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Kurt Russell, George Strait and Robert Duvall Among the 2020 and 2021 Western Heritage Award Inductees

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK – Returning in-person for its 60th year, The Cowboy will honor individuals who have made significant contributions to Western heritage through their life and career during the Western Heritage Awards, September 17-18.

Often called the “Oscars of the West,” this black-tie, celebrity-hosted event held at The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum attracts the biggest names in Western literature, music, television and film every year. This year’s ceremony will recognize honorees and inductees from both 2020 and 2021. Inductees include Academy Award winner Robert Duvall and Emmy-nominated Kurt Russell, as well as American country music singer George Strait.

“The West is more than a geographical location; it is a story we tell,” said Natalie Shirley, Museum President and CEO. “For more than a century, writers, musicians and film producers have interpreted the trials and triumphs of the people who built the American West. At The Cowboy, we are pleased to honor the work these men and women have done in telling the great stories of the American West.”

Each award winner and inductee receives a *Wrangler*, an impressive bronze sculpture of a cowboy on horseback created by Oklahoma artist Harold T. Holden, a 2017 Hall of Great Westerners inductee.

This year, Woodrow Wilson Woolwine “Woody” Strode (1914-1994), will be the 2021 inductee into the Hall of Great Western Performers along with 2020 inductees Kurt Russell and Neil Oliver “Bing” Russell (1926 – 2003). Inductees into the Hall of Great Westerners for 2020 are Montford T. Johnson (1843 – 1896) and Bennett Richard “Ben” Houston (1929 – 2016). Inductees into the Hall of Great Westerners for 2021 are Matthew “Bones” Hooks (1867 – 1951) and Mel O. Potter.

The 2021 Western Heritage Awards will also recognize R. W. Hampton and the 2020 awardee John Scott with the Chester A. Reynolds Memorial Award. Named in honor of

the Museum's founder, this award is bestowed on a living honoree who has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to Western values and ideals.

Singer and songwriter George Strait will receive the 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award and actor Robert Duvall will receive the 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award. Both honorees will also receive a commemorative three-piece Western buckle set created by Traditional Cowboy Arts Association silversmiths Scott Hardy and Beau Compton.

"Our institution began as The National Cowboy Hall of Fame over 60 years ago and we are happy to carry on that legacy through the Western Heritage Awards and through our Museum's Hall of Great Westerners and Hall of Great Western Performers," said Shirley. "We look forward to honoring great men and women of the West for years to come as we continue to provide space for people to remember and interact with the stories so many of us have come to cherish."

Due to the overwhelming support of our Inductees, Honorees, their families and sponsors, tickets to the 2021 Western Heritage Awards Induction Ceremony are sold out, but tickets for a special livestream remote dinner held in the Museum's Annie Oakley Center will be available for purchase and includes access to the cocktail reception preceding the induction ceremony, Saturday, September 18.

The full list of Western Heritage Honorees and Inductees for 2020 and 2021 are listed below. For more information about the 2021 Western Heritage Awards, visit nationalcowboymuseum.org/western-heritage-awards.

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About the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City is America's premier institution of Western history, art and culture. Founded in 1955, the Museum collects, preserves and exhibits an internationally renowned collection of Western art and artifacts while sponsoring dynamic educational programs to stimulate interest in the enduring legacy of the American West. For more information, visit nationalcowboymuseum.org.

2020 Western Heritage Awards Inductee List

Hall Of Great Westerners

Montford T. Johnson (1843 – 1896)

Bennett Richard “Ben” Houston (1929 – 2016)

Hall Of Great Western Performers

Neil Oliver “Bing” Russell (1926 – 2003)

Kurt Russell

Chester A. Reynolds Memorial Award

John Scott

Lifetime Achievement Award

Robert Duvall

Special Directors’ Award

Traditional Cowboy Arts Association

2021 Western Heritage Awards Inductee List

Hall Of Great Westerners

Matthew “Bones” Hooks (1867 - 1951)

Mel O. Potter

Hall Of Great Western Performers

Woodrow Wilson Woolwine “Woody” Strode (1914-1994)

Chester A. Reynolds Memorial Award

R.W. Hampton

Lifetime Achievement Award

George Strait

2020 Western Heritage Awards Honoree List

LITERATURE

Western Novel

The Cheyenne Story: An Interpretation of Courage, written and published by Gerry Robinson

Nonfiction Book

Lakota America: A New History of Indigenous Power by Pekka Hämäläinen published by Yale University Press

Art Book

Don Weller Tracks, by Don Weller, published by Weller Institute for the Cure of Design

Juvenile Book

J is for Jackalope by Teal Blake.

Magazine Article

“If You had Fought Bravely I would have Sung for You” *The Changing Roles of Cheyenne Women During Nineteenth-Century Plains Warfare*, by David Beyreis, published Montana The Magazine of Western History

Poetry Book

We Make a Tiny Herd: Poems to Honor the Burro Lady of Far West Texas by Lucy Griffith, published by Main Street Rag

MUSIC

Original Western Composition

“Hats Off to the Cowboy” recording artist Red Steagall, composed by Red Steagall and Joe Merrick

Traditional Western Album

Shadow of a Cowboy, recording artist Andy Hedges

New Horizon

“Desert Dwelling Mama” recording artist Adrian Brannan, produced by Craig Schumacher

FILM & TELEVISION HONOREES

Western Lifestyle Program

Cow Town, produced by Robert Burch at OETA

Theatrical Motion Picture

Deadwood: The Movie starring Timothy Olyphant, directed by Daniel Minahan, produced by HBO

Documentary

Country Music, directed by Ken Burns, written by Dayton Duncan, and produced by Duncan, Burns and Julie Dunfey

Fictional Drama

“Touching Your Enemy” *Yellowstone S2, E5* starring Kevin Costner, written by Taylor Sheridan

2021 Western Heritage Awards Honoree List

LITERATURE

Western Novel

The King of Taos: A Novel by the late Max Evans, published by the University of New Mexico Press.

Nonfiction Book

Sand Creek and the Tragic End of a Lifeway by Louis Kraft, published by the University of Oklahoma Press

Art Book

Making a Hand: The Art of H.D. Bugbee by Michael Grauer, published by Texas A&M University Press

Juvenile Book

Silverbelly by S.J. Dahlstrom, published by Paul Dry Books.

Magazine Article

“Transitions in the Changing West: The Photographic Legacy of Jessamine Spear Johnson,” by Tempe J. Javitz, published in *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* by the Montana Historical Society

Poetry Book

Second Wind by Patricia Frolander, published by High Plains Press

MUSIC

Original Western Composition

“El Caballo Del Fuego,” recording artist Doug Figgs/The Cowboy Way, composed by Doug Figgs, Floyd Beard, Mariam Funke

Traditional Western Album

A Place to Land, recording artist Kristyn Harris, produced by Aaron Meador

FILM & TELEVISION HONOREES

Western Lifestyle Program

Today’s Wild West, E307 produced by Mark Bedor at Today’s Wild West LLC

Theatrical Motion Picture

News of the World, starring Tom Hanks, produced by Universal Pictures

Documentary

Charlie Russell’s Old West, by coproducer and director Gus Chambers and writer and coproducer Paul Zalis at MontanaPBS

Fictional Drama

“I Killed a Man Today,” *Yellowstone*, S3, E8 starring Kevin Costner, written by Taylor Sheridan