

30  
YEARS  
**TRAPPINGS**  
*of*  
**TEXAS**

**2016 ARTIST GUIDE**



On the cover: *Off the Top*, watercolor, 40 x 40 inches, Teal Blake

# ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

## Chase Almond- Fort Worth, Texas

It's been said by virtually every artist, but it also holds true for Chase Almond, that it's the journey and not the destination that guides his work. Growing up in Fort Worth, Chase started painting with watercolors when he was fourteen, and worked in that medium until his sister, also an artist, introduced him to oils in 1998. "For me, the process of painting involves more than just recording what I see. My goal is for the viewer to experience the emotional response that inspired me to paint it. To transfer that response to the viewer "through" the painting, so to speak. My technique focuses on conveying this more with color and light and less about intricate detail."

Primarily an *en plein air* painter, he has studied with Kim English, Eric Michaels, George Strickland and Quang Ho. "I am attracted to pristine landscapes, but at the same time I'm intrigued by those with human presence or influence. I like to do small *plein air* pieces combined with photos and take them back to the studio and do larger works. The emotion and immediacy that is sometimes captured in an *en plein air* work is often difficult to translate into a studio piece. It's one of the great mysteries of painting from life."

He co-owns a restaurant design business and home & studio in Parker County. He is an avid quail hunter, horseman and fisherman. Also a world traveler, Chase has painted *en plein air* on five continents, recording new landscapes and cultures through his art.

## JaNeil Anderson- Redrock, New Mexico

JaNeil Anderson was born in 1956 in Safford, Arizona, and was raised in nearby Duncan, on her parent's farm on the Gila River. JaNeil has had the honor and privilege to have lived and worked on various cattle ranches in the Southwest. Firsthand experience with the gathering, branding and cooking for the cowhands has afforded JaNeil the opportunity to live, work and love

the lifestyle of the American cowboy and rancher. Coupled with her incredible artistic talents and her ability to capture the emotion of the moment, JaNeil's art is unique and refreshing.

JaNeil has earned a certificate in Basic Art Studies from Art Instruction Schools, Minneapolis, Minnesota and has studied under Cowboy Artist of America members James Reynolds and R.S. Riddick.

At the outset of her career, JaNeil worked in pencil, then moved to pastels and now works in oils. Anderson's intricate paintings style, the fine details of oils and her appreciation for color allow her works to capture the moment in time, pulling at your heart-strings as you imagine the story behind the piece. JaNeil has the unique ability of drawing you into her work and you literally find yourself emotionally invested in her art.

Anderson and her husband Walt reside on their third generation cattle ranch along the banks of the Gila River in Southwest New Mexico.

## Brian Asher- Snyder, Texas

Brian Asher was raised in the Fort Worth area and graduated from Richland High School in 1978. He has worked or day-worked on some of Texas's largest and most prestigious ranches all his adult life. Although he has been drawing from an early age, it wasn't until 1992 that he decided to take his work more seriously. On days he isn't working for area ranches, Brian draws and has limited edition prints made from his originals.

Brian still day-works and many times carries his camera with him to take pictures and get ideas for future works. He resides near Snyder with his wife Karen and their six children.

### **Wayne Baize- Fort Davis, Texas**

By the age of twelve, Wayne Baize's talent prompted his parents to arrange for private art lessons. After high school, he worked days in a lumberyard and feed-store and spent his nights refining his artistic talents. In 1968, Wayne met artist Tom Ryan who invited him to attend the Cowboy Artists of America annual art show. Ever since then Tom became Baize's friend and life-long mentor. In 1995, Baize was invited to become a member of the CA and has since served as Director, Vice President and President of the organization.

Wayne depicts the contemporary cowboy and gives honor to the cowboy way of life in his works.

Wayne and his wife Ellen live on their small ranch outside of Fort Davis and raise registered Hereford cattle.

### **Vern Ballantyne-Unity, Canada**

Vern Ballantyne is an accomplished rawhide braider. He not only makes gear for others, he uses it himself. The strength and functional beauty that Vern achieves is apparent in every bosal, quirt or headstall he produces.

Most of his gear is made in the cold, long winter months on his family ranch. He also starts colts and occasionally day-works.

### **Buckeye Blake- Weatherford, Texas**

Buckeye Blake is so thorough a Westerner that it would never occur to anyone to mention it to him. His father was a rodeo cowboy who eventually worked for the Arizona Border Patrol, and his great-grandfather, S. Coke Blake, was one of the pioneer breeders of Quarter Horses. Blake has lived in Nevada, California, Montana, Idaho and now Texas. In the West, there is no livelier testimonial to regional, figurative expression than the art of Buckeye.

Buckeye's work is united with a technique that exudes a kinetic vitality, a compelling wit and an unfettered whimsical style.

Blake's work has been shown at the Buffalo Bill Art Show and Sale at Cody, Wyoming, and in the Denver Art Museum, Denver, Colorado. He is represented by Big Horn Galleries, Cody, Wyoming. In 2012 Buckeye was chosen to be the Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale Honored Artist.

Buckeye and his wife Tona reside in Weatherford.

### **Teal Blake- Fort Worth, Texas**

Teal Blake grew up in Montana, on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, surrounded by ranching country. Growing up in his father's studio looking at C.M. Russell paintings and reading Will James books, it was hard for him to not pick up a pencil and start capturing his own vision of cowboys and the American West.

Teal has been painting professionally since 2005, he was predestined to become a western artist. Teal has always liked to show what makes the traditional West: cowboys not always clean shaven, shirts not always creased, and their horses' manes not always long.

Teal's love for the tradition of ranching and cowboying is unparalleled. Up before dawn gathering the cavvy, camping out on the wagon for weeks on end and playing cards with the crew during a rainstorm. Blake's portrayal of ranch life and the handful of people keeping it alive is an authentic one. No models, no costumes, simply being fortunate enough to work and ride alongside his friends and muses; he is able to capture his material and inspiration first-hand.

In 2014 Teal's labor, talent and accomplishments earned him an invitation into the renowned Cowboy Artists of America organization. He has also been honored with several awards, including the Joe Beeler CAA Foundation Award and First Place Watercolor at the Phippen Museum and has been featured in such magazines as *Western Horseman*, *Western Art & Architecture*, *Southwest Art*, *Ranch & Reata* and *The Cowboy Way*.

### **Brody Bolton- Gardendale, Texas**

Brody Bolton was born and raised in Odessa, Texas, on the Ratliff Ranch. He has ridden bulls and saddle bronc horses professionally for fifteen years. Brody lived in France for a year when his father retired from riding bulls and worked at Euro Disney. He has had the opportunity to travel to many other countries as well. Along with his passion for rodeo, Brody became interested in leatherwork.

For the past ten years, he has been working with leather and is focused on advancing his knowledge, skills and techniques in working with leather in the coming years.

### **Mike Capron- Sheffield, Texas**

Upon graduating from high school, Mike Capron became interested in three areas of life: riding, roping and painting. In pursuit of his goals, Mike worked on ranches in southern New Mexico and West Texas until 1965 when he joined the United States Marine Corps. He rejoined civilian life in 1968 and upon returning to Texas in 1969 met and married Anne and together they began to pursue his old dreams.

For Mike riding is always a joy and is his favorite place to exercise, meditate and study his painting subjects. Roping never ceases to amaze him and for Mike all forms of rope magic are infatuating. In speaking of his art, Capron sees life as painting and painting as life. He believes that sharing one's life and art are what takes you places that are worth telling about later.

Mike and Anne have two children, Liz and Wilson. Mike and Anne are the proud grandparents of Wilson and his wife Katy's daughters, Macy and Emmy.

Capron's works have been exhibited in Trappings of Texas for twenty-eight years, along with other museums across the Southwest and in private collections, book illustrations and anywhere he is asked to share his art.

### **Wilson Capron- Christoval, Texas**

Wilson Capron grew up on ranches in West Texas and has studied horsemanship and roping since his youth. In 1996, Wilson began working for a friend's father, legendary bit and spur maker Greg Darnall. Wilson lived with the Darnall family while attending Texas A&M University-Commerce, where he earned an Ag-Business degree. At first, working for Greg was a way to earn money for rodeo fees, but Greg's encouragement for Wilson to learn engraving sparked a passion for craftsmanship that continues today. As Wilson developed his engraving talent, he found guidance in artistic principles from his father, cowboy painter Mike Capron. In 1999, Wilson launched his own business

Capron plans out on paper the overlay engravings that define his contemporary interpretation of Texas- and California-style bits and spurs. Wilson has exhibited in Trappings of Texas since 1999. He has had his work in the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association member show in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, since 2005.

Wilson and his wife Katy who helps manage his business, and their daughters Macy and Emmy live in Christoval.

### **Beau Compton- Tombstone, Arizona**

Beau Compton a silversmith from Tombstone, Arizona, exhibited his work at the 2014 TCAA Emerging Artists' Competition and received the 2015 TCAA \$12,000 Fellowship scholarship to advance his skills through one-on-one mentoring sessions with a TCAA member.

### **Doug Cook- Lenapah, Oklahoma**

Necessity inspired rancher Doug Cook to try his hand at making bits and spurs. "I had a horse that needed something different for a bit. I couldn't afford a custom one, so I got to tinkering and built what I needed," Cook said. He perfected his technique through trial and error, expanded his tools to include engraving equipment and watched a friend build belt buckles to learn the basics of silver work.

Since the mid-1990s Cook has been making custom bits and spurs, with a little jewelry thrown in for something different, mainly in the Texas Style Tradition. When it comes to spur making, Cook is an admirer of Adolph Bayers, Jerry Cates, Billy Klapper and Bill Homer.

His knowledge of the form and function of good bits and spurs comes from personal experience. He has trained horses, studied animal science at Oklahoma State University and works on a ranch with Lisa for over 25 years. Additional feedback comes from son J.D. who competes in roping events.

Doug's works have been displayed at the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame in Colorado Springs, Colorado and at the Women's Protective Services auction in Lubbock, Texas. He has shown in Trappings of Texas and The Western Trappings of Texas in Llano. Doug holds a stamp for both bits and spurs in the International Guild of Bit and Spur Makers.

### **Rex Crawford- Walsh, Colorado**

If anything can be said about Rex Crawford, it's that he knows the cowboy lifestyle in and out. His appreciation for all things western developed while growing up on ranches in Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico.

Rex first became interested in hand crafting western gear in 2000 after receiving a pair of spurs built by his father-in-law. Since that time, Rex has been designing, handcrafting and engraving spurs, buckles, bits, jewelry and decorative items in his own style. This style is a blend of single point and bright cut engraving that is distinctive and unique.

When Rex speaks about his craft, it is clear he has a lot of heart. He says the best part of crafting his custom pieces is knowing they will live on in the lives of his customers. Rex believes in keeping his work true to tradition, making "heirloom quality" pieces that customers would be proud to pass down through their families.

Rex also has a very good-natured approach to his craft. When asked, he says he has no secrets to his trade.

"The way I see it," he said, "I was born not knowing how to do these things; I had to learn from somebody else." Without sharing what he knows, Rex would be unable to pass on the trade that he loves so much. Because of this, he is a strong advocate for education in these arts. Rex regularly takes classes to improve his skills in the engraving trade, and encourages others to learn by teaching classes himself.

Having a creative mind, Rex finds it difficult to identify the inspiration for his art. It's mostly his "crazy ideas" that come organically and become beautiful western pieces. One such idea became one of his very favorite pieces, a "Cowgirl Keepsake Box," that won top awards in several competitions.

In addition to Rex's unique engraving style, a tell-tale sign of his work is a Bible verse stamped near his maker's mark. He enjoys creating his own designs in addition to trophy pieces and custom gear for collectors and working cowboys. He competes in various shows and exhibitions around the country. This gives him the opportunity to share his passion and honor both his and his craft's cowboy roots.

Rex was recently selected by the Academy of Western Artists as 2015 Engraver of the Year.

### **Tyler Crow- Hico, Texas**

Tyler Crow grew up in the small town of Apache, Oklahoma. A 2007 graduate of Apache High School, Crow has always had paper and pencil with him drawing horses. While still in high school, he won the Frank Lucas Congressional Art Contest and his work was on exhibit at the U.S. Capitol. During his senior year he entered a pencil drawing in the Oklahoma Youth Expo at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Winning Reserve Best of Show and a scholarship gave him a chance to attend a weeklong summer painting workshop co-taught by Bruce Greene and Martin Grelle.

Since their first meeting, Crow has attended three more painting workshops co-taught by Greene and Grelle. In April 2010, he attended a Cowboy Artist workshop taught by Greene at the Scottsdale Artists

School in Arizona. These workshops have transformed Tyler from a sketch artist to a painter creating works that reflect his passion for cowboys and horses.

He received the People's Choice award at the Bosque Arts Classic in Clifton, Texas, and Small Works Great Wonders, at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. In addition, his work has been exhibited at the High Noon Show and Auction in Mesa, Arizona.

### **Angie Crowe- Blanco, Texas**

Angie Crowe began weaving around 1994. Traveling through New Mexico and Colorado, she studied the Navajo and Rio Grande weaving traditions- especially the bold expression of colors and geometric patterns that reflect nature and a spiritual world. During her travels, she met and spent time with two remarkable master weavers, Rachel Brown and Eppie Archuleta, both of whom inspired her to begin weaving.

Angie and her husband bought a farm in central Texas nineteen years ago and there they raise Karakul sheep whose wool she uses in her weavings. Ancient native traditions have informed her rug and saddle blanket designs. However, contemporary designs are also an important element of her work. She frequently chooses her wool colors first, both natural and dyed, and then she starts experimenting with various design ideas at the loom.

### **Teresa Elliott- Alpine, Texas**

Teresa Elliott has always enjoyed conjuring her own realities in paint. Once the bones of a painting are in place the sweeping landscapes, epic bovines and calves are all there to entice her to capture them in situations that she would gladly trade places with. She paints them as she imagines them, living in the moment, casually exchanging a glance with a visitor who may pick up on the operatic atmosphere she strives for.

Teresa is coming off of a phenomenal 2015 including: a painting added to the National Western Stock Show's

permanent collection in Denver, Colorado, including a Best Of Show award at the Coors Western Art Exhibit in January. Major exhibits include the traveling MEAM/Salmagundi 2014/2015; International ARC Salon Exhibition in Barcelona, Spain and New York City; 2015 Art Southhamptons in Bridgehampton, NY; the American Realism exhibit at the World Art Museum in Beijing, China; the Butler Institute of American Art; and eight years at the Coors Western Art Exhibit resulting in five People's Choice awards.

Additional honors include two Chairman's Choice and honorable mention awards from the Art Renewal Center's International Salon; Best Of Show at the Briscoe Western Art Museum's Night Of Artists and Artist's Choice at the 2008 Cowgirl Up! show at the Desert Caballeros Western Museum.

### **Wayne Franklin- Cotulla, Texas**

Wayne Franklin grew up in the heart of the south Texas brush country around Cotulla, where he has been a professional silversmith for thirty-nine years. His designs for belt buckles and pistol grips are influenced by his ranching heritage and the history of the region. He has made pistol grips for many of the Texas Rangers and others in the law enforcement community. Like a bit & spur maker or a saddlemaker, fit and function must come first. His pistol grips are not only attractive in design but must perform properly when the need arises.

He has designed and produces award presentation buckles for many organizations such as the Texas Wildlife Association, the Los Cazadores Deer Contest, and La Mesa Ranch Deer Contest.

Four sets of Wayne's pistol grips are on display on Ranger guns at the Texas Ranger Museums. One set is in the Texas Ranger Museum in San Antonio while the other three sets can be seen at the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco. This is the twenty-eighth year that Franklin has participated in Trappings.

## **Jerry Galloway-Dumas, Texas**

Jerry Galloway became interested in making bits and spurs while working on farms and ranches. While growing up, Jerry loved to work with his hands and enjoyed making something out of nothing. One of the things that Jerry especially enjoyed was modifying gear to suit his needs, and through that process he started making bits and spurs for his own personal use.

In 1993, Galloway began expanding on his engraving techniques and started to develop a unique relationship with both cowboys and collectors. He continued to work on his engraving techniques by attending the Miller Bit and Spur School in Nampa, Idaho, and also through instruction from Benno Heune of Emporia, Kansas. Jerry also spent time refining his craftsmanship with Jeremiah Watt.

Jerry admires the clean construction of the Texas style spur and the Gal Leg shank along with the large rowel, ornate California style. Through the years he has become a master of inlay work and fancy silver engraving. Galloway also enjoys the challenge of free-hand engraving directly on the steel. Galloway's spurs have been exhibited at the High Noon Western Americana Auction and Antique Show in Mesa, Arizona, and Trappings of Texas.

## **Scott Hardy- Longview, Canada**

Descended from five generations of Western Canadian ranchers and stockmen, Scott Hardy left the ranching life in 1981 to devote himself full time to working with silver. Since 1991, he has lived with his wife Leslie, two sons and a small herd of longhorns in the heart of southern Alberta's foothill cattle country.

Though largely self-taught, Hardy acknowledges the work of modern masters Al Pecetti and Mark Drain, and turn-of-the-century Tiffany Company craftsmen. Their influences and the knowledge that embellishing horse and rider with precious metal is tradition as old as man on horseback informs Hardy's drive to give contemporary expression to historic Western forms. Hardy is a founding member and past President of the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association.

## **Leland Hensley- Meridian, Texas**

A native Texan, Leland Hensley developed a passion for the art of rawhide braiding while attending Sul Ross State University in Alpine. After graduation in 1985, he took a job as a ranch manager but continued to polish his braiding skills. To this day Leland sees his braiding, not as a job that needs to be done, but an enjoyable activity that he looks forward to at the end of each day. He is constantly challenging himself to improve and grow. He's made it a personal goal with each finished piece to surpass what he's done in the past. As a result, Leland's work has developed an outstanding reputation amongst collectors and working cowboys alike for unique design, beauty, and functionality.

Leland has made several trips to Argentina to learn new techniques and share ideas. Drawing on international influences is one of the characteristics of Leland Hensley's style that sets his work apart.

Leland is a member of the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association. His work has been exhibited in Sun Valley, Idaho; at the Gathering of Gear in Elko, Nevada, and at Trappings of Texas, where Leland has served as Guest Curator of Gear since 2002.

## **Jay "J.T." Hudson- Hobbs, New Mexico**

Jay was raised on a ranch in southern Arizona. He has a degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Arizona and has cowboied in Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, Texas and Arizona.

He lives in Hobbs, New Mexico, where he has been a saddle maker for over thirty years. His business specializes in making handmade saddles, leather goods and quality gear for working cowboys. Jay also designs and makes his own silver and Western silver jewelry.

Jay believes in the importance of passing on his knowledge and has taught jewelry classes, worked with students in a New Mexico Department of Education rehabilitation program and had apprentices in the New Mexico Division of the Arts Apprentice program.

He has shown his work at many Cowboy gatherings and symposiums, as well as several galleries.

### **Stephen Jones- Woodward, Oklahoma**

Born and raised in Oklahoma, Stephen Jones and his wife, Kathy, live in the historical community of Keenan, which is located on the family ranch, in Northwestern Oklahoma.

Stephen spent over 30 years in the commercial art field and a successful fashion designer for ten of those years becoming a full time sculptor. Jones is a self-taught sculptor and has augmented his training by studying under some of the nation's great sculptors such as Mehl Lawson, Sandy Scott, Gerald Balcier, Paul Moore and John Coleman to further his skills as a sculptor. Being a working ranch cowboy and Cheyenne heritage along with his life-long, hands-on experience, adds to his in-depth knowledge of the American West as it is today, and is what helps breathe life into his art.

For Stephen art has been a life-long education and his entertainment.

### **HR "Heather" Kaiser- Norman, Oklahoma**

"My fundamental inspiration springs from the people and places that surround me. My goal is to capture the layers of attitude, emotion and personality of the historic American Western lifestyle and translate that into a visual feast that captures the heart and soul of the West.

Sculpting and painting are soul nourishing and energizing for me and have made a vast change in how I experience life. I see and sense strength in spirit and strive to capture that in my work to share with others."

### **Krist King- Archbold, Ohio**

Krist King is a self-taught whip maker and braider. He learned his craft cowboying on ranches in Nevada, Arizona, Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Florida.

While in Florida, he was introduced to the cow whip and decided to take one apart and learn to make one on his own. Over thirty years later, King supplies whips to customers all over the United States. As time allows, he also rawhides and has used his own reatas

for years. King also enjoys training horses for riding and driving. He lives in northwest Ohio with his wife Muriel. He also works for a fertilizer and propane company.

### **Frank "Buddy" Knight- Marfa, Texas**

Buddy Knight, a well-known blacksmith, cowboy and silversmith has worked on ranches for over forty years. He began making bits and spurs because his years of cowboying taught him the necessity of good quality working gear. He is a master of metal fabrication for the ranch or ranch house.

In 1988, Buddy started making spurs full time. He specializes in contemporary cowboy style bits and spurs of cold rolled steel with sterling, copper or brass overlays. Buddy also produces hand-cut, hand-engraved, Western style jewelry, conchos and trim. His work has been displayed for many years in Trappings of Texas. In 1995, he was invited to display his spurs at the Western Folklife Center in Elko, Nevada. In 1996, Buddy demonstrated spur making at the twenty-fifth annual Texas Folklife Festival at the Institute of Texas Cultures in San Antonio.

### **Douglas Krause- Klamath Falls, Oregon**

Douglas Krause was born in Idaho and spent most of his life in northern Colorado and southern Wyoming. He began braiding in 1972, hitching in 1978, and making mecates in 1995. Douglas began a four-year saddle making apprenticeship in 1981, with master saddle maker, T. J. Holmes. He purchased Holmes's Cheyenne, Wyoming, shop in 1985. In 1990, Douglas moved his shop to Colorado and then to California in 2005. His move to California was prompted by his interest in the West Coast type of gear and its history. Now most of his work is centered around the cow horse and stock horse industry.

He is most inspired by the work of fellow makers and enjoys being able to discuss trends, problems and solutions with other craftsmen. Douglas finds that the best leather workers are always willing to share ideas and

improvements. He feels that building gear is evolutionary—a journey where the idea is to build better and better equipment. Krause's journey led to a 1998 Best of Show award for his mecates at Elko, Nevada, and was recognized as the 2001 Braider and Hitcher of the Year by the Academy of Western Artists.

### **Laddan Ledbetter- San Angelo, Texas**

Laddan Ledbetter was born and raised in Midland, Texas, where he spent the majority of his time wrapped up in the rodeo world as a professional bull rider. He became interested in silverwork by hanging out in Terry Starnes' workshop. After being encouraged by Brody Bolton of 3B Leather Work, in February of 2009 he enrolled in the beginners engraving class in Johnny Weyert's school in Alpine.

In the beginning he made numerous contacts, and spent time with many amazing engravers such as Stewart Williamson, Wilson Capron, Russell Yates, and Mike Pardue, who all made a huge impact on his work. In 2011, in pursuit of refining and improving his engraving skills, he attended the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association Winter Workshop taught by Wilson Capron and Russell Yates in February and in November he attended Weyert's advanced class.

In 2013 he was accepted to compete in the Emerging Artist Competition held by the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association in Mesa, Arizona. His works have been exhibited in Western Trappings on the Llano, Llano, Texas, and Expressing the Rural West -Into the Future, Elko, Nevada.

### **Kathryn Leitner- Kingfisher, Oklahoma**

Kathryn's artwork focuses on the lifestyle of ranching family and their livestock. Her early childhood on her grandparent's ranch in central Montana started a passion for the western culture and she hopes to share that passion with her viewer.

She works in graphite, colored pencil and oil. Her education has been informal. It has consisted of a few workshops, local classes with a couple of very talented

teachers and viewing good art and a lot of books.

Kathryn has been published several times in the *Oklahoma Cowman Magazine* and has participated in the Rusty Gables Spring Stampede and Trappings on the Cherokee Strip, both held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Cowboy True, Wichita Falls, Texas; and Western Trappings on the Llano, Llano, Texas.

She now resides in rural Oklahoma with her husband, horses and dogs. She takes every opportunity to spend time with and photograph ranching families in their day to day lives.

"I feel blessed to have been bestowed with the God given gift of visual storytelling and I want to share the story of the people who still carry the values and character that our great country was founded on; the American Ranching Family."

### **Matt Litz- Iowa Park, Texas**

Matt Litz was lucky enough to be raised in West Texas most of his life giving him the opportunity to be around the lifestyle he loves so much: farming and ranching. Learning how to fix equipment and problem solve was just a few of the skills that he has brought into his silversmithing career. Matt has taken what had been a hobby into a career while still working a full time job as a welding shop foreman. No matter where he is working, he knows that quality above quantity paramount.

In 2004 he built his first trophy buckle and he hasn't looked back except to see how his work has improved. In addition he created trophy buckles for the Texas Rodeo Cowboy Hall of Fame, Fort Worth Stock Show, Man of the Year award for Resistol and K9s for Cops.

For Litz, 2013 was a great year in his silversmithing career. He entered and won the silversmithing award at the TCAA Emerging Artists in Mesa, Arizona. This was followed by winning the Art to Wear Jewelry contest at the Western Design Conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. To complete a great year, *Western Horseman* magazine featured him and his work.

Matt says, "I don't know what the future has in store for me but I welcome it with all its wonders. I look forward to the people I meet and the places this "hobby" will take me."

### **Pablo Lozano- Tandil, Argentina**

Pablo Lozano began learning about braiding at the age of fifteen. Family tradition tied him into Argentina's cattle heritage since the 19th century. After graduating from Champagnat College in Buenos Aires he studied with rawhide braider Don Luis Alberto Flores and silversmithing with Daniel Escasani.

Since 1987, Lozano has been an *ad honorem* instructor at the Heritage Center in Tandil. Throughout his career, Lozano has schooled and mentored many aspiring braiders. He believes in the concept of apprenticeship as a means to educate and safeguard the Gaucho's cultural legacy. In 2008 Lozano became a member of the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association. His works have been exhibited at Elko, Nevada; Mesa, Arizona; Loveland, Colorado, and at the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association Hall of Fame in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Lozano has received numerous awards and in 2007, he earned the *Santos Vega* as the best Argentine rawhide braider. In 2015 he was recognized as the Rawhide Braider of the Year by the Academy of Western Artists.

Lozano's traditional rawhide braiding is recognized for its dependable use and unique beauty due to his personal style and creative talent.

### **Jan Mapes- Kim, Colorado**

Ever since she was a girl visiting her grandparents' ranch in Arkansas, Jan loved horses and the outdoors. Through high-school and college those passions grew and her best friends were some of God's four-footed creatures. Naturally, they became the subjects that filled her sketchbooks. However, until she visited Santa Fe on her honeymoon she didn't consider art as anything more than a hobby.

For over thirty years Jan has been immersed in the rural cultural of Colorado's ranching community. With encouragement from her horse-trainer husband and an inquisitive mind, Jan developed her ability to express, first in clay and later in paint, the things that touched her heart.

Today her work travels from her studio in southeastern Colorado all across the United States. And with her contract for the design of the National Cutting Horse Association's trophy, her sculpture travels around the globe. But whether painting or sculpting, Jan's goal is the same: "to capture the spirit and beauty of this earthly experience, and to encourage others to see, feel, enjoy, and appreciate it."

### **Ernie Marsh- Thayne, Wyoming**

Making quality silver mounted bridle bits and spurs has been a passion of Ernie Marsh since 1990.

His unique style of combining firearm engraving with traditional inlay techniques, along with painstaking attention to detail have set his work apart. With function being the underlying foundation, his heirloom quality pieces have become valued possessions of serious horsemen as well as collectors.

Marsh's vision and passion for bits and spurs became reality with the help of the late Elmer Miller of Nampa, Idaho, and John Barraclough of Pasadena, California. He is also appreciative of the help and advice from many fellow craftsmen.

The Marsh's operate a full-time shop, producing bits, spurs, saddle silver and buckles and since 1998, producing the traditional style stainless bridle bits first produced and made famous by noted bit maker, Al Tietjen of Reno, Nevada. The Marsh Brothers Silver and Saddle Shop is located in Etna, Wyoming.

Ernie's work has been exhibited in shows throughout the country, including Elko, Nevada; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Fort Worth, Texas; Jordan Valley, Oregon; Paso Robles, California; Flagstaff and Prescott, Arizona. He has shown his work in Trappings of Texas for over 10 years.

He was chosen as one of the Top Ten Spur Makers from 1997 to 1999. In 2000, the Academy of Western Artists honored him with the Will Rogers Award as Spurmaker of the Year. Marsh is a founding member of the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association.

### **Loyd McConnell- Marble Falls, Texas**

Loyd McConnell has been making knives since 1976. He started on a Sears 6 X 48 grinder that he had borrowed from his dad. In 1966, he graduated from Texas Tech University with a degree in accounting and practiced public accounting for eighteen years. Throughout the years, he had been involved with several oil related companies both as owner and director. In 1989, McConnell made knife-making a full-time job.

McConnell's work can be found in collections all over the world. He is a Bespoken Knifemaker for Holland & Holland, Riflemakers to the British Crown, producing exclusive knife designs. The Orvis Company, Inc. and Beretta Galleries in New York and Dallas, Texas, carry his work.

### **Sharon McConnell- Dublin, Texas**

Horses and the cowboy lifestyle have been a life-long passion of Sharon McConnell. She relays the everyday life experiences with the horse through her sculpture. With this God-given talent, Sharon feels truly blessed to have had wonderful teachers such as Chuck DeHaan and Mehl Lawson.

Her art work can be seen in homes of collectors, ranchers and World Champion cowboys. She has done several commissioned pieces, four of which are on permanent display at Del Frisco's Double Eagle Steakhouse in Fort Worth.

Sharon and her husband Ronnie live on their ranch outside of Dublin.

### **Rick McCumber- Huntsville, Texas**

Rick McCumber was raised in the small south Texas ranching community of George West, located in the fertile Nueces River Valley. Surrounded by the families,

history and culture of the men credited with originating the legendary longhorn cattle drives of the 1880s, Rick was, as a child, privileged to 'tag along' during the cattle workings with men whose fathers and grandfathers had participated in the transformation of the early Texas cattle industry. The youngster did not realize at the time that it would be these early years of involvement with these experienced cowmen that would one day be the inspiration for the pieces he creates in his studio.

Grateful to have known these men, Rick is committed to accurately representing and honoring the ranching traditions of the south Texas cowboy, both past and present, in his work. Rick calls on his 'lessons learned' from the past and his own lifetime of ranching as he produces each new piece whether it's an accessory of silver and gold or an image cast in bronze, each piece that he creates captures the "cowboy spirit" that still lives in Texas.

### **Carlos Montefusco- Huinca Renanco, Argentina**

Born on December 25, 1964, Carlos Montefusco attempted his first drawing at the age of one when he added his own artistic signature to his father's graphic designs. By the age of six, Montefusco enjoyed horseback riding with his father and was developing an interest and passion for the horse, the Argentine countryside and its rural people.

A graduate from the University of Lomas de Zamora with a Zootechnical Engineer degree, he moved to rural Huinca Renanco to begin his professional career and continued to refine his artistic skills. However, he always managed to find time to show his love for nature and his passion for the Gaucho heritage through his drawings and paintings.

Self-taught, the fusion of his humoristic and singular style with a realistic and warm depiction of the Argentine countryside and its rural people has placed him in a unique position amongst Argentina's painters.

### **Whit Olson- Canistota, South Dakota**

While earning his Equine Science Degree from Montana State University, Whit Olson began studying under professional braider, Hial Steele of Manhattan, Montana. What began as a part-time job rapidly developed into a passion.

Though the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association's scholarship program and workshops, Whit has been privileged to work with TCAA braiders like Nate Wald and Leland Hensley. In 2015, Whit was awarded a TCAA Fellowship and continues to grow as an artist. His work is on display at several exhibits each year including: Trappings of Texas, Trappings of the American West, Flagstaff, Arizona; Art of the Cowboy Makers, Las Vegas, Nevada; and The National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada.

Whit and his wife, Megan, reside outside of Canistota, South Dakota, where they raise crops, cattle and kids. Although Whit stays busy farming and ranching, he continues to braid functional and elegant gear. He consistently strives to learn and build on what others have taught him and believes that learning is a lifelong commitment.

### **Joshua Ownbey- Canyon, Texas**

Joshua Ownbey was raised in Crowell, Texas, with a family background in farming and ranching. In 2007 Joshua moved to Canyon, where he started his business in 2009. Joshua's style was inspired by PeeWee Peebles who taught him how to engrave and refine his design. Pebbles also educated Joshua on the blacksmithing techniques of a one piece spur which Joshua continues to use. He also credits Jerry Cates and Terry Alward who have both helped guide his work.

In 2011 Ownbey attended Weyerts School of Engraving in Alpine where he successfully completed an advanced engraving class. Joshua prefers to "stay in the fire" as they call it, as much as he can by forging out all of his stock. With an eye on the future, Joshua strives to maintain loyalty with his customers by producing functional equipment for his clients. Joshua works on a daily basis improving the craftsmanship that is in-

involved in building his products and meeting his customers' needs and desires.

Joshua and his wife Jennifer promote their products at various trade shows throughout the year.

### **Mike Pardue- Midland, Texas**

Mike Pardue was raised in Midland and in 1984 he married his high school sweetheart Tammy. They recently celebrated their thirty-first wedding anniversary. He and his wife have two daughters, Tiffany and Bethany.

Pardue has served for twenty-four years as a Firefighter/Paramedic and Rescue Technician for the Midland Fire Department. Being a firefighter allowed him to pursue other hobbies and in 2000 he decided to learn the craft of western silver work and engraving. Pardue has been able to turn a hobby into a second career and recognizes that without the support of Tammy and help of family and friends he would not be where he is today. He also thanks God for all the blessings in his life.

### **Tom Paulson- Clifton, Texas**

Born in Fort Worth, Tom Paulson's interest in art started at an early age. His parents moved to Sanger, Texas, when he was ten and they lived on a small ranch for two years. While his father owned and operated a Ford dealership there, Tom was exposed to a rural life of horses, cattle and the out-of-doors.

In 1960 his father bought a small ranch in the mountains of southeastern Oklahoma to raise cattle. Tom helped work the ranch during summers, holidays and plenty of weekends while attending college. On the ranch he broke and shod horses, acquiring a knowledge of ranch life that has shaped his artistic tastes.

After graduation from college, he began a career in commercial art that lasted more than 30 years. In the 1990s he enrolled in professional painting and sculpture workshops. In 1999 he and his wife Vickie,

moved to Clifton, where he creates paintings and sculpture that reflect the ranch life of his youth along with the surrounding landscape and animal life.

Paulson is a member of the Western Artists of America and has shown his work in their 2012 Corsicana, Texas show and the 2013 miniature show in Billings, Montana.

### **PeeWee Peebles- Sanderson, Texas**

PeeWee Peebles grew up in the town of Ranger, Texas, where he graduated from high school. As a high school student, Peebles built his first set of spurs in Ag class and used them while working on area ranches. After graduation, he worked briefly on the D Ranch near the Guadalupe Mountains then moved to the Big Bend area where he lives today.

As a young man of nineteen, he moved to Marathon, Texas, and there had the good fortune to work for John Hardaway who was an area ranch manager. Hardaway was not only his boss, he was a teacher and mentor to PeeWee. He helped him to build gear from start to finish and also got him interested in engraving. In addition, Peebles was determined to build a one-piece spur but was experiencing difficulties producing one that met his standards. He had the good fortune to spend time with Billy Klapper at his shop where he learned the techniques and methods of creating a one-piece spur from one of the masters of the craft. Along the way, PeeWee received useful advice and criticism from the cowboys that he worked with on the importance of making a functional bit or a set of spurs

PeeWee and his wife Kyle along with their three sons Gage, Rance and Levens live near Tesnus, between Sanderson and Marathon, on the Tesnus Ranch which he manages.

### **Benoit Poulain- Lone Oak, Texas**

Benoit Poulain is a successful Frenchman residing in the countryside near Lone Oak. His thirty years of experience in the Western silversmith arena earned him the honor to build the saddle silver for the team

owner of the 2011 NFL Super Bowl finalist and five presidential saddles for dignitaries around the globe.

When he is not in the shop, he helps his wife Pam taking care of their 500 acres farm comprising of commercial cattle and dairy goats which he processes the milk into yogurt and various cheeses. They also raise chickens, rabbits, Rouen ducks, honey bees and a half acre vegetable garden and orchard. Twice a week he bakes heirloom sourdough bread. In the evenings he can be found in the kitchen engaged in a culinary experiment, which Pam and their friends adore!

### **Maximo Prado- Pergamino, Argentina**

Maximo Prado was born in the Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1978. He started studying the art of rawhide braiding from his mentor and longtime friend Armando Deferrari in the 1990's, an apprenticeship that lasted over a decade. Prado enhanced his skills as a traditional rawhide braider with the assistance of fellow braiders Pablo Lozano and the late Don Luis Alberto Flores.

Prado's traditional rawhide braiding is recognized for its dependable use and beauty due to his skill, talent and dedication. His passion for rawhide braiding and the Gaucho's legacy has driven him to start studying and learning about other horse cultures, especially the vaquero's horsemanship and the tools of their trade.

He has taught at the Heritage Center in Pergamino. In addition, Prado has worked with several rawhide braiders from Argentina, Australia and the United States. Furthermore, Prado has traveled to Montevideo, Uruguay, where he has participated in rawhide braiding contests and seminars.

He participates in trade shows and exhibits throughout Argentina in furtherance of public education and to promote the Gaucho's crafts. His traditional rawhide braid work has been shown at the "Exposicion de Artesanias Tradicionales Argentinas", "Feria Ganadera" and "Feria de Nuestros Caballos" sponsored by the "Sociedad Rural Argentina" in Buenos Aires.

In 2012 Prado was awarded first place in the rawhide braiding category for the sophisticated and elegant braid work he created for a traditional Gaucho knife handle shown at the "Fondo Nacional de las Artes," a national crafts exhibit in Buenos Aires.

### **Graeme Quisenberry- Queen Creek, Arizona**

Graeme Quisenberry has been interested in rawhide since spending a calving season in northern Arizona with a cowboy who told him about the time he spent in Nevada working with buckaroos and their gear.

From the beginning, Quisenberry has enjoyed the simplicity of rawhide, no chemicals or complicated machines, only a skilled hand, a sharp knife and something as simple as a horse shoe nail to part the strings.

Graeme has been fortunate to spend time with other braiders including Leland Hensley who have shared their experiences and expertise. He says, "I try to improve my skills with every piece I build."

### **Ruben Ramos- Jal, New Mexico**

Ruben Ramos has been involved in knife and leather work for over twenty-five years, and has become a full-time maker in the past few years. Ramos finds great satisfaction in creating a usable piece from raw materials. He is always seeking ways to improve on his craft and strives for perfection. His knives are truly one-of-a-kind and are built to last generations. Both his knives and custom leather goods are handmade by him in his shop.

Ramos has lived in Jal, New Mexico, most of his life and makes his home there with his wife DeAnna.

### **Ken Raye- Zachary, Louisiana**

Ken's interest in saddle making began when he was twelve years old, when he had made belts and wallets with a hand-me-down Tandy kit. In 1988, he worked for Harold Chambers, a local saddle maker in Denham Springs, Louisiana, and while there repaired saddles.

In 1991, Ken moved to San Angelo and worked for John and Tim Piland at Piland Saddlery and he made up his mind to become a saddle maker after building over one hundred saddles for them. He moved to Zachary, in 1993 and there opened his own shop.

At the Boot and Saddle Makers Roundup in Wichita Falls, Ken has earned the titles of Best Workmanship in the Geometric Category in 2008, 2010, 2011 and 2013 and Best Tooling in 2009 and 2013.

### **Javier Ribeyrol- Platanos, Argentina**

Javier Ribeyrol graduated from San Martin College and then began studying the art of silversmithing from Fernando Rivalora at the Municipal School of Arts in Berazategui. He subsequently studied the art of sculpting and chiseling in silver with silversmith David Zaco.

Ribeyrol's non-traditional style and creative talent are recognized by his distinctive hand cut and deeply-sculpted pieces that highlights bold floral motifs in his silver. The chiseling and engraving of floral patterns adds a unique beauty to his style.

Javier has mentored several aspiring silversmiths from his shop in the town of Plantanos. He believes in the concept of apprenticeships as a means to educate and safeguard the Gaucho's cultural legacy. Currently he is an instructor at the Municipal School of Arts in Berazategui working with aspiring silversmiths.

Since 1997, Ribeyrol has shown his works in trade shows and exhibits in Argentina. In 2012 he was invited to the first trappings show "Manos de La Patria" in Mar del Plata, in commemoration of the bicentennial of the Republic of Argentina.

Ribeyrol has exhibited his work in numerous Trappings of Texas shows as well as at the Art of the Cowboy Maker in Loveland, Colorado, and at the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association Hall of Fame in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

## **Raul Ruiz- San Angelo, Texas**

Raul Ruiz, the man known as the “Sheep Shearing Artist of West Texas” for thirty years, was born in Tom Green County, November 3, 1959, to Daniel and Clara Ruiz. As a child, Raul began to show a strong artistic talent that has followed him from his school day to the present. As a teenager Raul labored as a sheep shearer in the family business prior to the onset of his career as an artist.

In the mid-1970s Raul began an apprenticeship with the late Dwight C. Holmes, a nationally recognized and renowned artist and sculptor who was a member of a generation of well-known artists. Holmes led Raul into the same mediums of art by teaching and passing on his knowledge to him. After nine years of study Raul’s apprenticeship ended with the passing of the great artist, his friend and mentor.

Following in Holmes’ footsteps, Ruiz began creating sculptures for his town of San Angelo. Some of his sculptures include the 2001 life sized bronze statues of a ram and ewe that were formally unveiled at the Junell Center at Angelo State University and in 2011, Raul’s life size sculpture of San Angelo native and western novelist Elmer Kelton was dedicated at the Stephens Central Library in San Angelo. In 2012 busts of the late San Angelo philanthropist Eva Tucker and Elmer Kelton were dedicated at the San Angelo Independent School District Administrative Building. In 2013 a life-size bronze of an Angora billy goat was unveiled in Rocksprings, Texas.

Ruiz’s works have been exhibited throughout Texas including at the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum in Canyon; Bosque Art Show, Clifton; Llano County Historical Museum, Llano; Museum of Western Art, Kerrville; and Lea County Museum, Lovington, New Mexico.

## **John David Rule- Minco, Oklahoma**

John David Rule was born in Oklahoma City where he grew up as a cowboy spending most of his time when not in school, at the Oklahoma City National Stockyards. John studied art at a very young age, attending art class at the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds. Active in

many art projects throughout his high school years, he experimented in multi-media art forms including wire sculpture, oils, charcoal and leather carving.

In 1976 Rule went to work for National Saddlery Company Inc. in the Stockyards and eventually purchased it in 1980. In 2008, John sold the business and built a saddle shop and art studio at his ranch in Minco.

John became known as a “master” at fitting a saddle to a horse. Thanks to the encouragement of his friend A.G. Meyer, he submitted a beautifully tooled saddle example to the Pro Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA). Due to the quality of his craftsmanship, he was chosen to build the PRCA World Champion saddles from 1990 to 1999. In 2007, he built the Oklahoma Centennial saddle.

2015 saw Rule receiving Best of Show at Rusty Gables for sculpture, created the book cover for the CA’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary book *Sons of Charlie Russell* and was chosen by the state of Oklahoma to design the travel guide. Currently he is creating two life size sculptures in the Oklahoma City area.

## **Cary Schwarz- Salmon, Idaho**

Cary Schwarz began working leather as a hobby in the early 1970s as a farm boy from southern Idaho. Later, he visited a holster shop in Twin Falls where he saw employees working with leather, hand tools and equipment and soon he was working alongside these craftsmen. With this experience, he worked at two different leather shops while attending Boise State University. After working as a trapper, hunting guide, packer and farm worker, Schwarz enrolled in a saddle making school in Spokane, Washington, and built his first saddle in the fall of 1982.

Schwarz’s journey to become a top-notch saddler has led him to seek out some of the West’s most respected craftsmen in order to continue his education. In 1998, he became a founding member of the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association. He received the Academy of Western Artists Saddlemaker of the Year award in

2009 and Idaho Governor's Award for the Arts in 2010.

In the spring of 2009, Schwarz traveled to France to study old world leather work from a classically trained saddler in Saumur. As he continues his quest for refinement, he has also found the time to teach. Each year he hosts a clinic where he passes on what he has learned about saddle making and flower carving.

### **Lindy Cook Severns- Fort Davis, Texas**

Copiloting a corporate jet for two decades gave landscape artist Lindy Cook Severns a profound understanding of the skies that span her landscapes, while seven generations of Texas pioneer ancestors bequeathed the Fort Davis painter an appreciation for vast, rugged spaces and the people who roam them.

Severns' mother taught her to draw. She credits Santa Fe's Albert Handell with her smattering of formal art training. With roots in drawing the human figure, she seeks to paint landscapes as portraits of the terrain. Although some subjects demand being painted in oils, Severns appreciates the purity, permanence and complexity of soft pastels. "The thought process behind painting in pastels compared to painting in oils is like shooting an instrument approach down to minimums versus flying in clear skies with unrestricted visibility."

Old Spanish Trail Studio, Lindy's Davis Mountains working fine art studio and studio gallery is open by appointment. She is represented in Texas by Michael Duty, Dallas; Midland Framing & Fine Art, Midland; The Rusty Rabbit, Alpine; The Gage & V-6 Collection, Marathon.

### **Chessney Sevier- Buffalo, Wyoming**

Chessney Sevier finds inspiration in the simple beauty and lifestyle of the Nebraska sandhills where she grew up, and in the Wyoming landscape where she lives today. The daughter of an artist, Chessney has pursued her own career as a printmaker and painter since receiving her degree in fine arts from Nebraska's Chadron State College in 1998.

Chessney considers herself a "contemporary western artist." Her work reflects her rural upbringing and heritage, and expresses her experience of the American West. She works primarily in intaglio or copper plate etching, a process in which each print must be inked and pulled by hand. She also paints in acrylic and in oil, creating small-scale paintings that often depict community life in the rural West.

Sevier has taken top honors in printmaking at the Santa Fe Indian Market, and at the Heard Museum Guild Indian Fair and Market, Phoenix, Arizona. Her works have also been seen at the We Pointed Them North exhibit at the Cattle Raisers Museum, Fort Worth and in a solo exhibition at the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

### **Edgar Sotelo- Sulphur Springs, Texas**

Edgar Sotelo is a fourth generation artist who was born in Durango, Mexico. He came to the U.S. and graduated from Texas Tech University in 1988. He put himself through school and his pencil drawings helped to pay his expenses. He was encouraged by his wife to try oil painting in the early 1990s. For the past seventeen years the Sotelo's and their three daughters have lived in Sulphur Springs on their ranch, *La Joya*, The Jewel, where they raise American Quarter Horses.

Sotelo believes in experiencing what he paints. He does this by attending *charreadas* in Texas and visiting ranches that allow him to ride along, giving him the opportunity to observe, record and preserve the *charro*/cowboy way of life. He is always looking for ranches and individuals who still do things much as they were done one-hundred years ago. Experiencing this firsthand has created a deeper respect and admiration for this vanishing culture and way of life.

### **Baru Spiller- Wingate, Texas**

Barrel racing since the age of nine, Baru Spiller has immersed herself in the western industry her entire life. Passionate about the ranch horse industry, she has accumulated championships in ranch and cow horse

As a silversmith of ten years, her work has been included in exhibits at the Trappings of Texas; the Western Folklife Museum during the Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada; Home on the Ranch Exhibit & Sale in Wickenburg, Arizona; Fusion Silver Show at the Buck Brannaman ProAm Roping, Santa Ynez, California; and the Western Trappings on the Llano, Llano, Texas.

### **Ben Tolley, Hachita, New Mexico**

Ben Tolley and his wife and daughter call home the South Well Camp near the small town of Hachita, New Mexico, which is part of the family owned Hurt Cattle Company. He has worked on several ranches across the Southwest and in Colorado. Tolley has attended college and trade schools, but keeps finding himself returning to working with cattle.

Like many working cowboys, he has always had an eye out for fine gear and has had difficulty affording the best gear. Since he was unable to buy everything that he would like to own, he decided the best thing to do was to learn to build and braid his own gear.

He began his journey by reading and studying the braiding book by Bruce Grant, and since purchased several other books. That is how he learned to build and braid his own gear. Up until last year, he had not met another braider or rawhider. He found a group page on the Internet, full of braiders who were willing to share information and tips.

Tolley works with his own hides, starting with the skinning process, fleshing, de-hairing, framing and sting making. He works on his projects in the evening and on days off, and any time he gets the chance to.

### **Mike Vaughn- Bowie, Texas.**

Mike began his boot making apprenticeship at the age of sixteen, while still in high school. His mentors were Clyde and Joe Vasquez, two brothers and Master Boot-makers, who went to work at what was then Frank Leddy's, now M.L. Leddy's, in the Fort Worth Stockyards over thirty years ago. Clyde and Joe began working for Frank Leddy in 1941, the day he opened the

store, and were still there in 1983 when Mike graduated from high school.

In Mike's five and a half years of apprenticeship with Clyde and Joe, they would always say, "You better pay attention to what we're showing you because it's not written down anywhere and when we're gone, the knowledge is gone."

Today the legend is carried on as Mike continues to create beautiful, quality, great-fitting handmade boots for cowboys, cowgirls, businessmen and city folks all over the country.

Mike has one goal when it comes to crafting the finest handmade boots in Texas—perfection. His artistic flair, authentic cowboy style and demand for excellence are evident in every pair.

### **Nate Wald- Lodgegrass, Montana**

After graduating from college and returning to his home near Lodgegrass to ranch with his father, Nate Wald braided his first pair of reins in the spring of 1989 and has been braiding steadily ever since. "My great-grandfather did some braiding. It was pretty rough work, but it was functional—neck ropes, whips, quirts," says Wald, "and I just always liked braiding."

Wald is always working to improve his work with each new piece he braids. "I want to make the finest, most beautiful, unique gear I can produce without losing tradition, functionality, or straight, clean work."

By reading books on the craft and spending countless hours of braiding, Wald considers himself to be self-taught. A number of men, however, have been influential in the development of his work including Ed DuBeau, Bryan Neubert and Bill Dorrance. Wald is a member of the TCAA. Nate's work has been shown in the The Gathering of Gear exhibit in Elko, Nevada, and is in the permanent collection of gear at Elko's Western Folklife Center.

## **Herman Walker- Kerrville, Texas**

Herman Walker spent his formative years in the ranch country of West Texas on a 120 square mile ranch. After receiving a degree in Animal Science from Texas Tech, Herman began his art career.

From 1973-1978 Herman and his wife, Deanne, had a gallery/foundry in Kerrville, Texas. When his paintings and sculpture began to gain recognition, they moved back to Eldorado, Texas to be close to the subject matter he loved. For years his work has sold throughout the West and mid-West portraying the "Ranch Life" of the American cowboy.

In 2008 Herman and Deanne returned to Kerrville. "The essence of my work reflects the traditions and values of the cowboy. They live, work and play putting their brand on the land".

Walker's works will be seen in the upcoming shows around the state and in Colorado: Trappings of Texas; Windows to the West-Estes Park, Colorado; National Ranching Heritage Center "Summer Stampede 2016," Lubbock; America's Horse in Art Show at The American Quarter Horse Museum, Amarillo; Bosque Art Classic, Clifton; and Museum of Western Art-Fall Roundup, Kerrville.

## **Rygh Westby- Sedona, Arizona**

Rygh Westby, pronounced Rig, has worked on cow outfits, large and small, all over the West from Montana to Arizona, and some of these outfits still pulled a round up wagon, the horse-drawn kind.

A self-taught artist, Rygh painted at night while using bunkhouses or barns as his studio. While still working for the historic Padlock Ranch in Montana, he made his first sale of a painting through a gallery. Prior to that, Westby traded paintings for doctor bills, partial payments on a saddle, and the like. The sale of that small painting led to the creation of a body of work over the ensuing four decades. Most of the subjects for Westby's work are men he has worked with and the same is true of the horses he depicts.

Westby's art is in private and museum collections, including the bronze Ain't A Horse That Can't Be Rode, selected by the late Mr. Soichiro Honda for the Honda Motor Company Corporate Collection; the Buffalo Bill Museum, Cody, Wyoming; Museum of the Big Bend, Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman, Montana; and the Bradford Brinton Museum, Big Horn, Wyoming. Rygh's work can also be found in the collections of other artists, a high compliment, indeed.

## **K.W. Whitley- Crowell, Texas**

K.W. Whitley was born and raised west of Austin, Texas. She attended Westlake High School and continued her education at the University of Texas, Austin, with emphasis on fine art and design. Her interest in art was nurtured and encouraged by her father, Ralph White, who was an accomplished artist and instructor with The University of Texas Art Department.

As a child, K.W. showed hunters and dressage horses, and then pursued eventing. The discipline and knowledge gained through enduring the training needed for such riding, she feels, helped tremendously in later endeavors. In addition, she day-worked for Buster Borchardt on his large cow/calf operation near Crowell, Texas, and while working for him, she was exposed to the many aspects of daily ranch work.

Currently, K.W. lives in Crowell and there in her studio she continues to explore, observe and translate her visual experiences and influences to canvas and paper, using oil and/or a combination of gouache and color pencil. Her work can be seen in numerous shows in the U.S.



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*Information subject to change  
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