

Brice Chapman

cowboy trick roping

Lubbock, TX

The cowboy employs two well-known tools in daily work- the horse and the lasso. The horse is a means of transport and the lasso is the loop of rope thrown to catch animals. Out of a basic lasso loop early American cowboys developed various throws, loop sizes, styles and designs to help them get distance out of their rope tosses and to catch animals of different speeds and sizes. Cowboys in the field and on the ranch began to invent tricks, some for work, but most for play & entertainment during downtimes. By the start of the 20th century when Will Rogers introduced his horse-and-lariat act to the world of vaudeville in New York City, the art of trick roping had become firmly entrenched in cowboy culture. Today, trick roping can still be found on cattle ranches from Mexico to Canada as well as in western-themed shows, and on stages throughout the world. Here in the United States, Brice Chapman holds the distinction of being one of the finest trick ropers alive. Along with his partner, his Border Collie Sooner, he has wowed audiences from the rodeo arena to the White House.

Chapman began teaching himself roping at the age of four. The son of a renowned farrier (one who shoes horses), Chapman was raised in Lubbock, Texas surrounded by horses and cowboys. By the age of ten he was putting on shows at the Ranching Heritage Center. For the past 16 years, Chapman has traveled with his two sidekicks, his red Border Collie Sooner, and his Paint horse Crossfire. Chapman has spent years mastering the tricks developed over the last century by well-known trick ropers and has developed over 300 tricks incorporating his sidekicks into the act. Following in the great tradition of restless inventiveness, he says, "I just try to invent new things to keep my job fun." Although he couldn't fit Crossfire onto the undercarriage of the plane, Sooner will be at the festival and will be performing with Chapman the 200+ tricks the two have developed together. When not roping, Chapman runs a part-time farrier business in Lubbock.