

Icons of the West

Third annual show brings to viewers new symbols of the West.

Ringing in its third year, *Icons of the West* continues to grow into its place as an annual cornerstone of the peak Montana art season. *Icons of the West* began in response to the success of the Oil Painters of America (OPA) exhibitions hosted by Dana Gallery.

After deciding to develop a show unique to the gallery—and unique to the West—ideas were explored until a theme emerged.

"I was looking at a painting of a bison called *Icon* and I thought: that's great, there are lots of different icons of the West. I began thinking that certainly a bison or a grizzly or a majestic mountain is a Western symbol, but there are countless other icons of the West, an individual's interpretation or point of view," says Dudley Dana, gallery owner. And thus the *Icons of the West* exhibition was born.

In June 2011 the Dana Gallery launched the first invitational exhibit featuring local Missoula artists as well as those who had previously participated in *The Russell: The Sale to Benefit the C.M. Russell Museum, the Western Masters Art Show & Sale*, OPA artists, and others.

This year's juried show sought 234 submissions, of which works were awarded in six categories: Best Landscape; Best Figurative; Best Traditional Western; Best Contemporary Western; Most Original Interpretation of the Theme; and Best Use of Humor and/or Irony.

"I also like the notion of seeing what this icon means," Dana ponders. "I think the West is changing rapidly. What does it mean? And what is a symbol of the West? It almost becomes conceptual art in a way."



Loretta Domaszewski, *Cowboy Coffee*, oil, 12 x 12"

Loretta Domaszewski's *Cowboy Coffee* is a playful, colorful work that focuses on elements of the natural environment with combinations of bold saturated color.

"As a visual artist," she says, "I see the world through light, layers and pathways."

Feeling a deep connection to the earth as a living body informs Domaszewski's work and subject matter. "The physicality of earth, the shape and curves,

the way light travels through the water, the arc of a valley, the form and movement of the land, the patterns of a current, she speaks a universal language," the artist muses.

Domaszewski continues to be inspired by nature's constant

motion of flowing water patterns, changing cloud formations, and windblown fields of grass. The phenomenon of nature is the source of her paintings, and her unique view of the West.

"Our vision is that in years to come this show will merely

be the cornerstone of a major weeklong event involving the entire Missoula arts and business community much like the C.M. Russell show in Great Falls and the *Salon International* show in San Antonio," says Dana. ☞

dana
GALLERY

ICONS OF THE WEST SHOW

Lake View Horse Pasture oil 12" x 12"

LORETTA DOMASZEWSKI

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