

# At the REINS

## Steve Todd Leads the Charge for the 04 CAA Show

Steve Todd, chairman of the 39th Annual Cowboy Artists of America Sale & Exhibition, has one boot in the bank and another in the stirrup. By day, Todd is Director of Bank Performance for the Western regions of Capitol Bancorp and oversees 17 banks owned by the company. After hours, he unwinds at home with wife Melissa and their four horses, two dogs and two goats.

Todd, a third-generation Arizonan, grew up on a cotton and hay farm. As a boy he raised steers for 4-H and Future Farmers of America shows and got to know ranchers and their families.

**“We’re all imprinted somewhere in our early life,”** reflects Todd. **“I just got imprinted in a CORRAL.”**

This connection with the Western lifestyle led to an interest in the Cowboy Artists of America (CAA). The first CAA art he saw was the Gordon Snidow series of the “Coors Cowboys” back in the 1970s.

“I’d give my saddle to have owned one of those signed prints, but that was even out of the ballpark back then,” laughs Todd. “And you had to have connections to get them.”

To Todd those images were more than just paint on canvas – they were real people he had known and worked with on ranches around the state. Because of this, the CAA Sale & Exhibition also intrigued him. Each year he would read about the event and dream of attending, although to him it seemed out of reach for the average citizen.

*Leads the Charge for the*



L to R: Bob Pummill, Don Crowley and Steve Todd swap stories.

In 1993, Tom Ralston and Jess Roman got Todd involved in Men’s Arts Council (MAC), the non-profit organization that organizes the CAA Sale & Exhibition. While Todd respected MAC’s mission and had an interest in art, he admits that he had an ulterior motive when he joined the group.

“I have to be honest,” he grins. “It was to get to know more about the CAs and to have the opportunity to get to know some of them personally.”

Eleven years later Todd is doing that and then some. As chairman of the 2004 CAA Sale & Exhibition, he is finally fulfilling the personal goal he set so long ago to manage this event. This year his vision is to create momentum to make both the 39th and 40th anniversary CAA shows very special for those who attend.

For Todd, Sale night is always the highlight of the weekend. He takes great pride in the smiles of happy collectors and even greater pride in the smiles and handshakes of the CAs who work so hard to produce the show.

“When the artists see everything culminate in an exciting and successful evening, there is great satisfaction,” says Todd. “And then when the sales results are announced at the MAC reception after the event and the cheers erupt, there is a tremendous pride in a job well done that makes it even more special.”



CA members and guests on Diamond Tail Ranch in Glendevy, Colorado

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Detail: © Ray Swanson, *Blankets of the Dineh, 60" x 36"*, oil on canvas  
Inside detail: © Wayne Baize, *Looking for His Mount, 24" x 36"*, oil on canvas



# MEN'S ARTS COUNCIL presents COWBOY Tales

SUMMER 2004

## Making Their Mark

### CA members wield branding irons of their own

**B**randing is the ability to put your product at the forefront of the public’s mind. Mega marketing campaigns have made the taglines “The Pepsi Generation,” Coca Cola’s “The Real Thing” and Nike’s “Just Do It” household catchphrases. Even the Cowboy Artists of America (CAA) brand has its own identity: “The Brand of Distinction.” The brand of the 21st century is used to identify a product, person or service, which is the same purpose as the cattle brand during its 4,000-year history.

Among the thousands of registered cattle brands in the United States you can find those belonging to three CAA members: Fred Fellows, Bill Owen and Bruce Greene.

**F**red Fellows learned about brands when he roped steers with a brand inspector for the Los Angeles Stockyards. He learned that brands are read from left to right and top to bottom and that the ideal brand is made from one iron. Fellows could use a single “F” and brand the horse twice by rotating it, but he has chosen to create one iron that encompasses the rotating “F.”

Although Bill Owen’s brand has become a symbol for Christianity in popular culture, its origins are not religious. As a teenager Owen worked for a rancher named Richard Fish, who was the original owner of the brand. When Fish passed away, his widow decided to give the brand to Owen as a gift. To make the Fish symbol, he uses an iron in the shape of a quarter-moon.



**The Brand of Distinction**

Bruce Greene developed the G-Cross brand. This symbolizes his belief that all he has is given to him by God’s grace and that God is with him in all he says and does. He also includes the brand as part of his signature on all his artwork.

And while the Cowboy Artists of America brand is not officially registered to denote cattle ownership, it still has a special meaning to them. “The Brand of Distinction” stands for pride in being a part of the most prestigious and widely recognized group of Western representational artists in the country.



**“The Brand of Distinction”** stands for *pride* in being a part of the most **prestigious** and widely recognized group of **Western representational artists** in the country.

# ray SWANSON

*An artist evolving with the times*

**C**owboy Artists of America President Ray Swanson and Steve Todd, chairman of the 39th Annual Cowboy Artists of America Sale & Exhibition, kick off their boots and discuss Swanson's career, Western art, the CAA Show and how technology is changing the way the business of art is conducted.



© Ray Swanson, *Blankets of the Dinah*, 60" x 36", oil on canvas

**ST:** Ray, your career has spanned more than 45 years. When did you first become interested in painting, and how did you develop your skills as an artist?

**RS:** I always had an interest in drawing as a youngster – it came naturally to me and I taught myself to do it. In rural South Dakota where I grew up, there was not much emphasis on it. There weren't any classes at school, and people didn't really understand that you could make a

living from art. My mother's sisters told my mom that someday I could.

**ST:** You have received much acclaim during your career. Did you envision yourself here, or were you ever going to pursue something else?

**RS:** When I was a youngster I did not seriously consider it an option. I did not think I would make something of it. When I was 18 my father was killed in a farm accident, and my family moved to California where I studied aeronautical engineering. That was not of my choosing, but it was part of my path, and being in California exposed me to art. I also have the ability to handle the business end of things, which comes naturally to me.

After I married Beverly, I began to paint again in the evening after work. The first painting I tried was so interesting and I was so pleased with the result at the time that I decided that was what I wanted to do. I painted from 6 p.m. until midnight for six years. I developed some technique and had some success. I started to show some work, some people thought it was interesting enough to purchase it and then some galleries noticed. We saved money and then took a chance to see if we could survive in the art world.

**ST:** When did you first hear about the CAA?

**RS:** Oh boy. Far back there in the early day of my career in California, Ginger Renner had a gallery in Palm Desert. I would go to see the work of Charlie Dye and all the guys in Western art. Maybe that was where I developed my initial interest in Western art. I lived 45 minutes from that gallery, and I eventually showed in it. My art career has had many pages. Some never return and some are duplicated.

**ST:** You are admired for your paintings of Native Americans. Why are you drawn to paint them?

**RS:** The earliest draw was the character and life in their faces, what they went through and how they were living. The Navajo were more dramatic in their dress than they are today. My father would purchase cattle in the Western end of the state, and we would run into Indians in the towns out there. There were a lot of tribes around Sioux City.

**ST:** How is Western art and the CAA different from when you first joined?

**RS:** Time has changed everything. I used to be able to see the Navajo in their everyday life. That has disappeared before my eyes in my 45 years of painting. I started painting the present and now I paint history. Has the CAA changed? I don't know. I just think it gets to be a closer unit as time goes by, more of a family. It is more difficult to become a member because pride in the organization has grown. We know who we are and where we are, and that has made it a better group.



Bill Nebeker, Steve Todd and Ray Swanson, watching the buffalo drive at this summer's annual CAA trail-ride.

## Framed!

### Wayne Baize Piece is Poster-Perfect

One look at the 2004 poster for the 39th Annual Cowboy Artists of America Annual Sale & Exhibition and you can nearly feel the burn of the dust in your eyes. CA Wayne Baize's oil painting, *Lookin' for His Mount*, was chosen to represent the 2004 show because of its bold presence and richness.

"It's a classic piece, artistically, factually and emotionally," says Steve Todd, chairman of the 39th Annual CAA Sale & Exhibition. "I first saw the painting in the CA show in 2002. I liked it right away and so did Eddie Basha. The painting now hangs in the Basha Corporate Gallery."

Baize painted this scene at the Kokernot 06 Ranch in Fort Davis, Texas, a frequent inspiration for his work. In the painting, the cowboy – based on rancher Lance Lacy – is eyeing a remuda of horses and "lookin' for his mount." For city slickers, that means the cowboy is looking for a fresh horse to relieve his tired one so he can continue his work.

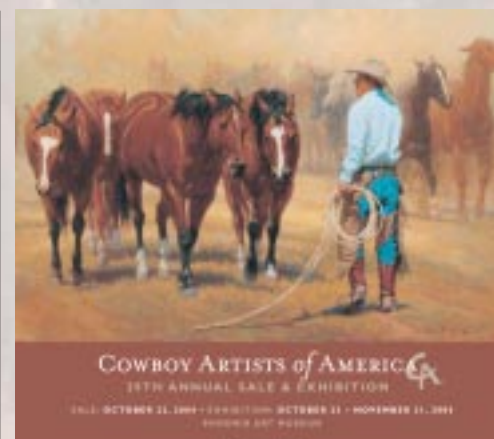
Baize was pleased to have his painting selected for the 2004 poster. "It is quite an honor," exclaims Baize. "I was tickled that

**ST:** How has the business of art changed?

**RS:** Do you want today or yesterday? It's changing fast. The Internet will influence how artists sell and how galleries operate. We all have to be aware of how these changes take place and how they affect us.

**ST:** As the CA president this year, how do you see this year's show and the upcoming 40th anniversary of the CA show?

**RS:** Well, I think we have an unwritten code that you had better be better the next time around. The guys are conscious of that. You have to produce better art the next time. Everybody wants to look good alongside the best, and people have grown accustomed to it. People pay more attention to the bigger shows, and they take a certain amount of work. They're a pretty big deal now, a changing deal. You have to be up on it and stay there. Make dust or eat dust.



© Wayne Baize, *Lookin' for His Mount*, oil on canvas, 24" x 36"

Steve decided to get that one done."

As for the show, Baize will continue to do what he has always done during his nearly ten years with the CAA. "I just try to bring the best pieces that I ever have."

To purchase this poster, call the Men's Art Council at 602.307.2060.

## Keeping Current

If you have a change of address or know someone who would like to be added to the mailing list, call Ruth Kaspar at 602.252.8382, or e-mail Jennifer Ramirez at [jenn.ramirez@phxart.org](mailto:jenn.ramirez@phxart.org).



© Fred Fellows, *Gatherer of Bear Grass*, oil on canvas, 26" x 70"

## Sale Preview

Catch a glimpse of some brand-new art that will be unveiled at the 39th Annual Cowboy Artists of America Sale & Exhibition. Select pieces are previewed throughout the newsletter.

### Sponsorships Available!

It's not too late to sponsor the 39th Annual Cowboy Artists of America Sale & Exhibition. If you are interested in having a smokin' good time and cavorting with the CAs while supporting the best of Western representational art, then call Ruth Kaspar at 602.252.8382.

## COWBOY ARTISTS of AMERICA

### 39TH ANNUAL SALE & EXHIBITION

#### Thursday, October 21

**Registration**  
1 p.m. to 4 p.m.  
The Ritz-Carlton  
2401 E. Camelback Rd.

**Scottsdale Western Art Walk**  
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Scottsdale Galleries

#### Friday, October 22

**Registration Continues**  
8 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
The Ritz-Carlton

**Morning at the Basha Corporate Gallery**  
9:30 a.m.

- Art Demonstration with R.S. Riddick
- Joe Beeler Book Sale & Signing

**Mix and Mingle with the Artists and Panel Discussion**  
12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.

**Exhibition Preview & Sale**  
Phoenix Art Museum

**Registration**  
5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**Pre-Sale Viewing**  
6 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

**Intent to Purchase Period**  
6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

**Drawing**  
7:30 p.m.

**Museum Closing**  
9 p.m.

#### Saturday, October 23

**Autograph Party and Poster Sales**  
8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

**Scottsdale Western Art Walk**  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Scottsdale Galleries

**Awards Banquet**  
The Ritz-Carlton  
6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

#### Tickets Available

For more information on any of these events or to purchase tickets, contact Ruth Kaspar at 602.252.8382. To learn more about the distinguished members of the Cowboy Artists of America, visit [www.caashow.com](http://www.caashow.com) or [www.cowboyartistsofamerica.com](http://www.cowboyartistsofamerica.com).

#### Attention Sale Attendees!

Only cash and checks are accepted at the CA Sale. Please remember to bring your checkbook or wallet on the night of the Sale, since credit cards are not accepted. One check per artwork purchased.



## Reminder!

Visit [www.cowboyartistsofamerica.com](http://www.cowboyartistsofamerica.com) for more information on your favorite Cowboy Artist.