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BOOK INFORMATION SHEET (7.18.24)

**Author (as it should appear on the book):** Ron Tarver

**Title:** *The Long Ride Home*

**Subtitle:** *Black Cowboys in America*

**Contributors:** with an essay by Art T. Burton

**Book pages:** 160

**Number and type of illustrations:** 103 photographs (99 color and 4 black-and-white) by the author

**Trim size:** 11.5" x 9.5" landscape/horizontal

**List price:** \$45.00

**Discount:** Trade

**ISBN (book):** 978-1-960521-02-6

**ISBNs (electronic):** TBD

**Edition:** Hardcover

**E-book?** TBD

**Jacket:** Yes

**Edition size:** 1,200

**Publication date:** July 2024

**Advances due:** July 2024

**To warehouse:** July 2024

**Printed in:** Canada

**Distributor:** Casemate/IPM

**Bookstore categories (list three):** Photography/Black History/Americana

**Audience:** Anyone interested in cowboys and cowboy culture, African-American and U.S. history, and fine-art photography.

**Selling points (list three):** Ron Tarver, who grew up in a family of Black cowboys, is a world-renowned photographer, so the art world will love his photographs of Black cowboys and their way of life; the history of the cowboy in America is long, but too few people understand the long legacy of the Black cowboy; and readers will love seeing what Black cowboy culture is like today, from rural towns to big cities.

**Tagline:** A book about the Black cowboy in contemporary America unlike any other!

## **Description of the work:**

*The Long Ride Home: Black Cowboys in America* tells the story of the Black cowboy experience in contemporary America like no other book. Although Black cowboys have been a fixture on the American landscape since the nineteenth century, few people are aware of their enduring contributions to the history of the West and how their unique culture continues to thrive in urban as well as rural areas all over the country.

The book features Ron Tarver's beautiful, compelling, and often surprising contemporary images of African-American cowboys that not only convey the Black cowboy's way of life and its rich heritage, but also affirm a thriving culture of Black-owned ranches and rodeo operations, parades, inner-city cowboys, retired cowhands, and Black cowgirls of all ages, too. Tarver, who comes from a family of Black cowboys in Oklahoma, uses his artistry to question, if not upend, long-held notions of what it means to be a cowboy and, with that, what it means to be an American.

*The Long Ride Home* couldn't be more timely, coming on the heels of Beyonce's hit album, *Cowboy Carter* (2024), and films such as Lil Nas X's hit time-travel Western, *Old Town Road* (2019), and Idris Elba's *Concrete Cowboy* (2021). The latter was based on Greg Neri's book, *Ghetto Cowboy* (2013), about Philadelphia's contemporary African-American cowboy culture. Many of Tarver's images were made in some of the same Philadelphia neighborhoods.

In addition to Tarver's photographs, *The Long Ride Home* includes an essay by Art T. Burton, an expert on the history of Black cowboys. This book is both a tribute to and a celebration of the Black cowboy in America, providing an invaluable and unique perspective on American history and culture as well as the Black experience in America.

## **Blurbs:**

"Ron Tarver was one of the earliest photographers to dedicate himself to documenting the lives of Black cowboys, which he has done for thirty years. As a boy growing up in Oklahoma surrounded by ranchers, farmers, and horsemen, many of whom happened to be African American, he understood their culture not as a Hollywood concept but as a demanding way of life. His images of urban cowboys, rodeo riders, and ranch hands radiate an intimacy born of trust often nurtured over generations. *The Long Ride Home* celebrates the heritage and the enduring resilience of these Black cowboys, who may have surfaced into popular culture awareness only in the last few years but who actually helped shape the American West more than 150 years ago."

—Elizabeth Cheng Krist, Senior Photo Editor, *National Geographic Magazine*

"Ron Tarver is a treasure, as a photographer, artist, teacher, and human being. His work is well meant, smart, and relevant."

—Henry Horenstein, photographer, filmmaker, and Professor of Photography at Rhode Island School of Design

“Ron Tarver’s sensitive photographs portray Black men and women in the iconic roles of American cowboy and cowgirl, revealing their important place in the romantic tradition of the West.”

—Elizabeth Spungen, Executive Director of The Print Center, Philadelphia, PA

### **About the Author:**

*Ron Tarver* (b. 1957) comes by his interest in contemporary Black cowboys through his own experience. His grandfather, Thomas Wilson, was a working cowboy during the 1940s who drove cattle along the Verdigris River, from Fort Gibson to Catoosa, Oklahoma, and was reported to have one of the best roping horses in the area. Tarver grew up in northeastern Oklahoma, in the small agricultural community of Fort Gibson, where he spent many long, hot summer days hauling hay and working on local farms. He received a B.A. in journalism and graphic arts from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, and an M.F.A. from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. Currently an Associate Professor of Art at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, he previously was a staff photojournalist at *The Philadelphia Inquirer* for thirty-two years. Nominated for three Pulitzer Prizes, he was part of the team that won the 2012 Award for Public Service Journalism for a series documenting school violence in the Philadelphia public school system, and he also has received other awards from World Press Photos and the Society of Professional Journalists. Tarver’s fine-art photographs have appeared in more than thirty solo and eighty group exhibitions, and they are in numerous collections, including the National Museum of American Art of the Smithsonian Institution, Oklahoma History Center, Philadelphia Museum of Art, State Museum of Pennsylvania, and Studio Museum in Harlem. He has been awarded a 2021 Guggenheim Fellowship in Creative Arts/Photography, a Pew Fellowship in the Arts, as well as funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and the Independence Foundation. He is co-author, with journalist Yvonne Latty, of *We Were There: Voices of African American Veterans* (Harper Collins, 2004), which was accompanied by a traveling exhibition that debuted at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia.

### **About the Contributor:**

*Art T. Burton* (b. 1949) retired in 2015 after spending thirty-eight years in higher education as a history professor at Prairie State College and South Suburban College, both in Illinois, and as an administrator in African-American Student Affairs at Benedictine University, Loyola University Chicago, and Columbia College Chicago. He earned a B.A. and M.A. in African-American Studies at Governors State University, University Park, Illinois. He is the author of several books, including *Black, Red and Deadly: Black and Indian Gunfighters in the Indian Territory, 1870–1907* (Eakin Press, 1991), *Black Buckskin and Blue: African-American Scouts and Soldiers on the Western Frontier* (Eakin Press, 2008), *Cherokee Bill: Black Cowboy-Indian Outlaw* (Eakins

Press, 2020), and *Black Gun, Silver Star: The Life and Legend of Frontier Marshal Bass Reeves* (Bison Books, University of Nebraska Press, 2022). Burton was named a “Territorial Marshal” by Gov. David Walters of Oklahoma in 1995; inducted into the Hall of Fame at the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, in 2008; and given the Living Legend Award by the Bare Bones Film Festival in Muskogee, Oklahoma, in 2015. He appeared on BET’s *Teen Summit with Mario Van Peebles*, discussing the film, *Posse*, and on FOX Cables’ *Legends and Lies* series, episode “The Real Lone Ranger,” and was a participant in the AHC Cable series *Gunslingers* episode on Bass Reeves. Burton spoke on African-American and Native-American cultures at the B.B King Symposium at Mississippi Valley State University in 2018 and was the keynote speaker at the 10th Anniversary Bass Reeves Western History Conferences in Muskogee, Oklahoma, in 2019.