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**The Cowboy Announces the Winners of the
50th *Prix de West*[®] Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale**

OKLAHOMA CITY – The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum hosted the 50th *Prix de West Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale* Weekend with two days of in-person events and virtual live-streaming options, June 17-18, 2022.

“Since 1973, The Cowboy has hosted one of the nation’s most prestigious Western art exhibitions and sales,” said Natalie Shirley, Museum President and CEO. “The original works and involvement by the artists this year was unparalleled, truly showing that the artists and art enthusiasts that come through our doors are the best of the West.”

Prix de West art sale weekend hosted artist demonstrations and seminars that were open to the public with Museum admission. It is the Museum’s largest annual fundraiser, hosting a live auction and a fixed-price art sale that helps to fund Museum exhibitions and family programming. The Museum sold \$3,833,200 in art the night of the sale.

Each year, the *Prix de West* Committee selects works of art that the committee deems to be of exceptional merit, with the top-honored *Prix de West* Purchase Award winner given to the artist whose work of art is selected by the Committee and purchased for the Museum’s permanent collection. This year Kyle Polzin’s 31” x 50” Oil on canvas painting titled *Rough Passage* was selected. Polzin received the \$65,000 purchase price, a \$5,000 award, and the *Prix de West* medallion sponsored by Roberta M. Eldridge Miller.

The Purchase Award Winner was announced during lunch on Saturday, June 18. When Polzin spoke that evening during the Saturday Celebration Dinner, he described the careful thought that went into making his painting special, describing the struggle he went through to make the work meaningful, including building his own materials for the painting, a practice for which the artist is known.

“When I started (thinking) about this painting, I knew that it had to be a special piece because it was the 50th year for the *Prix de West*, and I put a lot of thought into it and I just envisioned a stagecoach being somehow incorporated into this painting, but I was having a lot of struggles trying to think of how I could make it impactful,” Polzin said, adding that his wife had encouraged him to incorporate a stagecoach into the painting, one which he built himself specifically for the painting. “But after going through all that it took to get to that point, I think winning this award (really) justifies the time that I spent in making this stagecoach which now sits in my barn.”

Polzin went on to thank his wife, children and friends saying that he had an excellent support system and that winning the award was truly the greatest honor of his life.

Other 2022 award winners are:

- The Jackie L. Coles Buyers’ Choice Award was given to Curt Walters for his 30” x 48” oil on canvas painting titled *Inexorable Shiprock*. Priced at \$62,000, the piece sold during the Saturday evening fixed-price sale. The \$3,000 award is given to the most popular work of art chosen by *Prix de West* patrons and is sponsored by the Estate of the late Jackie L. Coles.
- Huihan Liu, received the Frederic Remington Painting Award for exceptional artistic merit for a painting for his 40” x 30” oil on linen painting titled *Family Time*. The painting priced at \$35,000 is available for purchase. Liu received a \$3,000 award for exceptional artistic merit for a painting sponsored by Donna Holt, Jan Provine, and Terri Saddler, in loving memory of their parents, Russ and Dortha Sadler, lifetime members and docents.
- The Major General and Mrs. Don D. Pittman Wildlife Award was given to Ron Kingswood for his 51” x 48” oil on canvas painting titled *A Morning Walk*. The painting priced at \$29,750 is available for purchase. Kingswood received a \$3,000 award for exceptional artistic merit for a wildlife painting or sculpture that is sponsored by the Estate of the late Major General and Mrs. Don D. Pittman.
- The James Earle Fraser Sculpture Award for exceptional artistic merit for a sculpture was presented to Steve Kestrel for his 12” H x 8 1/2” W x 7 1/4” D California Central Coast riverstone; granite, slate & sandstone base titled *Heir of Aries*. The sculpture priced at \$20,000 sold during the Saturday evening fixed-price sale. The \$3,000 award for exceptional artistic merit for a sculpture is sponsored by the Charlie Russell Riders in honor of Steve Rose.
- The Express Ranches Great American Cowboy Award, honoring the finest portrayal of cowboy subject matter, was presented to Thomas Blackshear II for his 43 1/4” x 33 1/2” Oil on canvas titled *Two Americans of the Old West*. The painting priced at \$38,000 sold during the Saturday evening fixed-price sale. The \$3,000 award is sponsored by Robert A. Funk and Express Ranches.

- The Donald Teague Memorial Award, honoring an exceptional work of art on paper, was presented to Dean Mitchell, for his 30” x 22” watercolor painting titled *The 1903 Wickedest Town in the West & Christianity*. The painting priced at \$20,000 sold during the Saturday evening fixed-price sale. The \$3,000 award was sponsored by Scottsdale Art Auction.
- The Wilson Hurley Memorial Award for outstanding artistic merit for a landscape was presented to T. Allen Lawson for his 29” x 45” Oil on linen mounted on panel painting titled *Two of Us*. The painting priced at \$65,000 sold during the Saturday evening sale. The award of \$3,000 was sponsored by Rod Moore Financial.
- The Robert Lougheed Memorial Award was awarded to T. Allen Lawson for his collection of three paintings: *Two of Us*, Oil on linen mounted on panel, 29” x 45”; *Six to Eight Inches Possible*, Oil on panel, 26” x 28”; and *The Beckton Statesman*, Graphite on paper mounted on aluminum panel, 42” x 40”. *Two of Us* sold for \$65,000 during the Saturday sale. *Six to Eight Inches Possible* and *The Beckton Statesman* remain available for purchase. The award of \$3,000 for best display of three or more works is chosen by *Prix de West* exhibiting artists and is sponsored by Barbara and Roger Simons in memory of Faydra and George Simons, true Western enthusiasts.

All unsold art remains on display to the public and available for purchase through August 7, 2022. See available works on the online catalog: pdw.nationalcowboymuseum.org.

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Prix de West Sponsors

The 50th Annual *Prix de West Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale* was made possible by the Presenting Event Sponsor, Eskridge Lexus of Oklahoma City, with generous Major Sponsorship support from Mr. and Mrs. J. Thomas Atherton, and William S. and Ann Atherton Foundation. Supporting Sponsors include the Cresap Family Foundation, Dellora A. and Lester J. Noris Foundation, and Mr. and Mrs. Gregory M. Simon. Associate Sponsors include Deer Time Ranch, Southwestern Stationary and Bank Supply, Inc., Mike and Shelia Ingram and El Dorado Holdings, Inc., Ghostwood, American Fidelity Foundation, and the Oklahoma City Convention & Visitors Bureau.

About The 50th Annual Prix de West Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum has hosted *Prix de West* since 1973. The 50th annual *Prix de West Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale* showcased nearly 300 original works by the finest contemporary Western artists working today. Art will be on exhibit and open to the public and available for purchase until August 7, 2022. Guest artists Grant Redden and D. LaRue Mahlke also attended for the first time, each bringing two original works to their first *Prix de West*.

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. For more information, visit nationalcowboymuseum.org.