

# Skyler Spence

## -My Sustained Investigation

With my pieces I wanted to investigate the isolated life of a western U.S. cowboy. In each piece I explore aspects and environments that the cowboy interacts with, that in which slowly reveals the vastness of such solitude. To further create this lonely character I explored in depth some of the everyday things of this cowboy, from his long desolate journeys to the things in his life that may seem to define his lonesomeness. Each piece represents a different form of vast solitude, while focusing on one repeating character to outline an interpreted story.

With Each piece I gradually expanded our view of the cowboy's desolate world. With my beginning pieces I explore the cowboy himself and important aspects of his life. For instance, one piece is dedicated to his handy bible, something of major importance to any cowboy. With the continuing pieces I slowly began to explore the cowboy's surroundings. When I started experimenting my knowledge of depth perception, I learned through each piece how to better stretch the landscape to signify the distance in a painting. In one piece, I experimented with the cowboy and his dog deep in the red rock canyons that stretch far into the distance, while in another, he and his horse walk quietly through a thick aspen forest.



9" x 12"  
Oil on canvas  
NFS

-This piece had a rocky start. I wanted to create a portrait of this cowboy to give him a bit of character to notice throughout the concentration. With a few failed attempts at a human face, I decided to use a picture of myself for both a better reference and a way to better control the lighting.

7" x 6.5"  
Oil on canvas  
\$100

-To further expand on this cowboy's life, I wanted to give him a companion who, while isn't another person, continues to keep him company out on the range.





8" x 8"  
Oil on canvas  
\$100

-Historically, religion was a large part of any cowboy's life. When these men explored the range surrounded by perils and the uncertainty of tomorrow, religion was one thing they turned to for guidance and security.



7" x 6"  
Oil on canvas  
\$100

-Every now and then, cowboys, miners, and mountain men had places to call a home, especially during the colder, harsher months of the year.

20" x 20"  
Oil on canvas  
NFS

-Through rocky trails in the mountains or the dense brush of a forest, sometimes it was best to walk a horse to avoid tripping.



11" x 7"  
Oil on canvas  
\$110

-With this work I got to experiment with new sky backgrounds and clouds, and go more in depth to characterize the cowboy.





24" x 18"  
Oil on canvas  
NFS

-In this piece I explored the changing weather and environment by focusing on the changing of elevation in the landscape.





36" x 12"  
Oil on canvas  
NFS

-I really wanted to signify the vast open land of the range with this piece. In some parts of the west, it would take travellers weeks just to cross one valley.  
Also with this piece, I decided to experiment with movement, while still having a noticeable landscape.



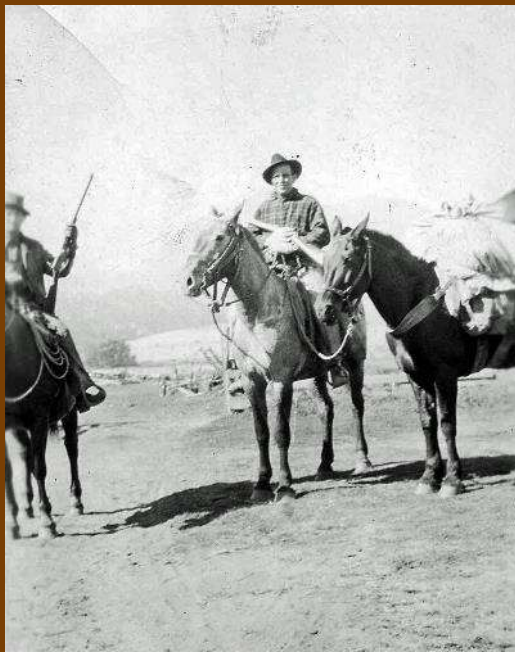
9" x 12"  
Oil on canvas  
\$80

-Although this piece was smaller than many of the others, I explored how far I could stretch the landscape and invest in a new environment.



18" x 11.75"  
Oil on canvas  
\$135

-In this piece, I studied highlights and shadows to deepen the surrounding landscape and focus on the horse and cowboy.



-These are some pieces I used for reference. The above photos are pictures from my dad's hunting trips, and a picture of my great grandfather who was a sheriff (middle). These photos heavily inspired many of my pieces, and helped me create paintings with realistic textures and scenes.



22" x 14"  
Oil on canvas  
\$150



9" x 9"  
Oil on canvas  
NFS

-This piece was a commission for a western themed album cover.