

NEWS RELEASE

Guymon Pioneer Days Rodeo

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Garcilazo brings Mexican tradition to Guymon rodeo

GUYMON, Okla. – It's no secret that Tomas Garcilazo not only loves horses, he might be the animal's biggest fan.

"The horse is a universal animal and can do so much," said Garcilazo, 40, one of the most accomplished horsemen and rope artists in the world. "No matter where you go, people admire the horse."

Garcilazo will be part of the festivities during the four fabulous performances of the Guymon Pioneer Days Rodeo from May 1-3 at the Henry C. Hitch Pioneer Arena. He will showcase his charro talents during the shows, which will take place at 7:30 p.m. Friday; 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday; and 2 p.m. Sunday.

"Being a competitor and someone who loves working with horses, I had the ability to create something involving horses and my roping ability," said Garcilazo, originally from Mexico City but now living in Oak Hills, Calif. "Having the desire to do it, I put an act together and decided to go on this way professionally."

He was shown the skills he now possesses at a young age from his family. La Charrería is a skill performed through the generations only by the Mexican charros, who take pride in their horsemanship and roping abilities. Garcilazo is a third-generation charro.

His skills have enabled Garcilazo to work all over the world. He worked Disney's Wild West Show in Paris and also toured part of Europe with the Buffalo Bill Wild West show. He was part of the touring and Broadway presentation of the Tony Award-winning Will Rogers Follies.

He's also an Oklahoman, of sorts.

"Because of the Will Rogers Follies, I became an honorary citizen of Oklahoma," said Garcilazo, the 2007 Specialty Act of the Year in the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. "The governor at that time gave me that certificate."

Though he recognizes his God-given talents, he also puts in the hours of someone not so blessed. He knows it takes repetition to train horses, to improve horsemanship skills, to improve roping talents.

"I grew up doing this as a kid," he said. "When I had the desire to do this professionally, I thank God. I get stuck with my horses, I like to kick back with them. I see their personality. I see their reaction, their desire to please me."

When he's not on location for work, he's in the arena. He has 12 horses that perform, and he rotates them in order to get the most out of them and to give them rest when they need it. He knows the importance of having his partners in top working condition when show time comes.

And though he carries on a Mexican tradition, his show reaches all ages and races. He suspects 90 percent of his performances are seen by Anglos, but that he gets a lot of notice when he comes into a community with a large contingent of Hispanics.

“My show pretty much reaches everybody,” Garcilazo said. “It’s something that means a lot to me.”

And it means a lot to the fans, who have come out in droves, from New York City to Los Angeles to Paris to Guymon.

“We pride ourselves in bringing in the best to our rodeo,” said Ken Stonecipher, a longtime member of the rodeo committee, which volunteers thousands of man hours each year in order to bring quality entertainment to the Oklahoma Panhandle. “We get the best livestock, the best cowboys and cowgirls, the best competition you can see. And we bring the best acts, year after year.”

It’s the Guymon Pioneer Days Rodeo, where cowboys become legends.