PAN
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ARTITLEDCONTEMPORARY



Charras de Agua Santa, TX (Emily Rivera) #1, American West 2026

Photography / Fine art archival print behind Museum Glass in a handmade black ash frame
Dimensions: 123 (high) x 99 (wide) cm (edition 9) and 156 (high) x 126 (wide) cm (edition 6)

Dean West

A wide range of environments and character types are explored in the works of Miami-based Dean West.

The Australian-born artist who studied at the Queensland College of Art, is best known for his intricate and highly staged photographs that take everyday occurrences beyond the realm of natural reality.

Extraordinary in their tonal range, digital clarity, and artistic vision, West's meticulously choreographed scenes, character studies, and atmospheric landscapes powerfully yet synthetically link needs to desires and documentation to invention.

Passionately dedicated to the vast possibilities of digital photography as both a medium and a cultural epoch, West's narratives draw inspiration from the total diversity offered by the visual arts.

While the tableau photography of Stan Douglas and Jeff Wall inform West's understanding of photography as a form

of contemporary communication, the paintings of David Hockney and Edward Hopper provide evident aesthetic direction.

The fictional world of cinema and the functional language of advertising have also clearly left their mark and taught lessons of their own.

International brands have embraced West's vision through partnerships and important clients such as Disney, MTV, Bombay Sapphire, and Fox Sports.

Recognized as one of Saatchi & Saatchi's 'Top 100 Emerging Photographers', West has also been honored with 'Advertising Photographer of the Year' at the International Loupe Awards and the prestigious 'Arte Laguna Prize' in Venice, Italy.

Series American West

From the stoic gunslinger to the charismatic outlaw, cowboy's both on and off the screen, have left a lasting impression on their audiences.

When it comes to making pictures, the Western movie genre draws from a well of cultural symbols that capture the essence of America.

Where men symbolize grit, a rugged individualism and the search for freedom and adventure on the open frontier.

From the Great Train Robbery (1903) to Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969), standing tall inside this dusty, cinematic universe is the cowboy himself.

A figure that knows how to wield a gun and ride horses well. From 1910 through 1960, approximately a quarter of all films featured western themes and landscapes, not only due to its representing ideals of bravery,honor and defending the innocent, but also due to its low cost to produce.

Production companies were able to build sets in cheap, deserted parts of the country and reuse them over and over again.

The Golden Age of Hollywood saw the rise of classic Westerns and their larger than life heroes exploding onto the screen.

Canonized icons such as John Wayne and Clint Eastwood, often depicted as strong and resilient individuals capable of enduring harsh conditions and facing danger with courage, embodied a distinct form of masculinity that permeated popular culture and resonated with audiences worldwide.

An icon with values that America could get behind.

Hollywood overlooked the Vaqueros however, expert horsemen from Spain and Mexico who actually herded cattle and whose skills with a lasso were legendary- and the black cowboys who also played a significant role in shaping the ranching cattle industry - the industry favored their own version- a tough and rugged white male.

The cowboy aesthetic, with its distinctive clothing, horseback riding, and wide-open landscapes, lends itself well to cinematic storytelling.

The image of a lone rider silhouetted against the sunset has become an enduring cinematic icon, even crossing over into advertising as seen with Philip Morris and Leo Burnett's famous Marlboro Man Campaign in 1954.

Oozing with masculinity, the Marlboro man appealed to a desire for adventure and ruggedness- not only boosting Marlboro's sales but forever shaping and changing perceptions of masculinity and cigarette smoking for decades.

From Richard Prince's ongoing deconstruction of the American archetype, to Andy Warhol's appropriation of Flaming Stars "Triple Elvis", the world continues to be attracted to the spectacle of The American West over lived experience.

West leans into the cultural canonization of the mythological cowboy in his new series "The American West" From awe-inspiring landscapes to beautifully crafted portraits, West's images are a sort of meditation devoted to materialism and illusion.

In some of West's pictures, the artist uses the power and mystery of the silhouette, often choosing not to light or purposefully shade a subject to create an air of mystery and intrigue.

The technique, well used throughout the medium's history by photographers such as Irving Penn & Elliot Erwitt,

distills down a subject to form, shape and composition whilst also inviting the audience to input their own imagination, depth and complexity to the picture.

They represent archetypal figures or universal concepts, transcending individual characteristics to convey broader themes and ideas.

It is unclear where West will point his lens exactly with his new project" The American West", however, there is one thing we do know, the artist will spend years preparing his conceptual ideas and painterly use light, color and symmetry to the delight of his audience's eyes.

Escaramuza Portraits, American West 2026

Escaramuza riders celebrate one of the most visually striking and disciplined traditions in Mexican rodeo culture.

These women embody a remarkable balance of beauty, grace, and toughnes - performing highly technical equestrian routines at speed while dressed in elaborate, historically inspired garments.

Each Escaramuza team designs its own dresses, hats, and embroidery, transforming the arena into a moving display of fashion, identity, and regional pride.

As Dean West continues to explore the diversity of the West, he has chosen to isolate the riders from the spectacle of the arena and present them in a cinematic, sculptural light.

Dramatic shadows, a controlled palette, and frontal composition reference the visual language of film noir and classical portraiture, allowing the intricacy of the costume and the quiet strength of the rider to emerge with clarity.

The portraits reframe Escaramuza not simply as performance, but as an enduring symbol of elegance, discipline, and resilience within the cultural landscape of the American West.