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50th Annual *Prix de West*[®] Returns to The Cowboy

Prix de West is the nation's premiere Western art exhibition & sale, bringing some of the finest artists and representations of the American West to the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum since 1973.

OKLAHOMA CITY – Since 1973, Western artists and art collectors have gathered at The Cowboy for *Prix de West*, the nation's premier Western art exhibition and sale. This year, the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum will present the 50th annual *Prix de West Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale*, showcasing works by the finest contemporary Western artists working today. Art will be on exhibit and open to the public from June 2 to August 7, with art sale weekend held June 17-18, 2022.

“Since its beginnings as the *National Academy of Western Art* in 1973, *Prix de West* artists have represented the American West through painting and sculpture,” said Natalie Shirley, Museum President and CEO. “The Cowboy is proud to continue the tradition of preserving and promoting Western heritage and culture through this extraordinary event.”

Prix de West features works ranging from historical subject matter that reflect the early days of the West, to more contemporary and impressionistic artistic expressions. Landscapes, wildlife art, and illustrative scenes are always highlighted in the exhibition. The highly anticipated annual exhibition and sale is the Museum's largest annual fundraiser, raising more than \$2.8 million in 2021 to help support exhibitions and Museum programming.

For the 50th *Prix de West*, 98 artists, both from the United States and internationally, are expected to attend, bringing over 300 original works. Guest artists Grant Redden and D. LaRue Mahlke will also attend, each bringing two original works to their first *Prix de West*.

“Since the *Prix de West* is made up of today's "very best" Western artists, the artwork which is submitted each year is always of the very highest quality possible because the artists know that their work will be compared, by attendees, to the work of their peers - whom they highly respect,” said *Prix de West* Committee Chairman Dan Corazzi. “Additionally, to ensure that the artwork for each

year's Show meets the quality standard of the *Prix de West*, all of the art is screened/juried (by the committee) before it is placed in the galleries for the public to view."

Works that are accepted each year is not only displayed at The Cowboy alongside some of the finest contemporary artists working today, but they are also in competition for several annual *Prix de West* awards.

Among the awards given each year is the top-honored *Prix de West* Purchase Award that some artists describe as the greatest honor of their careers. The Purchase Award is given to the artist whose work of art is selected by the *Prix de West* Committee and purchased for the Museum's permanent collection.

During the 49th annual *Prix de West* held in 2021, Greg Beecham, received the Purchase Award for his 30" x 48", Oil on linen painting titled *Gone Fishin'*.

During the 2021 awards ceremony, Beecham said, "I'd be lying if I said I'd never dreamed of this. But I never thought it would happen. This is the big one. This is the greatest honor I've ever had and the greatest honor I'll ever get."

Each year, the Museum hosts a weekend of events surrounding Art Sale Weekend including artist seminars, workshops, a cocktail reception, a live auction and an awards dinner that will once again be held on Saturday evening.

Artist Gerald Balciar, who will return this year for his 40th *Prix de West*, was selected to design this year's commemorative bolo, available for purchase at the Museum Store. This time-honored tradition is a favorite among attendees who proudly wear the bolo throughout the weekend.

Also available for purchase each year is the show catalog including art and artist biographies. To commemorate the 50th *Prix de West*, the catalog will be expanded to include an in-depth history and a look back at the art of the past 50 years.

Returning for the third time this year are virtual viewing and proxy bidding options for those who are unable to attend *Prix de West* in person.

For more information on the 50th annual *Prix de West Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale*, to make reservations, see a full schedule of events, or arrange to bid by proxy, visit nationalcowboymuseum.org/prixdewest.

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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.

The Museum is located only six miles northeast of downtown Oklahoma City at 1700 Northeast 63rd Street. Annual family memberships are available beginning at just \$40. For more information, visit nationalcowboymuseum.org.