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Country Music Hall of Famers Brooks & Dunn, Actor Graham Greene Among Those to be Inducted at 64th Annual Western Heritage Awards

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum will carry on the tradition of honoring the men and women who contribute to the history and culture of the American West.

Oklahoma City, OK, January 15, 2025 – The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum is proud to name Country Music Hall of Famers Brooks & Dunn and actor Graham Greene among the distinguished panel of recipients and inductees to be honored during the 64th annual Western Heritage Awards ceremony on April 12, 2025, at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. The Presenting Sponsor of this year’s ceremony is the National Western Stock Show’s “Honoring the Legacy” Campaign.

The Western Heritage Awards serve as the induction ceremony for the Museum’s Hall of Great Westerners and Hall of Great Western Performers, as well as the presentation ceremony for the Lifetime Achievement Award and Chester A. Reynolds Award, named after the Museum's founder.

“We are thrilled to announce the exceptional inductees for this year's Western Heritage Awards,” said Pat Fitzgerald, President and CEO of the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum. “Each individual being inducted embodies the spirit of the American West in their own unique way, contributing to its rich tapestry of culture and history. We’re excited to celebrate and honor their vast talent and contributions for generations to come.”

Every year, the Western Heritage Awards also honors individuals who have made significant contributions to Western heritage through creative works in literature, music, television and film. More announcements will come next month that highlight the individuals who will be honored for their creative achievements from 2024. That announcement will include ticketing information for

seminars and events that will be open to the public during the Western Heritage Awards weekend celebration.

Both honorees and inductees receive a Wrangler, a bronze sculpture of a cowboy on horseback created by the late Oklahoma artist and 2017 Hall of Great Westerners inductee Harold T. Holden.

For event details, visit nationalcowboymuseum.org/western-heritage-awards/. For media resources, contact Kerrie Booher at kbooher@nationalcowboymuseum.org.

2025 Hall of Great Westerners

Louise S. O'Connor

Dr. Baxter Black (1945-2022)

About Louise S. O'Connor

Louise S. O'Connor is a rancher, photographer and author. She has spent the last 40 years interviewing, photographing and writing about the people of the ranching culture of her native Texas Coastal Bend. She has created a vast and rich archive of stories as told by hundreds of men and women, representing a wide variety of cultural and ethnic origins. Louise's background as a member of a seventh-generation Texas ranching family instilled a deep understanding of the region's peoples and history in which ranching dates back to the early 1720's.

O'Connor began photographing and roaming ranches as a child. She studied photography under Ansel Adams, Brett Weston and Al Weber at Friends of Photography in Carmel, California. Her work has been seen at esteemed locations across the country including the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City and The Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C.

Her books and projects capture the vibrant storytelling of the people of a unique ranching culture. She presents their lives and dreams; especially the way they reflect upon their profound understanding of nature and the land they lived and worked on, and the animals they lived among.

O'Connor's published works, such as "Cryin' For Daylight," "Tales From the San'tone River Bottom," "Wild Rose," "Milam's Revelation Cookbook," and "The History of Marfa and Presidio County," co-written with Dr. Cecilia Thompson, reflect her deep respect and admiration for the history and the people that were engaged in all aspects of a working ranch before modernization and radical change began advancing after World War II.

She has been awarded an Honorary Master of Art degree from Bath University in England for her work in the preservation of Texas History. O'Connor's works have been published by Texas A&M University Press, and her photographic exhibition of "Cryin' For Daylight" is a permanent part of the Wittliff Collections at Texas State University.

About Dr. Baxter Black (1945-2022)

Dr. Baxter Black, large animal veterinarian, cowboy poet, and philosopher, grew up in Las Cruces, New Mexico immersed in agriculture and the ranching way of life. His decision to become a veterinarian occurred when he realized that no matter what came about, he could always ‘fix your cow.’

After graduating from vet school at Colorado State University in 1969, he ended up in Idaho working as the company vet for J.R. Simplot Company. During this time, driving around and talking to old cowboys, his storytelling style started to take root. Dr. Black began writing poetry based on the cowboys’ tales. With no TVs and few radios, he would take his guitar and recite the stories back to the cowboys. They loved it.

In 1980, while working as a troubleshooting vet for a pharmaceutical company in Denver, Dr. Black’s reputation as an entertainer began to spread. Soon, the constant requests for his brand of poignant, insightful and hilarious storytelling allowed him, after 20 years as a working vet, to transition from part-time cowboy poet to full-time cowboy entertainer. His audience grew to expect physical performances and onstage antics which always guaranteed a laugh. Dr. Black spoke throughout the U.S., Canada and Australia.

His weekly column, “On the Edge of Common Sense,” was carried by over 130 newspapers and his radio program aired on 150 stations through the years. The author of 30 books, he sold over 2 million copies of his books, CDs and DVDs. He was a guest on “The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson” multiple times and was a regular commentator on NPR’s “Morning Edition” for 20 years.

Over his 40-year career, Dr. Black wrote about what he knew – cowboys, cowgirls, rodeo, cattle, horses and ranch life. He wrote with a flair that still captures the imagination of everyone who reads his stories today, regardless of whether they work on a ranch or live in an urban setting. More importantly to Dr. Black was that no one was a stranger, whether they sat next to him on the airplane for thirty minutes or had known him for decades. Every person he met was a friend.

2025 Hall of Great Western Performers

Graham Greene

Anthony Quinn (1915-2001)

About Graham Greene

Graham Greene was born in 1952 on the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario, Canada. When he was old enough, he left school and headed out into the world. Over the years he was a construction worker, security guard, bouncer, carpet layer, bricklayer and laborer. In the early 1970s, he studied civil technology and became a draughtsman. He then studied welding and became an iron worker.

Over the years he was involved in the music industry as a roadie, eventually working as a lighting technician, then an audio engineer, while also working part-time in acting. He switched back and forth between music and acting for a time, eventually landing a TV role in 1979. He then became

executive director for a Native arts organization and started acting full-time. He worked in theater and film in England, Norway and South America.

Greene has won many theater and film awards, including a Dora Mavor Moore Award for his work in Toronto theater, three Gemini Awards – including a lifetime achievement award – given by the Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television, an Oscar nomination, a star on Canada’s Walk of Fame, and a Golden Boot Award. He was named to the Order of Canada, which is Canada’s highest honor, and has been awarded honorary doctorates from several universities and membership in the Masonic Lodge. Today, he continues to gain awards, such as Best Actor at the Tokyo International Film Festival. He still works in several acclaimed television series and films as well as being an ambassador for the Dreamcatcher Foundation.

About Anthony Quinn (1915-2001)

Someone once said, “If I was left on an island, I’d reconstruct the rocks. I have a need to say I was here.” And that’s how Anthony Quinn spent his life – leaving his mark on the world. His creative mind and spirit continue to move us and enrich our lives through his art and acting.

He was born under the gunfire of the revolution in Chihuahua, Mexico in 1915 to a half-Irish father, Frank Quinn, and a Mexican-Indian mother, Manuela Oaxaca, who both marched under the banner of Pancho Villa. Manuela and Frank were separated when she became pregnant with Anthony and was forced to leave the battlefield. When Quinn was only 8 months old, his mother hid him in a coal wagon and escaped to El Paso, Texas. They would not find Frank again until Quinn was almost 3 years old. A second child was born less than a year later, his sister, Stella.

Poverty led them to search for work as fruit pickers in California and they eventually settled in East Los Angeles where Frank worked at Zelig’s Studio, taking care of the animals and training as a cameraman.

Quinn’s interest in art developed early and recognition was quick to follow. At age 9 he began sculpting, and within three years entered a statewide California competition and won it with his plaster bust of Abraham Lincoln. He began drawing sketches of movie stars he would see when his father took him along to the studio. He mailed one sketch to Douglas Fairbanks, and much to his surprise he received a check for \$25 in return.

When Quinn was 11, tragedy struck. Frank was killed outside their home in East LA by a passing automobile. Quinn vowed to support his mother, sister and grandmother. He started skipping school and working at odd jobs to help support the family. Before the age of 18, he had worked as a migrant farm worker, newsboy, preacher and taxi driver. He also made \$5 to \$10 a fight as a welterweight boxer.

Quinn entered another contest during his junior year in high school, with an architectural plan for a marketplace, and again he was named a winner. The prize this time was to study and work with the famous architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, an encounter which was to change Quinn’s life forever. Wright

taught him that the average man does not know how to live, and that it is the job of the architect to build – not to the physical size of the man, but to the size of man’s spirit.

Finally, someone had put into words the hunger that Quinn had felt all his life – to live and create to the size of the spirit of man – which became the motto by which he would live. Wright also taught Quinn that a good architect must be able to convince people of how they ought to live, and sent him to acting school to improve his speech. Quinn worked as a janitor to pay for his lessons.

When one actor fell ill, the teacher asked Quinn to take his part in the play. He received wonderful reviews and thus began his career as an actor. When he began to get small parts in plays and films and earn as much as \$75 a day, he asked Wright whether he should continue to act or to pursue his career as an architect. Wright told him there was always time to become an architect later.

After more than 60 years of performing on stage, in television and film, with a career that included the creation of truly classic characters in “La Strada,” “Viva Zapata,” “Lust for Life,” “Requiem for a Heavyweight,” and “Zorba the Greek,” and as recipient of two Academy Awards and six nominations, Quinn will always be remembered as the consummate actor who received international acclaim and the respect of his peers and the public.

Although he had painted and sculpted since the age of 6, it was not until the 1980’s that Quinn discovered he could have another career as an artist. He had always sculpted small pieces of stone and wood he found while he was working on location in the deserts of North Africa and the Middle East. In that decade he began to enlarge these “maquettes” into full-sized sculptures with the intention of decorating his home. To his surprise, people started asking him where they could buy the artwork. He was given a one-man exhibition at a gallery in Honolulu, Hawaii and sold every piece in the show.

He continued making movies and in his free time on set would forage among the dunes. Between scenes, he would transform the objects, which most people would consider just rocks, stones, and scraps of wood into works of art. He found beauty in everything he saw.

Besides his achievements in acting, sculpting and painting, Quinn also wrote two autobiographies, “The Original Sin,” published in 1974, and “One Man Tango,” published in 1994. Quinn finished his last film, “Avenging Angelo,” with Sylvester Stallone, in May of 2001. In June of the same year, he died of respiratory failure at the age of 86. He was survived by his sister Estella, his wife Katherine and 12 children.

2024 Chester A. Reynolds Award

Warner Glenn

About Warner Glenn

Warner Glenn, a fourth-generation cattle rancher and renowned land and wildlife conservationist, was born and raised on the J Bar A Ranch, located near the Chiricahua/Pedregosa Mountains in Southeast Arizona. Glenn's family came to that part of the country to homestead in 1896.

Glenn married Wendy Paul in 1960 and together they raised two children, Cody and Kelly. Until her untimely death in 2014, they were strong community leaders, advocates for local causes like the cattle ranching industry and wildlife issues, and innovators in the creation and formation of The Malpai Borderlands Group, a non-profit, 501c3 organization that was founded in their home at the Malpai Ranch. Malpai Borderlands Group is now celebrating its 31st year representing environmentally correct and sustainable cattle ranching, collaborative science and preservation of open spaces and wildlife corridors. Today, Glenn continues to serve as a board member for the Malpai Borderlands Group.

Glenn, his daughter Kelly, and granddaughter Mackenzie continue to own and operate two working cattle ranches and lease a third, with one of these ranches having the Mexican border fence itself as its southern boundary. Glenn's son, Cody, and Cody's wife, Mary, are the support team to keep operations going.

In 1996 and again in 2006, Glenn was the first person to photograph two separate Mexican jaguars in the Arizona/New Mexico borderlands. Some environmentalists then pressed federal officials for an initiative to declare parts of Arizona and New Mexico "critical habitat" for jaguars, which would have had a negative impact on the cattle industry.

Glenn, along with many jaguar experts, said such a move was not necessary nor fundamental in the preservation of jaguars in Arizona and New Mexico because the occurrence was rare. He was able to stem the initiative. Today, Glenn continues to be a vocal proponent for both jaguars and landscape conservation on both sides of the border in that region.

Glenn is a community leader, a port in the storm, and a voice of reason who is known for stabilizing situations and encouraging collaboration. He has fundamentally changed the world of conservation and ethical ranching and hunting for the better.

At the age of 89, Glenn conducts all his cattle work on horse or mule back, has two packs of hounds, and with his daughter still trails and catches stock-killing mountain lions.

In 2008, Warner was presented with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Southwest Regional Recovery Champion Award for his leadership in conserving the Malpai Borderlands and protecting the jaguar.

This honor was followed by Arizona Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords recognizing Glenn for his dedication to the Southwest in the Congressional Record, and the Arizona Game and Fish Commission presenting Glenn with Environmentalist of the Year.

Glenn has also been inducted into the Willcox Cowboy Hall of Fame in Willcox, Arizona, and the Arizona Outdoor Hall of Fame. In 2016 he was presented the Environmental Stewardship Award by the Cochise County Farm Bureau, and New Mexico Governor's Conservationist Lifetime Achievement Award in 2018.

In all his accomplishments, Glenn has always been a cowboy first! He can rope with the best of them – roping cattle in the brush with ease and even roping a bear once that was killing one of his calves. He has always handled his cattle with respect.

Glenn, with Wendy by his side, ranched through the toughest droughts, the worst economic times, and, for more than 70 years, has raised and maintained a top-notch herd of cattle. Glenn is a modest man who has had a huge impact on his local neighborhood, the youth associated with his family, and the widespread circle of folks who call him a friend. His faith in God has never wavered, and his love of this country, his family and his way of life have never faltered.

2024 Lifetime Achievement Award

Brooks & Dunn

About Brooks & Dunn

Once artists like Brooks & Dunn hit the Country Music Hall of Fame, folks didn't expect much in the way of new ideas. Thirty-plus years into their career, Brooks & Dunn long ago dialed in their generation-defining sound and style. The best-selling duo of all time, their yin-and-yang, country-rock blend has earned them 20 Number Ones – plenty of material to fill stadium-rocking set lists. And with a Grammy-winning, course-of-history shifting catalog written mostly themselves, they could rest easy knowing without doubt they left a permanent mark on the American songbook.

But Kix Brooks and Ronnie Dunn have always been the restless type. Released November 15, 2024, their latest album "Reboot II" is the sequel to their acclaimed 2019 album "Reboot" and follows the same format of giving today's most engaging artists, in and out of country music, the near-impossible task of reimagining an iconic Brooks & Dunn song; except this time, the artists were given maximum creative freedom.

With styles ranging from progressive country and classic bluegrass to heavy metal, orchestral pop, and beyond, the very fabric of songs most country fans know by heart has been transformed. Whether it was '90s grunge, '70s style studio rock, or swampy soul, the duo encouraged each artist to throw out the playbook.

The new album's 18 tracks include reinterpreted hits such as "Neon Moon," "Boot Scootin' Boogie," and "Believe," resulting in a dynamic and eclectic collection that spans genres and generations.

Brooks & Dunn continue to break records, tallying the longest-running country music residency in Las Vegas, and crisscrossing North America year after year on their sold-out tours. They recently announced 2025 dates for the first leg of their “Neon Moon” tour. For a full list of upcoming tour dates and to purchase tickets, visit www.brooks-dunn.com.

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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.