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September 2025 Edition

MUSEUM AND EVENT PREVIEWS

EITELJORG MUSEUM | SEPTEMBER 5-OCTOBER 5, 2025 | INDIANAPOLIS, IN

Two Decades

Indiana’s Eiteljorg Museum celebrates a milestone with the Quest for the West exhibition.

By Michael Clawson

In the early days of Western art, when artists were answering the call to head West, many of them came from the Midwest: Charles M. Russell and Oscar E. Berninghaus came from Missouri; Joseph Henry Sharp from Ohio; Frank Tenney Johnson from Iowa; and Gustave Baumann from Indiana. This “West meets Midwest” theme is the underlying foundation at the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art in Indianapolis.



William Haskell, *Storm Rider*, acrylic on panel, 20 x 16 in.

The popular museum is celebrating its role in Western art as it marks 20 years of its hit exhibition and sale, *Quest for the West*, which kicks off on September 5 at the Downtown Indianapolis venue. Forty-eight artists will be presenting more than 180 works at the

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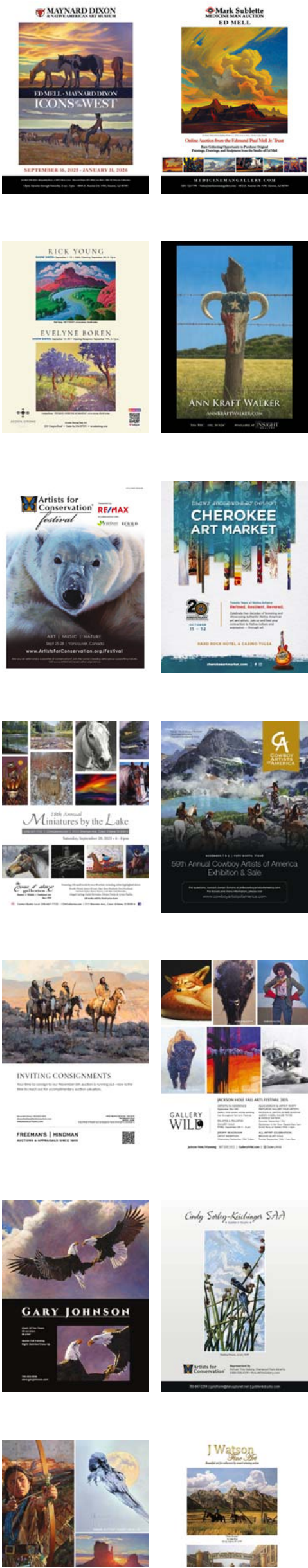
annual show, which features a vast array of genres and categories, from oil paintings and works on paper to sculpture in bronze and glass. The show, reflecting its role as an inclusive space for Native American creators, will also highlight several important Indigenous artists, including painter Starr Hardridge and glass artist Preston Singletary.



Mikel Donahue, *Prairie Wind*, acrylic on board, 24 x 14 in.

Other artists include Brandon Bailey, Sean Michael Chavez, Bruce Cheever, Glenn Dean, Josh Elliott, Robert Griffing, Terry Cooke Hall, William Haskell, Mark Kelso, Curt Mattson, Dean Mitchell, Brenda Murphy, Howard Post, Jill Soukup, Brad Teare, H. David Wright and many others. New artists this year are David Jonason, Bonnie Marris, Singletary and Z.S. Liang.

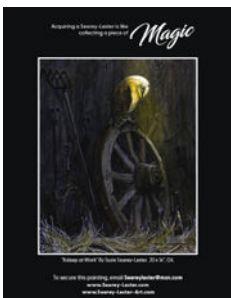
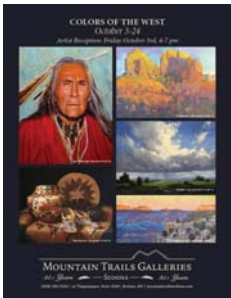
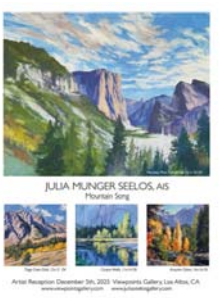
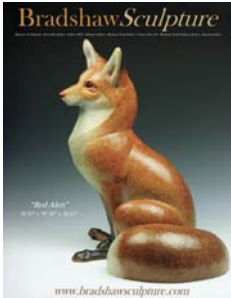
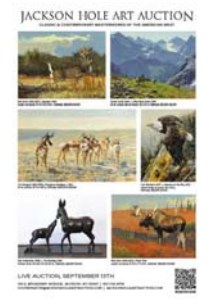
Another new addition to the show this year is Laura Fry, the Eiteljorg’s vice president for curatorial affairs and collections. Fry, who has been at the museum since early 2025, has had a significant impact within Western art at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Tacoma Art Museum and Gilcrease Museum. She joins the show excited to experience Quest for the West.

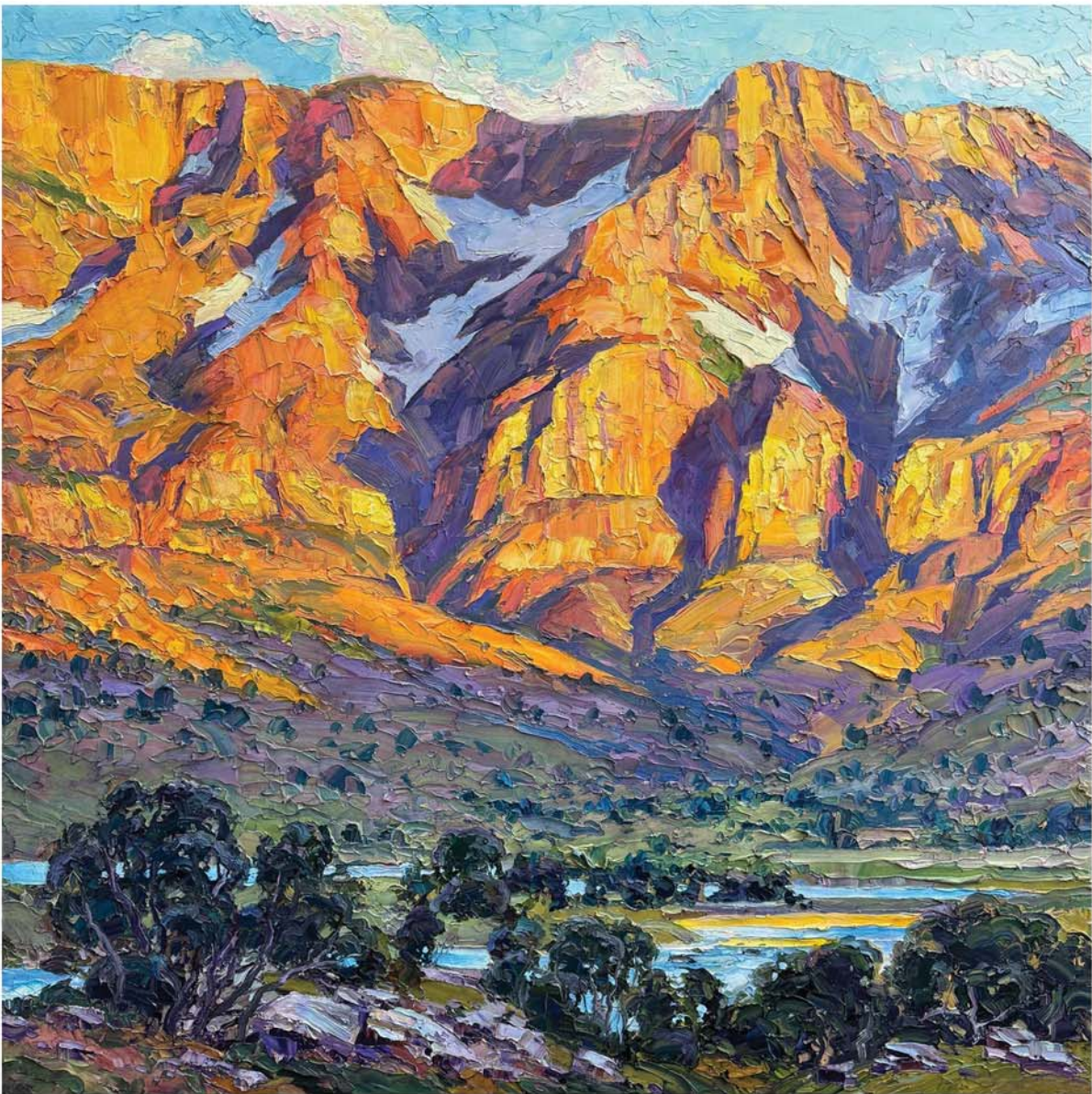




Jill Soukup, *I'll Scratch Yours if You Scratch Mine*, oil on canvas, 34 x 24 in.

“This show has a solid lineup, so I’m excited to see it all in the museum,” she says. “I’m very familiar with these artists and the show, but I had never attended the show before I joined the Eiteljorg. So it will be my first Quest for the West. One of the things that really stands out to me is the wide variety of styles and artists in the show. There are so many approaches to Western art represented here. They speak to the American West, but also more broadly about American art as well.”



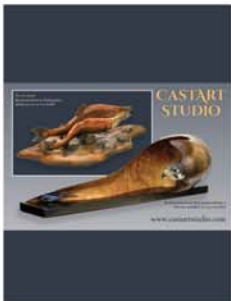


Brad Teare, *High Desert Light*, oil on canvas, 48 x 48 in.

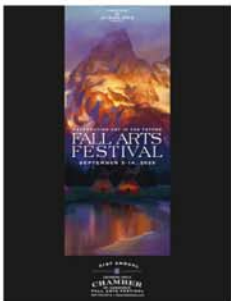
The show will kick off with a slate of events during its opening weekend on September 5 and 6. September 5 will feature an afternoon tour of the newly renovated Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum, followed by an evening reception and small-works sale featuring 37 miniature paintings. Unlike the main sale portion of the *Quest for the West*, the miniature pieces will not hang for the entire exhibition so collectors can take them home after the opening night. On September 6, there will be a luncheon and lively discussion at the Eiteljorg Museum. The guest speaker is Mindy Besaw from the Crystal Bridges Museum and the Eskenazi Museum of Art. Besaw is co-curator of *Knowing the West*, a traveling exhibition exploring art and often overlooked stories of the American West.



John Fawcett, *Indian Summer*, oil, 18 x 24 in.



+6



+8



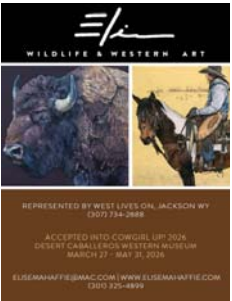
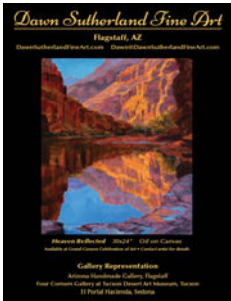
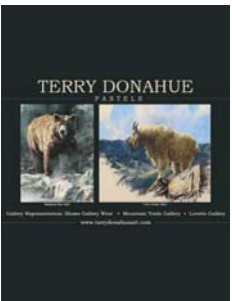


Starr Hardridge (Muscogee Creek), *Shadow of Indian Territory*, acrylic, 20 x 16 in.



Krystii Melaine, *Appaloosa*, oil, 20 x 40 in.

Fry notes that because the museum is not located in the West, collectors will frequently be surprised about the images they see and the stories they learn about. “There are some wonderful and quiet moments in the West that are represented here,” she says. “Not every painting has to have the tallest mountain or deepest canyon or most charged action scene. These are beautiful images that celebrate some of the best of what the



West has to offer.”

One of the returning artists showing work in *Quest for the West* is part-time Midwesterner John Fawcett, who will be showing pieces in both oil and watercolor. For his painting *Indian Summer*, he paints a quiet scene with a rider, his horse and his dog. “This oil came about after riding with my friend Davey and his dog Loretta last September, here in North Routt County, Colorado,” Fawcett says. “We were checking his cattle on a beautiful fall day, where the willows were turning color, the air was crisp and clear, and the water was cool in Willow Creek. It was one of those Halcyon days on horseback.”



Jay Moore, *Tales of the West*, oil, 30 x 40 in.

Other artists showing strong cowboy and horse subjects are Soukup, Mikel Donahue and Krystii Melaine, who will be showing *Appaloosa*, a detailed painting of a horse ready for ride.

Jay Moore, another returning *Quest* artist, will be bringing landscape and wildlife paintings. In *Tales of the West*, he paints a ranch nestled within a wintertime scene at the base of a mountain. “This painting is of the Maryland Creek Ranch near Silverthorne, Colorado. For the plein air study, I woke before dawn, drove to this location along the road, stood in 2 feet of snow, and waited for the sun to rise,” he says. In his wildlife work *Contentment*, Moore paints a grouping of elk. “I have had the photo reference of this family of elk for a few years, and waiting for the right inspiration of the right background to set them. Then this idea came into my mind, and I decided to try it out. Maybe I was influenced subliminally by John Clymer? I am not sure exactly.”



John Buxton, *Sunburst Upon a Tranquil Silence*, oil, 24 x 22 in.

Another artist bringing works from multiple categories is John Buxton, who will be presenting images of Native Americans, landscapes and still lifes—each one with its own mood and atmosphere.

Quest for the West will remain on view at the Eiteljorg Museum through October 5. —

Quest for the West

September 7-October 5, 2025

Eiteljorg Museum

500 W. Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204

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