

Western Art Thrives in Great Falls: Record Sales at March in Montana Auction

Great Falls, MT – Western Art is alive and thriving, as referenced by the remarkable success of the 38th annual **March in Montana** sale. Enthusiastic collectors, dealers, and galleries turned out in force, exceeding expectations with record-breaking sales across the board. From historic masters to contemporary artists, demand was high, and the excitement was palpable throughout the event.

Works by Montana's favorite son, **Charles M. Russell**, continued to draw strong interest, with a pair of Native American portraits – including one of Chief Joseph – selling for over **\$100,000** to an ecstatic buyer. Several other Montana artists stole the show, with a major **Olaf Seltzer** – *Blackfoot Braves*, a striking 20x30 painting depicting two Native American riders on a scenic bluff - sold for **\$78,000**, well above its high estimate. An **Earle Heikka** pack-string bronze sculpture, titled *Successful*, fetched nearly **\$20,000**, proving the lasting appeal of his craftsmanship. Meanwhile, three exceptional works by **James Ralston** and a stunning oil painting by **Larry Zabel**, a Montana favorite, captivated collectors and achieved impressive sales.

Historic Western art remained in high demand, as two outstanding pieces by **Gerald Curtis Delano** soared past their estimates, earning applause from the audience. *Canyon Couple*, a masterful 18x24-inch watercolor, brought \$66,000, while *Back to Back*, a bright and bold 12x16 painting, sold for \$27,000. **Oleg Stavrowsky** maintained his hot streak with strong sales, totaling over \$85,000, while wildlife art collectors showed enthusiasm for works by **David Wade** and **Bonnie Marris**.

The contemporary Western art market also saw outstanding responses. **Don Oelze, Joe Kronenberg, Colt Idol, and Rachel Brownlee** all had exceptional showings, with their works exceeding high estimates and proving the growing demand for modern interpretations of the Western experience.

In addition to fine art, rare collectibles made a significant impact. A **Visalia Stock Saddle Company saddle** shattered expectations, selling for **\$36,000**, well above the **\$15,000–\$25,000** estimate. Native American art also shone brightly, with a **Northern Plains beaded pipe bag** drawing considerable interest from collectors, before selling for \$5,800 after a feverish bidding war.

Alaskan art was another highlight of the sale, with strong bidding on works by **Sydney Laurence, Eustace Ziegler, and Theodore Richardson**. Laurence's *Mt. McKinley*, a breathtaking depiction of the famed North American peak, and the cover piece for this year's sale, sold for **\$58,000**. The enthusiasm from Alaskan collectors contributed to the dynamic energy of the auction.

With the overwhelming success of this year's event, plans are already underway for the **39th annual March in Montana sale**, scheduled for **March 19 through March 21, 2026**, in Great Falls. Collectors and enthusiasts are encouraged to mark their calendars for what promises to be another milestone in Western Art history.

About March in Montana

March in Montana is a premier auction and art event dedicated to showcasing the best in Western, Wildlife, and Native American art. Held annually in Great Falls, the sale attracts collectors from across the country, offering a diverse selection of fine art, bronzes, and historical artifacts. For more information, visit www.marchinmontana.com, or contact us at 208-664-2091.