

MEN'S ARTS COUNCIL *presents*

COWBOY Tales

SPRING 2004

Branding animals is nothing new. Evidence of branding can be traced as far back as ancient Egypt. The practice of branding – along with the first cattle – was brought to the New World by Hernán Cortez during the 16th century.

Cattle ranching spread rapidly over the decades, and north of the Mexican border, ranchers were quick to adopt this inexpensive and permanent marking technique to protect their herds. They created a system of symbols that is still used today.

Cattle brands did more than just identify the owner of a head of cattle. These simple markings became powerful symbols that spoke

horses and cattle for over 100 years, then you must be doing something right," says Todd. "The Weaver brand stands for something – quality, versatile, well-bred, usin' kind of horses that trace back to the original sires of the quarter horse breed."

That's the way it is with the Cowboy Artists brand and tradition. For nearly 40 years, the CA brand has become synonymous with the most distinguished Western art there is, with roots that trace back to the foundations set by Charlie Russell and Frederic Remington.

The Cowboy Artists of America was founded on June 23, 1965, and the CA brand was created and adopted as their trademark in

“I knew **cowhands who could neither **read nor write**, but who could name *any brand*, either letters or figures, *on a cow.*”** — *Evans Coleman, Colorado Cowpuncher*

volumes about the families that employed them. They came to embody pride in hard work and the business of ranching. As 19th century cowboy Evans Coleman wrote in his journal, cattle brands were immediately identifiable and represented much more than just a name.

The idea of a brand is so powerful that it transcended cattle ranching. In modern times, brands are applied to just about everything because they send a message about a product, service or mission.

2004 Cowboy Artists of America Sale & Exhibition Chairman Steve Todd understands the importance of a brand. His two quarter horse fillies bear the XA brand, which has been used by the famous Weaver Ranch since 1888.

"If you have been putting your brand on

September of that same year. The CAs were quick to apply this brand to their artwork as a sign of their pride in being part of this distinguished membership.

"The CAA Museum in Kerrville, Texas, used to give each member a branding iron when they were initiated," explains CA Secretary and resident historian Tom Watson, who has been an integral part of the CAA for 35 years.

CAs – both active and emeritus members – are the only people who can use the CA brand on their artwork. And while imitation is decidedly the sincerest form of flattery, CAs protect the symbol whose meaning they have worked so hard to earn: That the CAs are the most prestigious and widely recognized group of Western artists in the nation.



The Brand of Distinction

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First Cut

A look at last year's winners

Each year the Cowboy Artists of America have come together for the premier Western American art show, hosted by Phoenix Art Museum. The 38th Annual Cowboy Artists of America Sale & Exhibition began last Oct. 17 with the Sale, and the Exhibition ran from Oct. 18 through Nov. 16.

Media ranging from bronze and stone sculptures to oil and water soluble paintings to charcoal drawings represented a range of traditional Western images. Beloved favorites included cowboys, Native Americans, pioneers, mountain men and trappers.

As in past years, 10 medals were awarded to CAA members for outstanding artwork. And just like before, the judges had a difficult time selecting winners from the impressive body of work that was on display. Here is a look at who made the "first cut":



Gold — Water Soluble

Ray Swanson, *Quiet Moments*, gouache on board, 40" x 30"

2003 CAA Award Winners



Gold — Drawing and Other Media

Loren Entz, *Repairing the Old Bonnet*, charcoal on paper, 15.5" x 19"



Silver — Water Soluble

R.S. Riddick, *The Winter Hunter*, gouache on arches paper mounted on board, 50" x 30"



Silver — Drawing and Other Media

Don Crowley, *The Scouts*, pencil on paper, 23" x 29"



Gold — Sculpture

Orland C. Joe, *Healing Ways*, Italian marble, 26" x 15" x 11"



Silver — Sculpture

Mehl Lawson, *Cool Water*, bronze, ed. 1/15, 40" x 40" x 28"