

HORSE

Shot at the Factory

April 3, 1965

Black and white, 16mm sound, 24fps, 105 minutes
(restored 1996: 99 minutes)

Sharp focus, stationary camera: the horse in profile with the full cast, technicians, and director in the first and third reels; the horse in full frontal shot with its trainer and then visitors, appearing singly, in the middle reel

with:

Mex:	Tosh Carillo
Tex:	Dan Cassidy
Sheriff:	Gregory Battcock
The Kid:	Larry Latreille
The horse:	Mighty Byrd, courtesy Dawn Animal Agency
Horse Trainer:	Leonard Brook
Director:	Ronald Tavel
Marguerite:	Florence Foster Jenkins
Overseer:	Harvey Tavel
Overseer:	Norman Robert Glick

Middle Reel only:

Mighty Byrd, Leonard Brook, Larry Latreille, Edie Sedgwick,
Chuck Wein, Gregory Battcock, Tosh Carillo, Gerard Malanga

Lights and phonograph: Billy Name (Linich)

On boom: Betty Stahl On sound: Buddy Wirtschafter

Head Technical and Director's Assistant: Gerard Malanga

Mise en scène: Andy Warhol

For a discussion of HORSE, see the section, The Roots of The Theatre of The Ridiculous in the Scripted Films of Andy Warhol.

A few notes in answer to questions raised recently concerning the history and details of this film:

Sheriff's repeated line to Kid, "Get out of town!" (e.g., Sheriff Pat Garrett to Billy the Kid), is an automatic, unresisted in-joke. Larry Latreille, playing Kid, was jailbait, a French-Canadian runaway who had fallen in with the Rotten Rita S-M drug groupies on the Factory's periphery. They often used the building's stairwell to shoot up, and my accidental discovery of them one morning, along with Ondine, their Factory tie's apologies for and explanation of their presence, led to my thinking about VINYL's mise en scène. The line is a half humorous admonition and not so humorous (almost blackmailing) threat put to Larry, a not uncommon way of relating then among the Drella Dellas (Factory denizens). More taunting and gratuitous than particularly serviceable, it pleads the salon as the conflicted and competitive place Warhol-watchers claim he applied so much time to insuring would be always the case.

"To think I could have killed you a thousand times!" pops up in several scripts. It comes from the climactic scene in TANGIER (Universal, 1946) and has no very special significance other than that I'd had a chance to study that heavily-chiaroscuroed espionage film at the time, in theatres and on Connecticut TV, and that it was on my mind. Jack Smith made me repeat the line endlessly to get into character for a renowned still-photography shooting session. The melodramatic cliché has a kind of representative quality: of melodramatic clichés.

Billy Name's extensive photo-coverage of the HORSE shoot is well-liked and widely reproduced. Well-liked not the least for the coverage (sic) it gives to Tosh Carillo stripped down to his jockstrap, a costume Tosh appeared also not the least uncomfortable cavorting in. But it was Tosh's tush that brought an old lady to

her feet at the film's Cinematheque premiere, and right out the front door vociferously determined to flag down a cop. Expecting the worst, stalwart Cinematheque owner-manager Jonas Mekes primed for action, telling me he'd have to confront the authorities if and when they appeared and let them know that art just isn't always pleasant; and that New York's legal division which regulates such limited activities actually must defend, protect, and further them.

But when Andy, somewhat shocked himself by the dimension of Tosh's tush on the giant screen, and having sought a dark, private corner of the theatre to enjoy it, was apprised of the trouble to materialize momentarily, he rushed confused into the lobby, frantically seeking the guidance and protection of drug-mellowed Edie Sedgwick and her similarly-mellowed guides and protectors. Failing to find them anywhere out front, the master panicked and ran to the street, where he discovered them all as yet unalarmed on a cigarette-break: there, when he joined them, flushed with the NYPD news, they lifted their skirts as a man and fled into the night.

To lend variety to the films shot there, a different area of the Factory was chosen as the sound stage for each. Since the unexpectedly huge and tensed-up horse naturally arrived by the (much celebrated in song and story) freight elevator, it was thought wise to park it for the duration as close to that elevator as possible. Hence, the elevator and pay phone to its left are in a way stars in this movie. But when Andy saw how the set-up - the four young men in cowboy drag, the playing cards, pistols, other props and Mighty Byrd himself - when assembled, so easily duplicated a Hollywood western, he was visibly perturbed. Wanting to disperse that realistic impression, he asked Harvey Tavel, the photographer Norman Robert Glick, and a third young man, a stranger (there were a number of thickly-accented Italians at the shoot) to take up positions between the horse and the studio's east wall: in order not only to outline depth - the in-frame area became virtually a square - but focus attention on the telephone and elevator. In addition,

he asked the conservative-looking young lady holding the boom to lower it into left frame, and Billy Linich moved the light board in to screen right. As a result, the film is notable for incorporating its own production. But a deconstructed (as it is) western is still, like MY LITTLE CHICKADEE, a western.

The line of silent witnesses headed by my brother so impressed me that years later I was to ask a company actor from time to time, but not every night, to sit quietly on stage and simply watch the play. While this was a common enough device in Elizabethan theatre, or occurrence if we assume the bodies were merely audience, I knew the perceptive in the house would see it as more than a classical embellishment. But it is a dimension, depending on your mood, that either brackets a work in a way unsettlingly remindful of Plato's cave or, in a more contemporary manner, confirms the deferred reality even of what we see.

In regard to a staging of HORSE itself, for this script would appear to be suitable to a stylized or highly-styled, postmodern production, the Andy Warhol Research Project of the Whitney Museum of American Art asked recently why it never has had one. The simple reason is that the script was "lost" (to me) for years until a copy was recovered by Patrick Smith in 1978: at which late date I had no interest in recycling the scripts as stage plays. Another original turned up in the estate of Buddy Wirtschafter when he died. Sun & Moon is its first publisher.

The movie veers from the scenario considerably because of Mighty Byrd's unexpected size, and for reasons discussed in the above mentioned section, The Roots, etc.; but that lends even more curiosity to a theatrical realization of this tract.

Lastly, MoMA's restored print scores the movie's beauty as the original never did. Billy's spot placement, upper right, has the effect of a planetarium, clearer-than-real crescent moon; and as the film lightens to white in its final moments, the 16mm suddenly seems to stretch into letter-boxed format to accommodate the Michelangelo bas-relief-like look of the sequential males and animal unrolling from end to end in an unexpected and modern, shattering recall of Mannerism's equestrian dignity.

ANDY WARHOL'S

H O R S E

with

Larry Latreille	as	Kid
Gregory Battcock	as	Sheriff
Tosh	as	Mex
Hal Wickuy	as	Tex

[→ Dan Cassidy]

sound by Buddy Wirtschafter
scenario by Ronald Tavel
technical assistant, Gerard Malanga

props;

guns

2 bottles of milk, four drinking glasses
a pack of playing cards

3 land deeds

something for the horse to eat

faust tape

(AFTER THE CREDITS ARE READ, KID WILL PERFORM AS MANY MANY TRICKS ON THE HORSE AS HE CAN DEVISE. THE OTHER THREE WILL STARE AT THE INSTRUCTORS IN THE STANCES THAT HAVE BEEN CHOSEN FOR THEM, SHERIFF AND HEX STANDING, TEX RECLINING.)

SHERIFF: One of you ~~texmurderer~~ two guys is a murderer.

TEX: It ain't me.

KID: It ain't me.

SHERIFF: One of you two guys is a murderer.

KID: You're a tinhorn.

TEX: It ain't me.

SHERIFF: One of you two guys is a murderer.

HEX: Gringos!

SHERIFF: You two guys staying in town long?

KID: Just thought I'd look the town over.

SHERIFF: Get out of town.

TEX: Howdy, folks.

SHERIFF: One of you two guys is a murderer.

KID: Indians done it.

(KID WILL LEAN FORWARD ON THE HORSE AND MAKE LOVE TO IT, HUSHING HIS FACE IN THE MANE.)

TEX: Get down from that there horse, Kid.

SHERIFF: (shocked) Why, it's the Kid!

(KID GETS DOWN FROM THE HORSE. TEX STANDS UP AND MAKES LOVE TO THE HORSE.)

SHERIFF: Don't turn your back on me!

KID: You're a tinhorn.

(KID WILL SING THE FOLLOWING SONG:

Kid: I'm the Kid from Laramie,
Hang me on yonder tree.

I come ridin' off the plain
Out o' the wind and rain
A-seeking just one friend,
But, friend, this here's the end.

I'm the Kid from Laramie,
Hang me on yonder tree.

Here's a handsome town
An' I been goin' round and round
But nowhere can I find
Two pokes with a single mind.

I'm the kid from Laramie,
Hang me on yonder tree.

I met up with this lone cow poke,
He said being pards is just a joke;
I told him quit your laughin', pard,
Them is words that's mighty hard.

I'm the Kid from Laramie,
Hang me on yonder tree.

I had to gun him dead
On account o' what he said.
I put a bullet in his head
I had to gun him dead.

I'm the Kid from Laramie,
Hang me on yonder tree.

SHERIFF: One of you two guys is a murderer.

KID: I'm a celebrate.

TEX: I'm a celebrate.

SHERIFF: I'm a celebrate.

HEX: I'm not a celebrate.

(KID, TEX, AND SHERIFF WILL PROCEED TO MAKE LOVE TO THE HORSE, RUBBING ITS MANE, KISSING ITS MUZZLE, MASAGING IT ALONG THE FLANKS, KISSING ITS BACK, LEGS, AND BEHIND.)

SHERIFF: I'm an onanist.

TEX: I'm an onanist.

KID: I'm an onanist.

HEX: I'm not an onanist.

(KID WILL MAKE ADVANCES TO TEX, TRYING TO PUT HIS ARM AROUND HIM AND GET FRIENDLY. TEX WILL REPEL KID NASTILY. KID WILL STAND BY EMBARRASSED AND LONESOME.

SHERIFF WILL OPEN HIS SHIRT, EXPOSING CHEST.

KID WILL TAKE NOTICE AND WATCH SHERIFF WITH GREAT INTEREST.

KID IMITATES SHERIFF, OPENING HIS SHIRT.

SHERIFF LOOKS AT KID SLOWLY AND SEIZES HIM UP.

SHERIFF AND KID SMILE AT EACH OTHER.

SHERIFF GOES OVER TO KID AND STANDS NEXT TO HIM.

KID PUTS HIS ARM AROUND SHERIFF'S SHOULDER AND BEGINS SINGING AGAIN.

SHERIFF RUBS HIS PRIVATES WHILE KID SINGS.

SUDDENLY THEY BREAK UP AND SHERIFF, KID, AND TEX RUSH BACK TO THE HORSE AND START MAKING LOVE TO IT AGAIN.)

HEX: Here's the land deed for Texas, Tex.
Here is the land deed for New Mexico and Arizona, Kid.
Here is the land deed for California, Sheriff.
Gringos!

(THEY ALL TAKE THE LAND DEEDS, SMILING EVILLY.
THEN SHERIFF, TEX, AND KID BEAT UP HEX. MUCH CONFUSION
AND NOISE.† HEX ENDS UP IN A HEAP ON THE FLOOR.)

SHERIFF: I'm as pleased as Punch.

KID: You're a tinhorn.

TEX: -GHXXLIXX Guy like that ain't got a chance.

SHERIFF: Indians done it.

(SHERIFF, TEX AND KID WILL RESUME ORIGINAL POSITIONS.
HEX STRUGGLES TO HIS FEET AND COMES FORWARD FOR CLOSE-UP.
HE LOOKS EVILLY INTO THE CAMERA. HE IMPROVISES CURSES
IN SPANISH.

HEX WILL WALK BACK AND CLIMB ONTO THE HORSE.

HE WILL DO ALL SORTS OF OBSCENE THINGS ON THE HORSE,
GESTURES, INTIMATIONS, SUGGESTIONS OF BEASTIALITY.

HE WILL TAKE OFF HIS BOOTS.

DISGUSTED LOOKS FROM THE OTHERS, HOLDING OF THEIR NOSES.

HEX WILL RUN HIS TOES THROUGH THE HORSE'S HANE.

SHOCK AND HORROR OF THE OTHERS WHO RUSH TO THE HORSE'S

REEM

RESCUE, PUSH HEX OFF THE HORSE, AND RESUME KISSING AND FONDLING THE HORSE AS BEFORE.

THEN SHERIFF, KID, AND TEX WILL RESUME THEIR ORIGINAL POSITIONS.

HEX, CURSING AWAY IN SPANISH, WILL CLIMB BACK UP ON THE HORSE AND RECLINE ON IT, PUT IN SUCH A WAY AS TO REACH OVER TO SHERIFF'S FLY WITH ONE FOOT AND START TO UNZIP HIS FLY.

SHERIFF WILL RELAX AND ENJOY THE PROCEDURE.
BOTH SHERIFF AND HEX LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND SMILE KNOWINGLY.)

SHERIFF: To think I could have killed you a thousand times.

HEX: I'll bet you're glad now that you didn't.

(KID GOES OVER TO SHERIFF AND EXAMINES HIS OPEN FLY.)

KID: Indians done it.

(SHERIFF RUBS HIS PRIVATES.
KID RUBS HIS PRIVATES.)

HEX: I'm not an onanist.

(SHERIFF, KID, AND TEX RESUME KISSING THE HORSE.
THEY KISS HEX'S FEET DURING THE PROCESS.)

SHERIFF: I was just funnin'.

KID: I'm a celebrate.

SHERIFF: What's eating you , Kid? It'll do you a lot of good if you' spit it out.

KID: Someday, all this land is gonna be mighty fine cattle country.

SHERIFF: Yup.

KID: Someday there's gonna be mighty fine towns on this here land.

SHERIFF: Yup.

KID: There's gold in them there hills.

SHERIFF: How long you staying in town, Kid?

KID: Ain't staying long. Just scouting.

SHERIFF: How long you staying in town, Kid?

KID: What's eating you, Sheriff? It'll do you a lot of good if you spit it out.

(SHERIFF RUPS HIS PRIVATES MEANINGFULLY, BUT SPEAKS AS IF HE WERE DREAMING.)

SHERIFF: Someday there's gonna be law and order in this here land. Ain't gonna be no more Hexes.

(SHERIFF AND KID TURN AROUND AND LOOK AT MEX. THEY APPRAISE HIM SEXUALLY.)

KID: Cepting for certain things.

SHERIFF: Cepting for certain things.

KID: And I'll have a lady friend.

SHERIFF: Yeah, there'll be civilization in this here land.

KID: I love this horse.

SHERIFF: I love this horse.

TEX: I love this horse.

MEX: I love this horse.

(SHERIFF, KID AND TEX TURN AROUND AND SHOUT IN ANGER AT MEX.)

SHERIFF: You ain't got no rights.

KID: You can't love nothing.

TEX: Get down off that horse/

(SHERIFF, KID AND TEX PULL MEX OFF THE HORSE AND BEAT HIM UP AGAIN. MUCH NOISE AND CONFUSION. MEX ENDS UP ON THE GROUND. THERE IS MUCH FEELING OF MEX'S PRIVATES DURING THE STRUGGLE. THEY TEAR OFF HIS SHIRT.

KID RESUMES HIS PLACE ON THE HORSE. HE DOES SOME TRICKS. KID SINGS AGAIN UNTIL THE END OF THE REEL.

E N D O F R E E L O N E.

R E E L T W O

(THE CHARACTERS ALL AS IN END OF REEL ONE WITH KID SINGING A STANZA OF HIS SONG FOR CONTINUITY.)

SHERIFF: What'll you have, Kid?

KID: Milk.

SHERIFF: What?

TEX: What?

XX KID: I said milk.

(SHERIFF TAKES OUT HIS GUN AND AIMS IT AT KID.)

SHERIFF: You'll have whiskey!

(KID WHIPS OUT HIS GUN AND SHOOTS SHERIFF IN THE SHOULDER.)

KID: Milk! Milk for everyone!

(HEX RUSHES OVER TO THE MILK BOTTLE AND POURS A GLASS OF MILK FOR EVERYONE. HE HANDS OUT THE GLASSES. THE FOUR PROCEED TO DRINK THE MILK SLOWLY, OBSCENELY, THE MILK RUNS DOWN THEIR CHINS AND OVER THEIR CLOTHES.)

KID: My gun is my tool!

SHERIFF: Your what is your tool?

TEX: ~~MY~~XXXXXXXXXXXXX Hey, what is this, anyhow?

SHERIFF: This is a horse opery, Tex.
This is a horse opery, Hex.

(THE TAPE RECORDER WILL PLAY THE FINAL DUET FROM FAUST. HEX WILL PARODY THE ROLE OF MARGUERITA WHILE SHERIFF WILL PARODY THE ROLE OF FAUST. KID AND TEX WILL WATCH THE OTHER TWO DURING THEIR OPERA ARIA AS IF THEY WERE STONE NUTS. WHEN THE ARIA IS OVER, HEX WILL RUSH OVER TO THE MILK BOTTLE, FILL FOUR GLASS AND PASS THEM OUT. EVERYONE DRINKS.)

HEX: Did you enjoy that?

KID: It was beautiful.

TEX: Indians sung it.

KID: That's what we need around here. A little civilization and culture.

TEX: It was beautiful.

SHERIFF: What's your real name, Hex?

HEX: My real name is Dale Evans.

SHERIFF: Damn! I knew you was the smartest horse in the movies.

(HEX BEGINS TO FEED THE HORSE.)

SHERIFF: Here I am, Sheriff for 35 years, and I ain't even got a gold watch.

KID: You got a gold star.

SHERIFF: At least I got this horse. I love this horse.

KID: You got what horse?

HEX: She is my horse, Tex!

TEX: She is my horse, Hex!

SHERIFF: She is my horse, Tex and Hex!

KID: Tex, Hex, Sheriff, she's my horse!

SHERIFF: How about a round of poker to decide whose horse she is?

TEX: Let's make this a little more interesting. Anybody want to bet?

HEX: I bet 100 pesatas.

TEX: A hundred confederate bucks.

KID: A hundreds silver dollars.

SHERIFF: I bet my honor.

(KID, TEX, AND HEX LOOK AT SHERIFF AS IF HE WERE NUTS.)

SHERIFF: Gotta leave something to chance.

KID: You ain't got a chance with 3 guys like us.

SHERIFF: Gotta leave something to chance.

(THE FOUR FORM A GROUP ON THE FLOOR PRACTICALLY UNDER THE HORSE'S BELLY AND BEGIN TO PLAY STRIP POKER.
KID LOSES THE FIRST ROUND AND TAKES OFF HIS HAT.)

KID: I'm scared, scared of what might happen.

(ANOTHER ROUND IS PLAYED.)

SHERIFF: You lost that one, Mex!

(MEX TAKES OFF HIS SHIRT.)

MEX: I ain't got a chance with 3 gringos!

SHERIFF: Get going, and don't you never open your trap.

(KID LOSES THE NEXT ROUND AND TAKES OFF HIS SHIRT.)

KID: I'm scared, scared of what might happen.

(MEX LOSES THE NEXT ROUND.)

SHERIFF: You lost again, Mex!

MEX: Let's talk this over, civilized.

SHERIFF: Take it off! Take it off!

TEX: Take it off! Take it off?

(MEX AND KID BOTH TAKE OFF THEIR TROUSERS AND SIT IN THEIR UNDERWEAR.)

MEX: Aie!! It is cold in your country!

(THEY CONTINUE PLAYING AND SWILLING THE MILK. FINALLY, SHERIFF LOSES A ROUND.)

TEX: You lost that one, Sheriff!

KID: You lost the game, Sheriff!

MEX: You lost the whole game, Gringo!

TEX: Let's get the Sheriff!!!

(MEX, KID, AND TEX RUSH AT THE SHERIFF. THEY ALL TIE HIM UP WITH ONE BELT, HIS HANDS AND THEN TIE THE BELT TO THE HORSE'S REINS. THEY TAKE CHANCES WHIPPING HIM WITH THE OTHER BELTS. MEX KICKS SHERIFF, ETC. MUCH YELLING AND CRYING OUT WITH PAIN AND JOY. KID SINGS DURING THIS SCENE.)

KID: Beat it, beat it!
 Get along, get along.

 Beat it, beat it!
 Get out of town.

 Beat it, gotta beat it,
 Gotta beat it every day!

MEX: There's no time for that now. We gotta get out of here fast.

KID: You're too good a man, Sheriff, to die for nothing.

MEX: Get in the rig, Mary.

TEX: Yeah, Indians done it.

KID: Where you headed for?

TEX: Out west. I'm going west.

KID: I'm scared, scared of what might happen.

MEX: Keep a-going!

KID: We was just funnin', wasn't we?

TEX: Yeah, having good old cowboy fun.

(THE FINALE OF FAUST PLAYS AGAIN ON THE RECORDER. MEX AND SHERIFF RESUME THEIR PARODY OF THE ROLES. TEX AND KID DRINK MILK.

THIS GOES ON TO THE END OF REEL TWO.)

E N D O F R E E L T W O.