



**FINALIST,
2024 SUNDANCE
INSTITUTE FILM LAB**

**Sometimes the Hardest
Ride is Loving Yourself.**

cowboy

LOGLINE

When Pro Rodeo's hottest star, COLE LANGAM, hits rock bottom after coming out, he believes he's lost everything—until an unexpected journey of self-love redefines what it truly means to be a champion.



STORY COMPS



The character study of
**BROKEBACK
MOUNTAIN...**



The pageantry of
**FRIDAY NIGHT
LIGHTS...**



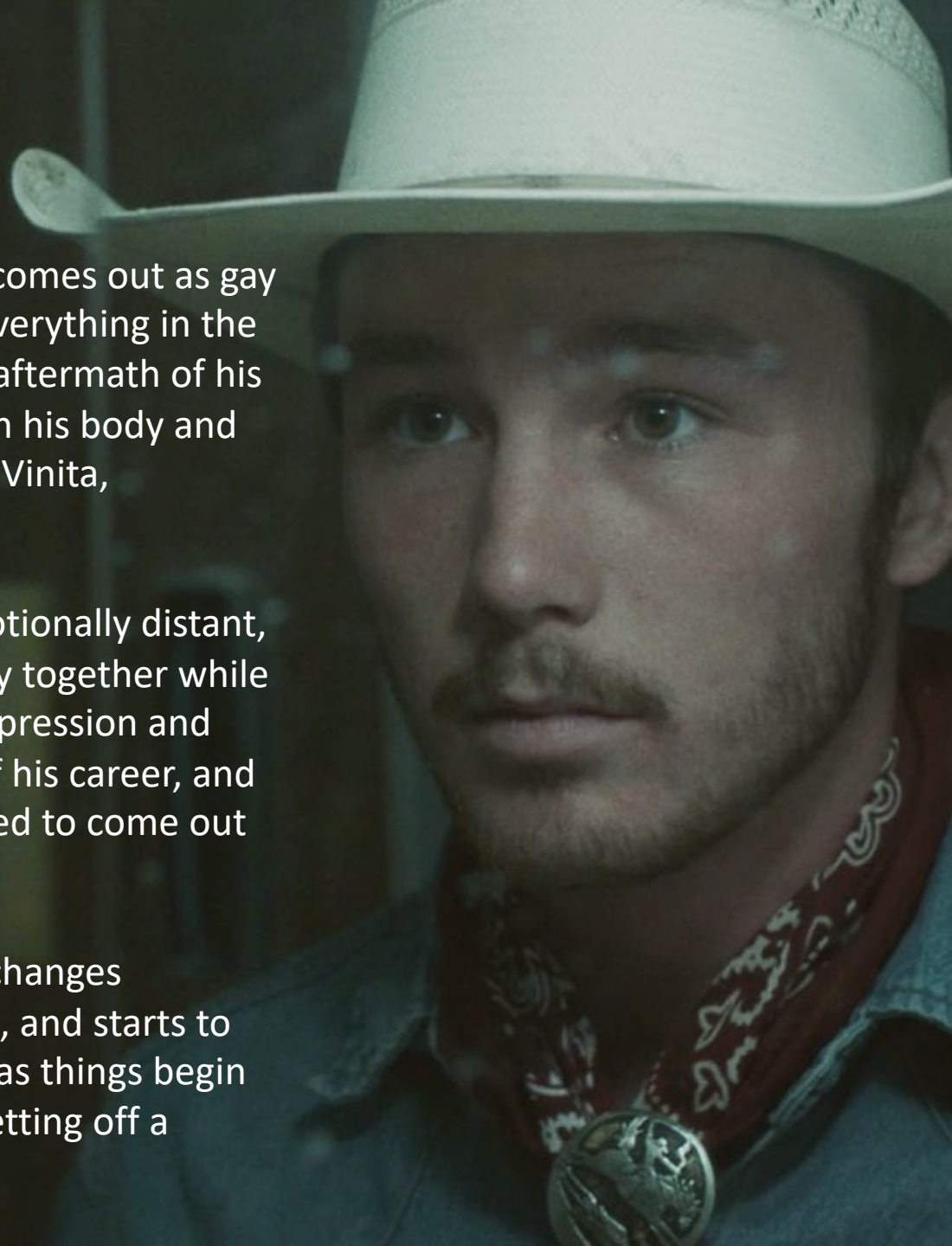
And the family themes
of CODA.

OUR STORY

Cowboy follows COLE LANGAM, a professional bull rider in his 30s who comes out as gay in the hyper-masculine world of professional rodeo—and loses nearly everything in the fallout. The story opens at a PRCA rodeo, where Cole, distracted by the aftermath of his coming out video, gets bucked off a bull and seriously injured. With both his body and reputation in pieces, he returns home to recover at his family's ranch in Vinita, Oklahoma.

Back home, things are tense. Cole's father, ALLEN, is old-school and emotionally distant, struggling to accept his son's sexuality. His sister, MOLLY, holds the family together while managing the ranch and caring for their aging dad. As Cole sinks into depression and alcohol, he isolates—haunted by cruel comments online, the collapse of his career, and the betrayal of CHANDLER DRAKE, his secret boyfriend who had promised to come out with him but backed out when things got tough.

Pushed by Molly, Cole reluctantly agrees to attend a gay rodeo—and it changes everything. He reconnects with LOGAN MOSS, a friend from high school, and starts to find community among other queer cowboys for the first time. But just as things begin to look up, Cole sabotages his progress in an effort to protect himself, setting off a downward spiral that nearly ends in tragedy.



OUR STORY

At rock bottom, it's Allen who steps up, offering Cole the acceptance he's craved. This emotional breakthrough opens the door for real healing. Cole starts therapy, works on his sobriety, and rebuilds trust with Logan, who tells him love is possible—but not before he puts in the work.

By the end, Cole is back in the arena, training hard, riding better, and showing up as his full self. The film culminates at the Mesquite Championship Rodeo, where Cole competes proudly, backed by his biological family and his chosen family from the gay rodeo world. In front of a crowd that once rejected him, he kisses Logan—no more hiding.

Cowboy is a grounded, emotional story about identity, recovery, and belonging. It explores the collision of traditional Western culture and LGBTQ+ identity through the lens of family, love, and resilience. It's about what it costs to live honestly, and why it's always worth it.



FROM DIRECTOR STEPH MARTINEZ

As a sporty, queer, Latinx kid raised in Arizona on Westerns and Selena by a *caballero* father and Catholic Midwesterner mother, I was drawn to *Cowboy*'s story because it celebrates LGBTQIA+ resilience and visibility in spaces where we've often been erased—directing this film is a dream come true!

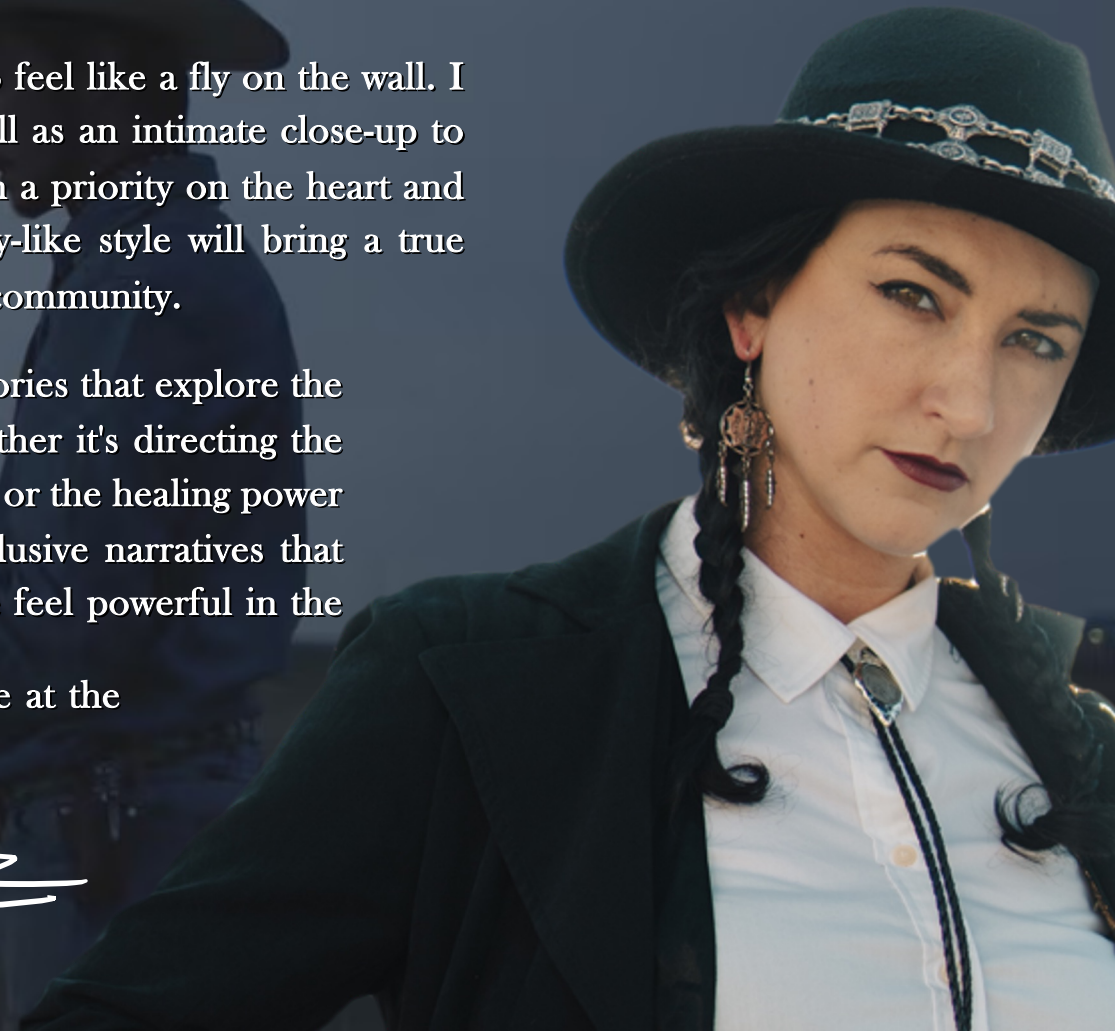
In directing the short film *A New Era of Cowboy*, I wanted the audience to feel like a fly on the wall. I love a moving handheld shot to show the dynamics of a relationship, as well as an intimate close-up to show emotional closeness. I will continue to play with these techniques, with a priority on the heart and soul of the piece: love. Additionally, incorporating an almost documentary-like style will bring a true authenticity to the film and allow the audience to feel set inside of the rodeo community.

For me, filmmaking is about more than representation—it's about creating stories that explore the joys and struggles of queer existence with vulnerability and humanity. Whether it's directing the centuries-spanning love story of two queer vampires in *Artemis & Cassandra*, or the healing power of female friendship in *Sitting in Silence*, my goal is to offer nuanced, inclusive narratives that connect with audiences on a deeply human level, all while making everyone feel powerful in the process.

Queer stories in film are acts of resistance and affirmation. I'm proud to be at the helm of *Cowboy*, a part of this transformative moment in cinema.



Steph Martinez



THE COWBOY AUDIENCE

Western stories continue to resonate because they explore timeless themes of resilience, identity, and transformation. These stories reflect universal human conflicts, and depict a world where survival demands grit.

At their core, these narratives are driven by complex, morally ambiguous characters navigating personal struggles and societal expectations. Adding emotional depth are family dynamics and relationships shaped by love, duty, and sacrifice. Paired with stunning cinematography and visceral storytelling, Westerns offer a powerful exploration of survival and the pursuit of meaning, ensuring their enduring appeal.

The Hollywood Reporter and industry executives alike credit Taylor Sheridan's *Yellowstone* for sparking renewed interest in "Americana and real-world living," highlighting the appeal of dramatic, soap opera-style storytelling set in the modern Wild West. *Yellowstone*'s record-breaking success has reignited demand for Western-themed content, with networks and streamers like Amazon and Netflix fast-tracking projects such as *The Abandons* and *American Primeval*.





Cowboy is proud to have the Palm Springs Hot Rodeo (PSHR) as our fiscal sponsor. A donation toward *Cowboy* through the PSHR is a non recoupment, tax write-off incentive. 7% of your donation will support the rodeo, with the remainder going toward production of *Cowboy*.

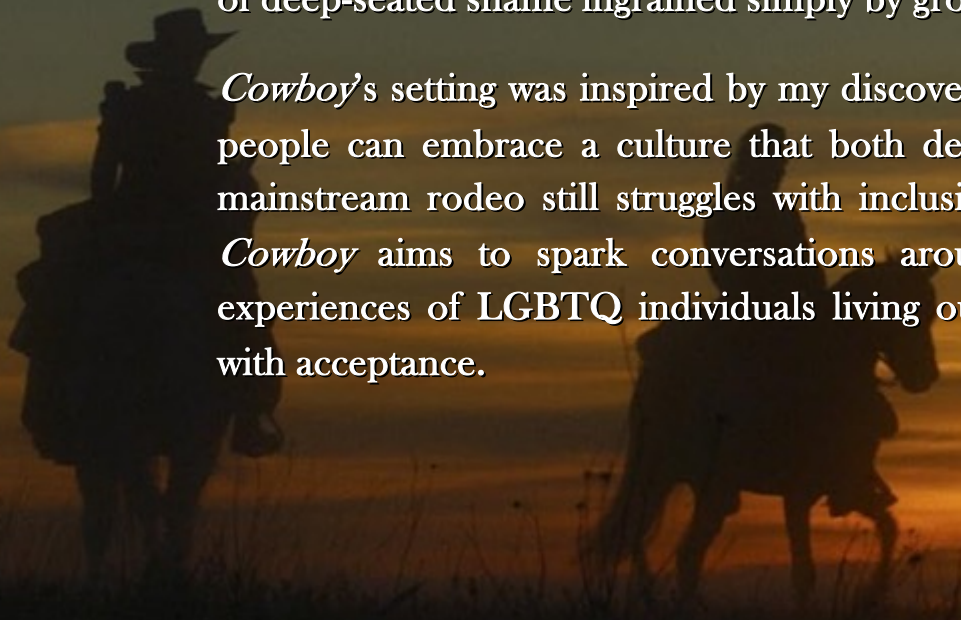
PSHR is also providing *Cowboy* their rodeo as a filming location—free of charge!

FROM WRITER JACOB SEIDMAN

I love writing stories that explore themes of love, self-esteem, and the societal pressures that strain relationships. These films, though varied in story and tone, also reflect my personal journey—sometimes intentionally, sometimes subconsciously—toward self-love and self-worth as a gay man navigating the modern world.

Cowboy continues this narrative style that has become my signature: telling stories about people, not about people who are different. This film is not a traditional "coming out" tale, but rather an exploration of "coming into your own." While much of today's LGBTQ content celebrates the discovery of identity during adolescence, I find myself increasingly drawn to the journey that comes afterward—the unraveling of deep-seated shame ingrained simply by growing up "other" in a heteronormative world.

Cowboy's setting was inspired by my discovery of the gay rodeo, a vibrant, inclusive space where people can embrace a culture that both defines and welcomes them. Yet, I also learned that mainstream rodeo still struggles with inclusion, which makes queer rodeos an essential haven. *Cowboy* aims to spark conversations around queer mental health and shed light on the experiences of LGBTQ individuals living outside the privileged urban centers often associated with acceptance.



MEET OUR TEAM CONT'D

MATTHEW LYNN, DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

MATTHEW's work has achieved worldwide theatrical release and been played at SXSW (2023 Audience Choice Winner), Cannes, Tribeca, TIFF, Frameline, Outfest and more while receiving both Gotham and Queerty award nominations. He has served as the cinematographer for work with QC Entertainment, NEON, Cadillac, Ford, Chevy, Nissan, Lush Cosmetics, Caitlyn Jenner, and The Tannenbaum Group.



BRIGS/WARE CASTING, CASTING

BRIGS / WARE CASTING is the duo of Rachel Imbriglio, CSA and Walter Ware, CSA. They have more than 20 years of industry experience working for FX, Warner Brothers, Amazon, Disney, NBC, Apple+, ABC, Netflix, 20th/Hulu, and Lionsgate. They are also known for their associate work on the award-winning *Jury Duty* and *Monster: Dahmer*.



MEREDITH PETRAN, LINE PRODUCER/UPM

MEREDITH's production experience runs the gamut from commercials, television pilots, and YouTube content to feature films with multi-million-dollar budgets. Her background in marketing provides expertise in managing projects, people, and budgets of every size, making her a producer who holistically understands what it takes to unite creativity and costs.



MEET OUR TEAM CONT'D

JAZZ VICKERS, STUNT COORDINATOR

Jazz has worked with the stunt teams of *CSI* and *9-1-1*. Most recently she worked under her father, 5x Emmy nominated stunt coordinator Jim Vickers, on Paramount's *1923*.





JACOB SEIDMAN:
JHSEIDMAN@GMAIL.COM

LEGAL:
SALLY KOENIG
KOENIG LAW OFFICES
KOENIGLAW@MAC.COM

LITERARY AGENT FOR JACOB SEIDMAN:
LANETTE MASTANDREA,
SOVEREIGN TALENT AGENCY
LANETTE@SOVEREIGNTG.COM

CONTACT