Beining at ARTS Lab) for help with my video installation.

Thank you to Stefan Jennings Batista for making portraits of me in my suit.

Thank you to my friends/colleagues in the photo program at UNM for being so supportive, caring, talented, and inspiring.

Thank you to David and Matt at Starline Printing.

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# Cowgirl (disambiguation)

Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Cowgirl** is the female equivalent of a **cowboy**.

**Cowgirl** may also refer to:

**Entertainment:**

"**Cowgirl**" (song), a 1994 single by Underworld

"Legend of a Cowgirl", a 1997 single by Imani Coppola

"Cowgirl", a 2001 song by Bambee from her album *Fairytales*

**Cowgirl** (album), a 2006 album by Lynn Anderson

**Cowgirl** (film), a German film starring Alexandra Maria Lara

**Cowgirl** (short subject film), a short subject film featuring Sandra Oh

Alan "Cowgirl" Pearlman, a character in the Green Lantern comics featuring

Cowgirl, a character in the comic book mini-series *Ultra*

**Sports:**

Oklahoma State Cowgirls, the women's athletic teams of Oklahoma State University

Wyoming Cowgirls, the women's athletic teams of the University of Wyoming


**Other uses:**

Cowgirl (sex position), another name for the "woman on top" position

Jennie Cowgirl, Jenn Sterger, model and television personality, known for a brief

time at **FSU Cowgirls**, a group of FSU coeds of which Sterger was a member

Cowgirl Creamery, an artisanal cheese company in California, US

 *This disambiguation page lists articles associated with the title **Cowgirl**. If an internal link led you here, you may wish to change the link to point directly to the intended article.*

