



4K **HORSE POWER**
AMERICAN LEGACIES

1 x 50 min. Written and directed by Eric Bendick

4K, 5.1 and Stereo Executive producers: Birgit Peters, Sabine Holzer



American horses are icons. Mustang. Appaloosa. Morgan. Quarterhorse. Even their names suggest a timeless power.

Horsepower that shaped a nation. A nation whose demands shaped them. Each has a unique story to tell. Born of legendary historical moments, charismatic figures, and singular places, this documentary takes us on a journey tracing the emergence of these breeds over time. But the work to understand, create, and maintain their legacies is not over. Today's horse trainers are as diverse as the horses they care for. Their passion is unbridled—for they continue in the long tradition of innovation and husbandry that is now part of the very fabric of America.

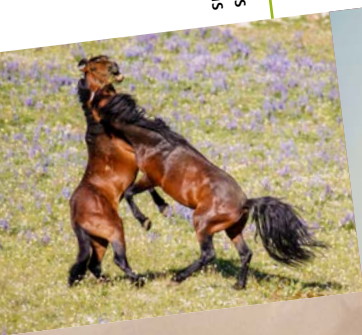
The origin story of American horses can be traced all the way back to the 50-million-year-old fossil beds of Polecat Bench, Wyoming. Here, the discovery of the earliest known fossils of **Dawn Horse** reveal that the ancestors of our contemporary horse arose on the North American continent. From these ancient beginnings, Equus spread around the globe. But only a few miles from the site of Dawn Horse, a herd of wild **Mustangs** now roams the rugged Pryor mountains. These horses are descendants of the earliest horses to return to American soil. Arriving aboard ships of Spanish explorers, horses reclaimed North America. The Pryor Mustangs, isolated in this range for four-hundred years, are the

closest genetic link to the original Spanish stock. With the return of American horses, the stage was set for a new generation of American breeds.

A combination of natural and artificial selection, accident, and rare fortune created the wide spectrum of American horses we know today. Emerging from regional patterns of work, culture, tradition, and geography, these signature breeds have each made their mark in history. From the **Appaloosa**, bred and revered by the Nez Perce tribe, to the **American Quarterhorse**, perfectly engineered to work the open range, to the **Morgan Horse**, whose underdog story is as legendary as they come. And, of course, the Mustang—whose wild behavior is now being understood for the first time. Viewed individually, each breed and each exemplary horse is also a living work of art. On a cinematic canvas where the play of light, atmosphere, mood, and environment coalesce, we discover intimate relationships between horse and human, breed and selector. Whether working cutting cows in a sagebrush sea, galloping through autumn foliage in New England, or racing across the Utah desert on the Pony Express Trail, these are the vivid scenes and unforgettable moments which bring the natural history of these icons to life.

These are the stories of American horses—and true Horse Power, brought to the screen.

A co-production of THIRTEEN Productions LLC and Terra Mater Studios in association with PBS, CPB and WNET produced by Grizzly Creek Films



www.terramater.com

Terra Mater Studios GmbH
Wambachergasse 2, 1130 Vienna/Austria
phone +43-1-87003-0, office@terramater.com
[#terramatters](https://twitter.com/terramatters)

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