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**National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum's *Prix de West*® Generates \$3.1 Million in Sales During Weekend Events**

*Prix de West* Award Winners Also Announced During Celebration Dinner

**[OKLAHOMA CITY, June 12, 2024]** – The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum hosted the 52<sup>nd</sup> *Prix de West Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale* Weekend on June 7 – 8, with nearly \$3.1 million in art sales during the weekend.

The *Prix de West Art Exhibition & Sale*, presented by Eskridge Lexus Oklahoma City, is the Museum's largest annual fundraiser, with a live auction and a fixed-price art sale that helps to fund Museum exhibitions and family programming.

George Carlson, recognized as one of America's greatest sculptors as well as a master at using pastels and oils, was awarded the prestigious ***Prix de West Lifetime Achievement Award***, given on rare occasions to celebrate an artist whose work has had lasting impact on the genre of Western art. Carlson is only the fifth artist to receive this award, sponsored by Montie Carol Montgomery, in the 52-year history of *Prix de West*.

Carlson, who has exhibited at the show for 40 years, said he feels "waves of gratitude" that *Prix de West* exists to illuminate Western art and share the resonant story of the West. He said he's particularly thankful for "the people behind the scenes, with their commitment to Western fine art and their support of the artists involved in the show, always making artists feel welcomed and respected." He continued, "It's like coming home again."

In addition, each year the *Prix de West* committee selects a work of art that the committee deems to be of exceptional merit. The top-honored *Prix de West* Purchase Award is given to the artist whose work is selected by the committee and purchased for the Museum's permanent collection.

Thomas Blackshear II received the 2024 ***Prix de West Purchase Award*** for his 36 x 31 in. oil on canvas painting titled *A Much Needed Break*. Blackshear received the \$45,000 purchase price, a \$5,000 award and the *Prix de West* medallion sponsored by Roberta M. Eldridge Miller.

Blackshear, who has exhibited at *Prix de West* for four years, has received national recognition in recent years for his vivid Western paintings, which he calls “Western nouveau,” that depict the strength within Black and Native cultures.

In his acceptance speech, Blackshear paid tribute to Black artists who came before him. “The first person I’d like to thank is (fellow *Prix de West* artist and honoree) Dean Mitchell, because Dean is a trailblazer, who for 20 years was the only Black artist in these celebrated shows. He opened the door and I want to thank him for that,” said Blackshear. He continued, “I’ve had some low lows in my career, but I’ve also had some incredible high highs, and this is one of them.”

The **Directors’ Choice Award for Excellence** is given on special occasions and is sponsored by the *Prix de West* committee itself. Dean Mitchell’s 18 x 30 in. acrylic painting titled *Why*, with the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre as its subject, was selected for this award. Mitchell received a prize of \$3,000 as well as this year's commemorative *Prix de West* bolo in gold. The painting is priced at \$20,000, and as of now, is available for purchase.

Other 2024 award winners are:

The **Jackie L. Coles Buyers’ Choice Award** was given to Daniel Smith for his 24 x 38 in. acrylic painting *Winter's Shroud*, which sold for \$21,000. A \$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.

The **Major General and Mrs. Don D. Pittman Wildlife Award** was given to Kyle Sims for his 36 x 60 in. oil painting titled *Survival of the Fittest*. Sims received a \$3,000 award, for exceptional artistic merit for a wildlife painting or sculpture, sponsored by the estate of the late Major General and Mrs. Don D. Pittman. The painting is priced at \$38,000, and as of now, is available for purchase.

The **Robert Lougheed Memorial Award** was awarded to George Carlson for his collection of four paintings: *Northern Tapestry*, oil on linen, 42 x 42 in., which sold for \$86,000; *Eagle Creek*, oil on linen, 28 x 35 in., which sold for \$58,000; *After the Burn*, oil on linen, 36 x 36 in., which is priced at \$68,000 and is available for purchase; and *American Bison*, oil on linen, 34 x 40 in., which is priced at \$70,000 and is available for purchase. This 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.

The **Donald Teague Memorial Award**, honoring an exceptional work of art on paper, was presented to Joel R. Johnson for his 26 x 32 in. transparent watercolor painting titled *Mesa Reflections*. The painting sold for \$12,000. The \$3,000 award Johnson received was sponsored by Scottsdale Art Auction.

T. Allen Lawson received the **Frederic Remington Painting Award** for exceptional artistic merit for a painting, for his 26 x 60 in. oil on linen painting titled *Seeking Shelter*. The painting sold for \$90,000. Lawson received a \$3,000 award, which was sponsored by Donna Holt, Jan Provine and Terri Saddler, in loving memory of their parents, Russ and Dortha Sadler, lifetime members and docents.

The **James Earle Fraser Sculpture Award** was presented to Dan Friday for his 16 x 13 x 13 in. handblown glass sculpture titled *Lummi Blanket Basket*. The sculpture sold for \$8,000. Friday received a \$3,000 award, for exceptional artistic merit for a sculpture, 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 Abigail Gutting for her 36 x 44.5 in. oil on linen painting titled *Running on Empty*, which sold for \$13,500. Gutting received a \$3,000 award, sponsored by Robert A. Funk, Sr. and Express Ranches.

The **Wilson Hurley Memorial Award**, for outstanding artistic merit for a landscape, was presented to Grant Redden for his 40 x 42 in. oil on linen painting titled *November Snow*. The painting sold for \$35,000. The award of \$3,000 was sponsored by Rod Moore Financial.

All unsold art remains on exhibit and available for purchase through August 4, 2024. See available works on the online catalog: [pdw.nationalcowboymuseum.org](http://pdw.nationalcowboymuseum.org).

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### **Prix de West Sponsors**

The 52nd annual *Prix de West Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale* was made possible by the Presenting Sponsor, Eskridge Lexus of Oklahoma City. Supporting Sponsors include the Cresap Family Foundation, Dellora A. and Lester J. Noris Foundation, and Mr. and Mrs. Gregory M. Simon. Associate Sponsors include American Fidelity Foundation; Mike and Shelia Ingram and El Dorado Holdings, Inc., Leslie Rainbolt, M.D.; Southwestern Stationary & Bank Supplies, A Southwestern Group Company; Verizon; and Visit Oklahoma City.

### **About the 52<sup>nd</sup> annual *Prix de West Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale***

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum has hosted *Prix de West* since 1973. The 52nd 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 4, 2024. Guest artists Tony Abeyta, Dan Friday, Abigail Gutting, Brett Allen Johnson, Jerry Jordan, Mary Whyte and Kim Wiggins attended for the first time, each bringing 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 63<sup>rd</sup> Street. For more information, visit [nationalcowboymuseum.org](http://nationalcowboymuseum.org).