

Calling All Old Cowboy Hands, Tenderfeet and Greenhorns!

Calgary, AB (May 10, 2004) – Saddle up and travel back to the nostalgic days of the Wild West with *Capturing Western Legends: Russell and Remington's Canadian Frontier*. From June 19 to October 11, 2004 Glenbow Museum invites visitors to retrace the legendary history of the Canadian West through the eyes of two great American artists, Charles M. Russell and Frederic Remington.

For the first time ever, *Capturing Western Legends* brings together the art and stories of the Canadian western frontier in a remarkable major exhibition featuring the works of Charles Russell (1864-1926) and Frederic Remington (1861-1909). Both Russell and Remington created legendary images that continue to define the 'Old West' today. These two artists captured a moment in time and period of transition with the western frontier. Museum visitors will explore the era of the North-West frontier when the Blackfoot people roamed the landscape; the fur trade was a dominant industry; and when the ranching industry straddled the borders between Alberta and Montana.

Capturing Western Legends will feature four exhibits: Canada's West as recorded and interpreted in their artworks (*Capturing Western Legends*), their enduring impact on popular culture (*The Popular West of Russell and Remington*), the works of artists influenced by them (*The Legacy: Frederic Remington and Charles Russell*), and historic photographs that reflect the romantic style of Russell and Remington (*In Focus: Photographing the Alberta and Montana Frontier, 1870-1930*). These four exhibits will be complemented by a range of events, programs, and activities including unique partnerships with the Calgary Folk Music Festival, the Calgary International Film Festival, and the Calgary Stampede. Museum visitors will also be able to meet Charlie Russell, a character actor who will share the legends of this region and offer a unique behind-the-canvas perspective of this legendary artist.

Capturing Western Legends will launch Glenbow Museum's centennial celebrations in 2005. "The Party is at Our House" says Mike Robinson, Glenbow Museum's President and CEO. "We're excited to invite the public to Glenbow to see a cultural chuckwagon of exhibitions and celebrate Alberta's 100th year as a province."

Robinson adds, "Following *Capturing Western Legends*, Glenbow Museum is offering four major exhibitions that simultaneously celebrate our western heritage while bringing the world to the west with international travelling shows: *Rodin: A Magnificent Obsession*, *The Bow: Living with a River*, *South East Asia: Journeys of Body, Mind & Spirit*, and *Petra: Lost City of Stone*. And all while this is happening, a new gallery will be in development on our third floor: *Mavericks: An Incurable History of Alberta* scheduled to open in 2007."

Rodin: A Magnificent Obsession (October 30, 2004 to January 30, 2005) will feature the works of Auguste Rodin, one of the most important sculptors of the 19th century. *The Bow: Living with a River* (February 19 to June 5, 2005) will explore Alberta's lifeline and the importance of water as a critical topic of the 21st century and one that is embedded in issues of responsibility, sustainability and the environment. *South East Asia: Journeys of Body, Mind & Spirit* (July 1 to September 25, 2005) will bring to Calgary an exhibition rich and vibrant culture with its diverse peoples, landscapes and traditions and enable Glenbow Museum to showcase its magnificent permanent Asian Gallery while exploring immigration and the changing face of Calgary and Alberta.

Glenbow Museum will wrap up 2005 with *Petra: Lost City of Stone* (October 15, 2005 to February 20, 2006), a major international exhibition that reveals the ancient city of Jordan, one of the most influential and prosperous cities during its height in 50 AD.

Capturing Western Legends is presented by Norrep Funds / Hesperian Capital Management Ltd. and supported by BP Canada Ltd., Calgary Region Arts Foundation (CRAF), the Donner Canadian Foundation, Anadarko Canada Corporation, the Calgary Herald, Alberta Centennial, the Hyatt Regency on Stephen Avenue Walk, the Calgary Folk Music Festival and the Calgary International Film Festival.

Glenbow Museum is Western Canada's largest museum and is also one of the most financially self-sufficient major museums in Canada. Through a variety of dynamic and changing exhibitions and programs and a broad collection of artifacts, art, and historical documents, Glenbow Museum builds on a commitment to preserve western heritage while simultaneously provide visitors with a glimpse of the world beyond.

Media contact:
Tanis Booth, Communications Specialist
Glenbow Museum
(403) 268-4246
tbooth@glenbow.org

Backgrounder on Capturing Western Legends Supporting Exhibits

Glenbow Museum visitors will journey to the bygone era of the western frontier this summer with three supporting exhibits in *Capturing Western Legends*. Both Charles Russell and Frederic Remington achieved unparalleled success in the genre of western art. Their names are virtually synonymous in the popular imagination with iconic images of the West.

The Popular West of Russell and Remington

Mass-market media transformed Russell and Remington's images of the West into recognizable icons which continue to resonate with the public today. Both artists ensured that their images became widely available through illustrations and reproductions. Russell's works in particular were seen on postcards, calendars, souvenirs, and other commercially produced and inexpensive objects. Their images became models for the representation of the West in popular culture in the 20th century. In creating backdrops for their films, many Hollywood westerns were influenced by Russell and Remington. The popularity of these artists also spawned the creation of fakes and unauthorized copies. One section of this exhibit explores the problem of authentication by analyzing two specific case studies.

The Legacy: Frederic Remington and Charles Russell

Charles Russell and Frederic Remington created prodigious bodies of work which popularized the myths, symbolism, and imagery of the Old West. Generations of artists have continued the Russell and Remington traditions of realistic storytelling, historic themes, action, and atmospheric landscapes. Glenbow Museum has searched its collections and will feature more than 60 paintings, prints, and sculpture that illustrate the continuing legacy of these two artists. *The Legacy: Frederic Remington and Charles Russell* will also feature modern painters such as David Garneau, Bruce Parsons and Franz Spohn to demonstrate how some artists have pushed the boundaries of traditional western art established by Charles Russell and Frederic Remington over a century ago.

In Focus: Photographing the Alberta and Montana Frontier, 1870-1930

Sweeping landscapes, impressive wildlife, bold people, stirring events—the western frontier offered a rich, unspoiled palette to its first photographers. Journey to this bygone era with over forty remarkable photographs of the Alberta and Montana frontier selected from the vast holdings of Glenbow's photographic archives. Photographs by more than a dozen professional, commercial, and amateur photographers will be featured in this exhibit, and like the western artists Charles Russell and Frederic Remington, these photographers created many of their works as a romantic vision of the disappearing western frontier.

**Was Glenbow Museum Duped?
Backgrounder on The Popular West of Russell and Remington and the Fakes Exhibit**

In 1965, the Glenbow Museum purchased *Warrior's Return* as an original work by Frederic Remington. For almost forty years, it has been considered one of the museum's treasures. Yet, it could not be found in the artist's *catalogue raisonné*, which includes every known work by Remington. When Peter Hassrick, the book's author and the foremost Remington scholar in the world was asked to explain this omission, he replied simply that *Warrior's Return* was not included because it was not a Remington!

Both Charles Russell and Frederic Remington were very successful illustrators at a propitious moment in history, the era known as "the golden age of illustration" (1890 -1920), when reading books with lively illustrations was the most popular form of entertainment. Moreover, it was during this period that technological advances made it possible to mass produce copies of original art in full colour. Thousands of reproductions were sold to decorate homes. Images by Russell and Remington were everywhere – in books, magazines, on postcards, calendars, folios, souvenirs and other commercially produced objects. The wide circulation of their pictures is central to understanding how Russell and Remington came to embody the spirit of the West.

The great popularity and commercial success of Russell and Remington also spawned the creation of many forgeries and fakes. Upon learning that *Warrior's Return* was not listed in the artist's *catalogue raisonné*, Glenbow Museum curators determined that further investigation into the painting's authenticity was warranted. This resulted in a specially developed section of *The Popular West of Russell and Remington* that explores the problem of authentication through stylistic and scientific analysis.

In collaboration with the Canadian Conservation Institute in Ottawa, Glenbow Museum conducted a comprehensive scientific investigation of *Warrior's Return* which is displayed in *The Popular West of Russell and Remington*. Is *Warrior's Return* an original Remington? Or is it a fake? Visit this exhibit and find out.

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Sunsets, Shootouts and Damsels in Distress
Backgrounder on Russell and Remington's Influence on Hollywood Western Movies

Have you seen the classic western movie *The Searchers*? Did you know that Hollywood director John Ford wanted a realistic look for the film so he turned to Charles Russell's paintings as his model?

The western movie was the first homegrown and successful genre in American cinema, and its imagery grew directly out of the romanticized paintings of Charles Russell and Frederic Remington. Several Hollywood directors were influenced by their works including William S. Hart, Douglas Fairbanks Sr., John Ford, and Howard Hawks.

Museum visitors will be able to saunter in to our theatre-like setting in *The Popular West of Russell and Remington* to see scenes from *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, *Stagecoach* and *The Searchers*. We also recommend that you wrangle up a seat at home and rent some classic western films. You will soon discover the influence these two prominent western artists had in defining the rugged vistas and strong characters we've come to know in these movies.

Stagecoach (1939) – Widely regarded as the greatest western film of all time, in one scene, as the stagecoach races across the barren landscape, director John Ford duplicated one of Remington's finest paintings, *Downing the Nigh Leader*, 1903.

Fort Apache (1948) – Star John Wayne claimed that he was influenced in his portrayals of western figures by Russell and Remington imagery. Remington's *The Last Stand*, 1891, was clearly a principal visual influence with his starkly beautiful paintings of cavalrymen.

She Wore a Yellow Ribbon (1949) – John Ford used Remington imagery most intensively in this film. Cinematographer (who won an Academy Award for the film) said Ford commented, "I want Remington colour."

Sergeant Rutledge (1960) – John Ford developed the central idea for this film from Remington's painting, *The Alert*, 1888.

El Dorado (1967) – Director Howard Hawks turned to Remington's *An Argument with the Town Marshall*, 1905 for a scene showing light out of a saloon. Hawks said he got the idea of illuminating scenes with lamps from Remington.

Monte Walsh (1970) – The film's credits are shown imposed over drawings by Charles Russell. These drawings set the tone for the entire movie.

Glenbow Museum is pleased to partner with the Calgary International Film Festival (CIFF) for unique programming activities. Further details can be found in the *Glenbow Live!* calendar.

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Backgrounder of Artist Biographies

Charles Marion Russell (1864-1926) b. Oak Hill, Missouri

At the age of 16, Charles Russell left school and moved west to Montana, spending the rest of his life out west fascinated by the ranching lifestyle, Native peoples, and the vast western landscape. In 1888, 24 year old Montana cowboy Charlie Russell rode into Alberta for a summer adventure. He made friends with a number of Blood (Kainai), and started to develop his deep, personal understanding of the Natives. As Russell's fame spread through the western ranching region, he took on several interesting Canadian commissions and by 1912, his friend Guy Weadick invited him to exhibit at the first Calgary Stampede. He also met George Lane, A.E. Cross, Pat Burns and Archie McLean, financial backers of the Stampede, which eventually led to more commissions. There, Russell discovered a new and important market for his art that encouraged him to paint more Native themes and to develop his idealized images of the heroic "Mountie".

Charlie Russell saw the West as nature's original home for all creatures, and disliked the changes brought on by progress. With his wife Nancy promoting his art, Russell exhibited widely and through his realistic style and romantic outlook, he paid tribute to the West that had passed.

Frederic Remington (1861-1909) b. Canton, New York

Frederic Remington was born in New York but came west for the first time in 1881. He was drawn to Alberta in 1887 lured to the north-west by stories of the legendary Blackfoot (Siksika) and the colourful North-West Mounted Police, and he returned in 1890 to add to his sketches. Remington's detailed illustrations of the North-West Mounted Police and the Hudson's Bay Company fur trade, and lively images of the Siksika were widely published in popular magazines and he signed an exclusive contract with Collier's in 1903 to provide 12 illustrations a year, all which were widely reproduced. These were the images that helped shape the popular view of the Canadian frontier.

Remington believed in the 'manly' virtues of the outdoorsman, and saw the West as a place where a man could prove himself. He lived hard, but food, drink, and nights out with his many friends took second place to his passion – art. By the end of his life, Remington's art was progressive, using impressionism and symbolism to express his artistic ideas. Before his early death at 48, he purposefully destroyed many western works that had brought him fame feeling that some of his early works, particularly illustrations, were not what he wanted to be remembered for.

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