

Beyond the West

50 top artists present new work at the Quest for the West at the Eiteljorg Museum in Indianapolis.

Our eagle-eyed readers might have picked up on a little piece of writing style we use in the magazine: west, as in the cardinal direction on a compass, is lowercase, while West and Western are often capitalized because they refer less to specific places and more to larger ideas about culture, art and people. The point here is that living in the west is not always the same as living in the West.



Ezra Tucker, *Back Country Elk Cow & Calf*, acrylic on illustration board, 30 x 40"

This fascinating point is clearly seen in the *Quest for the West*, the annual exhibition and sale held at the Eiteljorg Museum in Indianapolis. Although it takes place far from the western region of the country, the show channels and embodies the spirit of the West, proving that the West knows no boundaries.

"*Quest for the West* builds interest in and support for the art of the American West. The event fosters relationships between artists and collectors, and showcases a bold variety of styles among the works available," writes Johanna M. Blume, curator of Western art, history and culture at the Eiteljorg.

This year's exhibition, featuring 50 top Western artists, will take place starting September 8 at the Indiana museum. Opening events include a reception; sale of miniature artworks in a fixed-price, by-draw sale; and a presentation by artist and actor Jim Hatzell, who has worked on more than 75 movie and TV projects, including *Dances With Wolves*. The following day, September 9, will include a luncheon, evening reception, sale for the main portion of the exhibition and a banquet that will include an awards ceremony. The exhibition continues through October 8.

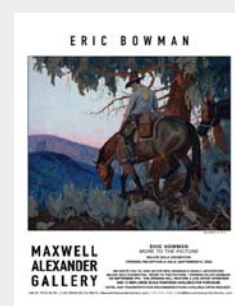
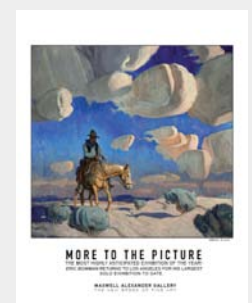
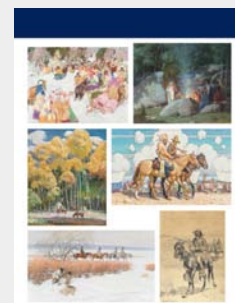
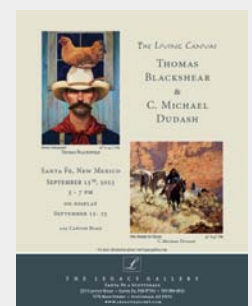
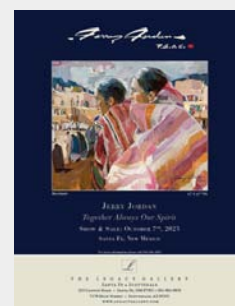
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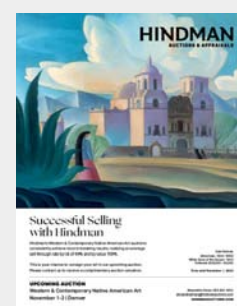
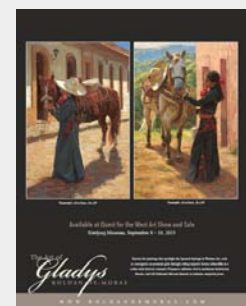
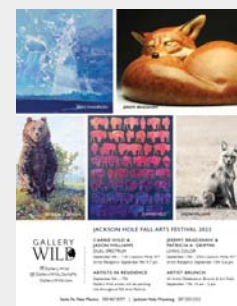
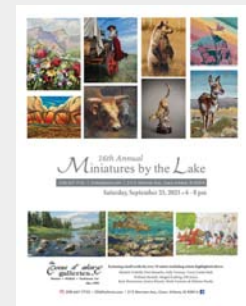
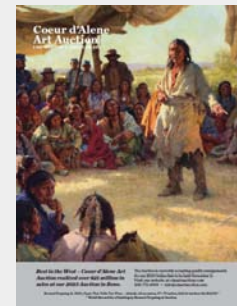
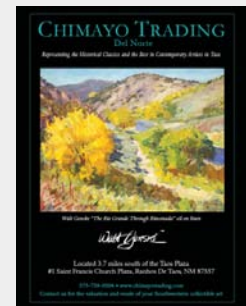
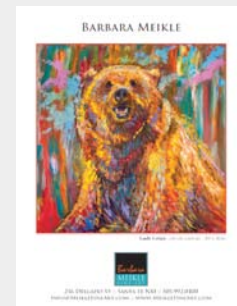




William Haskell, *Unrelenting*, acrylic on panel, 30 x 24"

Invited artists include Gerald Balcia, Tim Cherry, Mikel Donahue, Robert Griffing, Donna Howell-Sickles, Dean Mitchell, Jay Moore, Don Oelze, Howard Post, Gladys Roldan-de-Moras, H. David Wright and many others. New artists to this year's show are Luke Anderson, Dave Lamure Jr. and Ezra Tucker.

Besides the high quality of the artwork and its friendly environment in Downtown Indianapolis, the *Quest for the West* is also known for its pairing of both veteran artists and rising up-and-comers, as well as traditional artists with more contemporary artists. Those traditions continue this year with artists like Mateo Romero, a leading contemporary in the Southwest, sharing wall space with someone like Heide Press, who paints historic scenes of pioneers and other figures of the early American West.

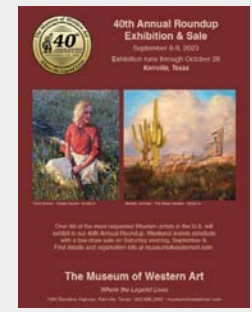
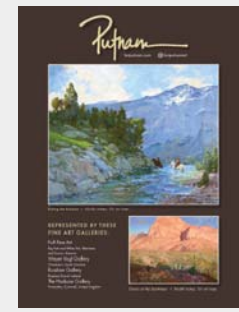
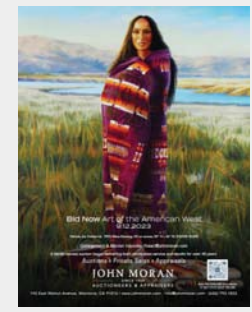
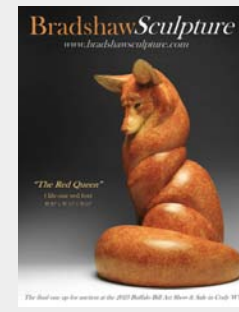
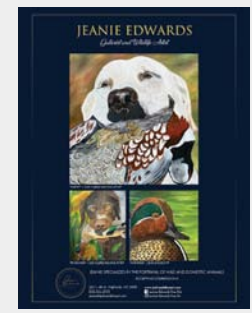




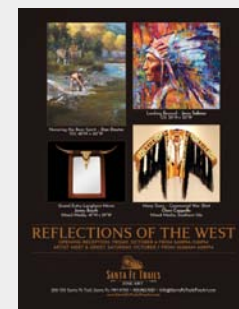
Top: Jay Moore, *Afternoon Clouds*, oil on linen, 24 x 36"; Gladys Roldan-de-Moras, *Encuentro*, oil on linen, 36 x 24". Bottom: John Buxton, *Rural Americana*, oil, 16 x 23"

One returning artist who works in a more traditional style is Texas painter George Hallmark, who will be showing his painting *Siete*, which is Spanish for seven. "Most of central Mexico lies in an area of volcanic activity. Even though most of the volcanos are now dormant, there is still an occasional small tremor. Buildings constructed of handmade bricks begin to shift and crack," the painter says. "In the United States, these buildings would probably be torn down. In Mexico, however, the walls are sometimes repaired with creatively designed buttresses. These architectural additions not only hold the building up, they also add character. In the painting, a woman heads to market after leaving her beautiful numero siete."

Roldan-de-Moras will also turn her attention to Mexican influences with her work *Encuentro*, showing a traditionally dressed rider wearing a sombrero as she greets her horse, presumably during a large event that is taking place out of sight from the viewer.



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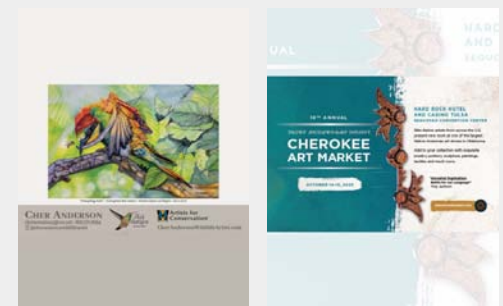
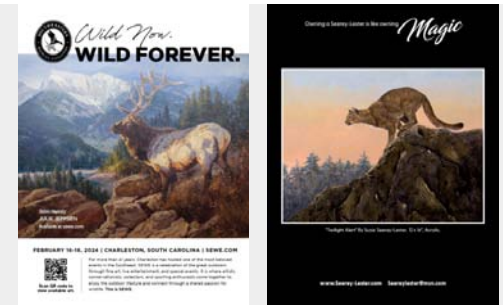
G. Russell Case, *Rising Clouds*, oil, 18 x 24"



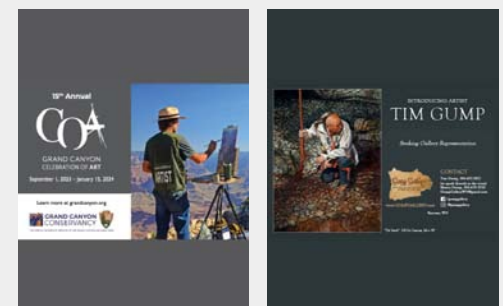
John Fawcett, *Close Encounter*, oil, 20 x 24"

Artists that will be showing more contemporary views of the West include William Haskell, who will be presenting *Unrelenting*, done in his remarkably modern style with abstracted forms and geometric design.

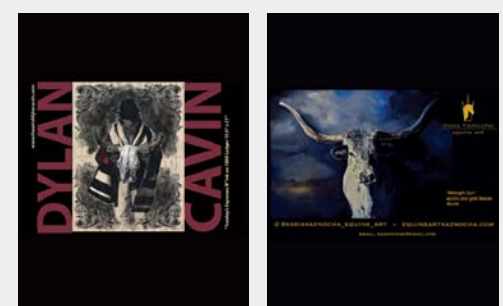
Oil and watercolor painter John Fawcett has long been a fixture at the show and this year he will be showing a wide variety of material, including cowboy and Native American imagery. In the watercolor *Coffee Mates*, Fawcett shows a cowboy kneeling down to enjoy a cup of coffee while he pets his dog. "The cowboy way of life is a simple one. There are a few necessities that make it 'the best'...a good horse, a well-worn saddle, a great working dog and a hot cup of coffee," the artist says of the work.



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Abigail Gutting, *The Champ*, oil on linen, 20 x 30"

Fawcett will also be presenting *Close Encounter*, an oil that shows how drama was around every turn in the Old West. "The Plains Indians traded and worked with mountain men as early as the 1820s and 1830s, gathering knowledge of the local rivers and streams to increase their bounty from hunting and trapping," he says. "Here, the two friends and partners used a small canoe to navigate the small stream where they paddled silently to gain a good shot at their prey."



Mikel Donahue, *Cherokee Blossom*, acrylic and gouache, 24 x 13"; Donna Howell-Sickles, *Shall I Tell You My Story*, mixed media on paper, 44 x 30"

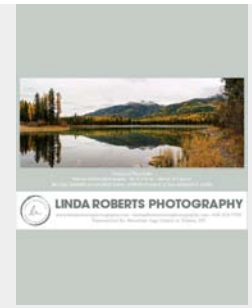
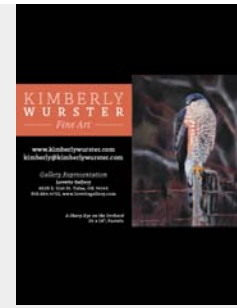


Landscapes are a popular subject at *Quest for the West*, and this year's show will feature a number of noteworthy works, including pieces by Bruce Cheever, Josh Elliott, Brad Teare, G. Russell Case and a lovely snow scene on a farm titled *Rural Americana* by John Buxton.

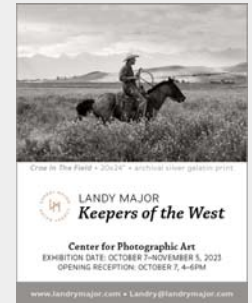
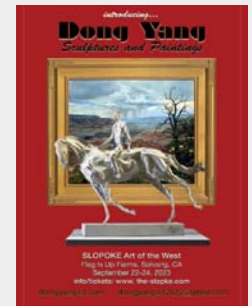
Animals and wildlife are also common images at the show, including Ezra Tucker's *Back Country Elk Cow & Calf* and the fox painting *Protecting the Rookery*, as well as several major new horse pieces by Abigail Gutting.

Another artist bringing significant new work is Mikel Donahue, who is largely known for his authentic cowboy scenes. For the *Quest*, Donahue will be showing two Native American figures, *Ponca Proud* and *Cherokee Blossom*, both of which show a great deal of attention to the clothing, jewelry and the faces of his subjects.

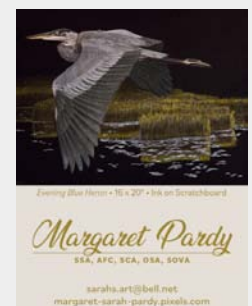
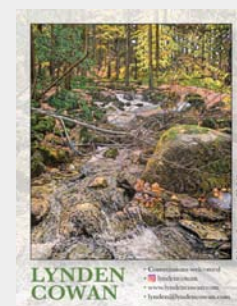
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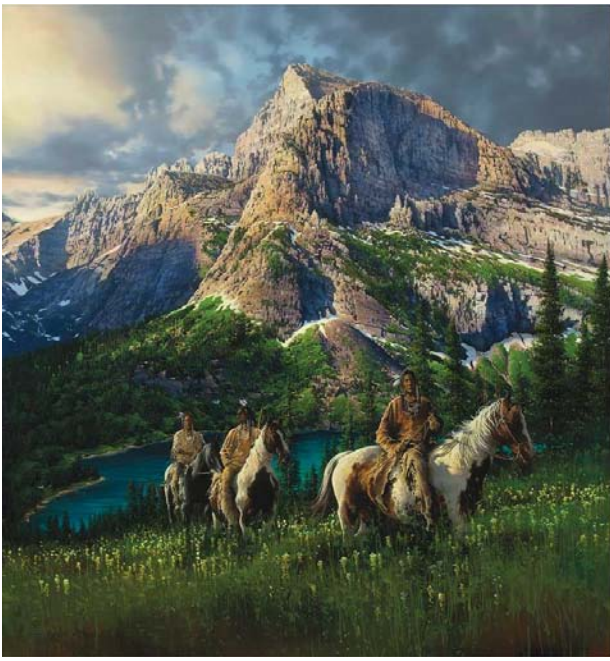
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Bruce Cheever, *Belly High in the Bear Grass*, oil, 32 x 30"; **George Hallmark**, *Siete*, oil on linen, 36 x 30"

While the exhibition will continue through October 8, collectors are urged to participate in the opening weekend events so they can put their name in for these artworks, as well as many others. —

Quest for the West

September 10-October 8, 2023

Opening reception and miniature sale, Sept. 8, 5-9 p.m.

Luncheon, Sept. 9, 11:30 a.m.

Reception, sale and banquet, Sept. 9, 5-9 p.m.

Eiteljorg Museum, 500 W. Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204

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