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New Acquisition: Kurt Russell gifts his father's hat to The Cowboy

During the 61st Western Heritage Awards dinner, Kurt Russell made a surprise gift, donating his father, Bing Russell's hat worn on the TV Show "Bonanza" to the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK – Actor Kurt Russell donated his father, Neil Oliver "Bing" Russell's hat, worn on the TV show "Bonanza", during the 61st Western Heritage Awards dinner held at The Cowboy on Saturday, April 9.

The Western Heritage Awards honors individuals who have made significant contributions to Western heritage through creative works in literature, music, television, and film, and serves as the induction ceremony for the National Cowboy Museum's Hall of Great Westerners and Hall of Great Western Performers.

During the ceremony where both Kurt and his father were inducted into the Hall of Great Western Performers for their work in on-screen Westerns, Russell told the story of his father's desire to be recognized for both his skill as a baseball player and as an actor.

"I have to say that my dad, ever since he was a little boy, he really did say he just wanted to do two things in his life, he wanted to play baseball and he wanted to play Cowboys and Indians," Russell said during the ceremony while receiving the award on behalf of his father. "And that's exactly what he did. He also said he wanted to be (the first person) to be inducted into the baseball hall of fame and win an academy award."

Russell complimented the energy in the room and said he was honored to receive the recognition on behalf of his father, who had now been inducted into a hall of fame for his work as an actor.

"And so, Dad, here you are, coming into this Cowboy Hall of Fame, this entertainment division," Russell said. "And so very simply, I'm going to leave something for the Museum. This was the hat of Deputy Sheriff Clem Foster, played by Bing Russell."

The hat is the first piece of memorabilia from the TV show "Bonanza" to enter the Museum's collections.

For photos and videos associated with this release, contact Melissa Stewart at

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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.