

VOICE TO BE HEARD

Adrian “Buckaroo girl” Brannan has made a name for herself since the release of her first album nine years ago. Now, the singer-songwriter is embarking on new adventures, crushing hurdles on the way.

Interview by **KATIE FRANK**

“You see more cowboys and ranchers on Instagram than I ever imagined. Being able to share not only everyday experiences, but do things like my weekly giveaways and share new songs, is super fun for my followers.”

The Rundown

Age: 23

Role models: My family

Favorite movie: *Calamity Jane* with Doris Day

Food craves: Basque food or Tex-Mex—I am a foodie.

Greatest thrill: Playing live with my heroes on stage, or riding broncs

Website: buckaroo girl.com



WITH HER POWERFUL, AUTHENTIC LYRICS and a personality to match, Adrian Buckarogirl is making waves within the cowboy culture world and beyond. The Southern California singer grew up riding broncs and recorded her debut album when she was 14 years old. She recently landed an audition for the popular television singing competition *The Voice*, and is working on her fourth record to be released later this fall.

Adrian pushes to make a difference offstage, as well. In a blog she shares with her sister, Liz, she dishes on not just Western fashion and beauty tips, but also tackles weighty topics such as domestic and sexual abuse, of which she is a survivor.

No topic is too big or taboo for the rising star. As she recovers from a scary buck-off last winter, she shares with *Western Horseman* her plans to keep pushing forward professionally, creatively and emotionally.

TEXAS CONVERT

The music in Texas is a huge inspiration to me now, and bands like Jake Hooker and The Outsiders, and oldies like Bob Wills, play a large role in the new record. The Great Basin inspired me as a young artist. Texas has stolen my heart in the same way that Nevada inspired me for my album *Highway 80*.

I am a Southerner at heart, and the first time I sang and rode a bronc in Amarillo [at the Women's Ranch Rodeo Association national finals], I realized I found home. I respect all cowboys from different parts of the world and like learning how other folks do things.

AUDITIONING FOR THE VOICE

I am honestly a little nervous about the audition [in July]. I'm not really the "LA" type, but it's what makes me different and will make me stand out. I'm going to wear what I wear and

sing what I sing, and I hope the judges know it's just plain me. This will be a great way to show the world another side of what music can be. I want to stay true to who and what I am, but share that uniqueness with the rest of the world in a bigger way. Plus, it's a huge challenge, and boy, do I love a good challenge.

AN ADVOCATE AGAINST ABUSE

Going public about my abusive past was probably one of the most difficult decisions I've made, but I also felt like I had to. As a survivor of abuse and assault, I talk to people every day who are going through what I had to as a young girl. I want them to know that they are not alone, and it is possible to be removed from danger and feel safe again.

Abuse is something very real in the cowboy community, even if we don't want to admit it. I want to

bring awareness and help change victims from feeling too frightened to being able to speak out. I'm not ashamed of what happened to me, and I realize now it wasn't my fault. It's something I can turn into a positive lesson for others.

God gives us rough roads in life sometimes, but I know He has a reason for it all. I want to take the hand I was dealt in life, and help others through those experiences. I'm very cautious about taking care of myself these days, I have spent a lot of time trying to heal and not become hard and distrusting because of it. It's not exactly easy, and I know it has affected my relationships, but I am not giving up.

CLOSE CALL

When I got bucked off my horse this year, I got my bell rung! Unfortunately, the wreck was my seventh major concussion. Because I've had so many head injuries, the doctors

are worried about me bumping my head again and seriously hurting myself, or worse. So, sadly, no riding for a year. It has been super hard not being able to ride, but it's been a learning process as well. I need to take care of myself.

FAMILY MATTERS

My sister, Liz, and I are best friends. She and I have always had each other's back, and we've never let anyone come between that. I love telling young girls that they have a built-in best friend in their sibling.

My whole family is crazy and loud and pretty different (we're always in each other's business!), but it works for us. Knowing there is a group of people who would do anything for you no matter what is a wonderful feeling. Family is the most important thing we can have in life, which is something the Western world understands, and it's something I never want to forget. **YWH**

