

CLYDE ASPEVIG

Clyde Aspevig's personal and artistic horizons have unfolded expansively since his childhood on a Montana farm near the Canadian border. That period of geographical and cultural isolation was in retrospect a blessing for the artist he recalls. "Because I grew up in a vacuum in Montana, I wasn't taught the cliches."

He sees such naiveté as allowing him to be more open to everything around him, which is especially evident in his latest works. His peripatetic field easel now ranges across the wild mountains and prairies of Montana, Death Valley, Adirondacks, rocky North Atlantic coast, Scandinavian fjords and the well-tended hillside estates of Tuscany. Growing up, he witnessed the alternating painful and joyful cycles of agricultural life. He was unusually fortunate to be encouraged by his family in the pursuits of art and appreciation of music. Clyde learned early on to work hard and persevere against obstacles natural and manmade. Rather than scoffing at or demeaning Clyde's interests, Clyde's father, the practical but open-minded farmer, bought his twelve-year-old son's first painting.

He considers his paintings as old friends and visual souvenirs of places experienced in his life. The viewer, too, shares in Clyde's magical evocations of the landscapes that touched him.

While his early efforts attracted awards and critical praise from the regional or "Western" sector of the art community, Clyde's work has since emerged to be highly sought after by world class collectors. In a culture notorious for nourishing illustration of stereotypical, iconic subject matter, Clyde fearlessly departed whenever he felt the call, and resisted early attempts by Western art dealers to label him and restrict him to the saleable panoramic scenics.

His paintings of the West are not theatrical sets intended to reinforce regional mythology, but rather evocations of places that he perceives as already disappearing during his own lifetime, subjects worthy of both artistic and societal preservation.

The paintings reflect Clyde's intense days of absorbing his natural surroundings, days which shaped a philosophy: "I see nature as being so much more powerful than we realize." He sees the true value of preserving the last islands of wilderness, agreeing with the late writer Wallace Stegner that just the fact of knowing it is out there is important to the human spirit.

To Clyde Aspevig, painting expresses human emotion better than any other medium. The divine nature of light reveals to the receptive eye the timeless interaction of land forms and sky, water, flora, soil and rock. If he has any "mission" beyond the canvas in his creative endeavors, it is simply a wish to call attention to the timeless, intrinsic worth

of our natural environment.

The image resolves from a deliberative yet intuitive process of the artist, seeing. Nature, undistorted by the filters of acculturation.

Clyde's intent is to create something beautiful and harmonic. While subject matter is of prime consideration, further contemplation of the painting eventually yields its subtle nuances of texture and rhythm. His paintings possess qualities meant to outlast the viewer's initial infatuation, qualities that will endure well into succeeding generations.

Each painting is a struggle and a journey for the artist, the destination a prolonged feast of discovery for the viewer. While his mastery of the medium is apparent, the desire of the artist is that technique shall never override the painting's essential concept.

His own physical and spiritual connection with the subject's place and time emerges on the canvas, a transformation intended to be savored as long as the work exists. As far as Clyde is concerned, some of the most powerful representations he developed were those that left something out. That the viewer notices a sense of space, rhythm and harmony is no accident.

All the while, there is the composer, with brush and palette knife, conducting, refining, coaxing, and interpreting his own score. As he explains, "I use music all the time in my paintings." The discerning viewer sees and feels the brushstrokes corresponding to musical notes and movements -- legatos broad and delicate, an adagio of cured prairie grasses, a swirling vivacity of light and clouds over the marcato of mountain granite. Clyde's music touches the eyes with distinct rhythmic textures, letting the canvas reflect how earth and sky are interwoven. The result is the artist's ethereal yet tactile manifestation of natural forces: "Paintings become symbols of all that we are."

Clyde Aspevig is acutely conscious of the forces constantly at work sculpting the earth; erosion from rain and melting snow, wind, extremes of heat and cold. While the evidence so far suggests that the earth has endured millennia of human folly, he is aware of the fragility of life and how industrialized civilization has so rapidly altered entire mountains and rivers and displaced ancient buffalo ranges and forests.

And yet the artist moves on, seeing, feeling, preserving on canvas what is best that remains of the New World, while absorbing excellence from masters of the Old World. If we, too, allow ourselves to look carefully, we may all become a little richer.

Selected One Man Exhibitions:

- 2016 Brinton Museum, Big Horn, Wyoming
- 2015 Booth Western Art Museum, Cartersville, Georgia
- 2010 Santa Barbara Historical Museum, Santa Barbara, California
- 2001 & 2009 The National Arts Club, New York, New York
- 2008 Steamboat Art Museum, Steamboat Springs, Colorado
- 2006 Nordic Heritage Museum, Seattle, Washington
- 1991 & 2005 Rockwell Museum of Western Art, Corning, New York
- 2004 Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman, Montana
- 2002 Gerald Peters Galleries, Santa Fe, New Mexico
- 1984, 1986, 1989-1992 & 1998-1999 Trailside Galleries, Scottsdale, Arizona
- 1980-1981, 1983, 1994 Thomas Nygard Gallery, Bozeman, Montana
- 1993 Trailside Galleries, Jackson, Wyoming
- 1990 Gervais, Columbia, South Carolina
- 1986, 1988 Grand Central Galleries, New York, New York

Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 2011, 2012, 2013 Artistic Visions Show in Jackson, Wyoming
- 2013 The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museums Prix de West Exhibit in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- 2013 The California Art Club's 102rd Annual Gold Medal Juried Exhibition at USC Fisher Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California
- 1999-2004 Coors Western Art Exhibit and Sale, National Western Stock Show, Denver, Colorado
- 1998-2004 Masters of the American West, Autry Museum of Western Heritage, Los Angeles, California
- 1997-2004 Prix de West Invitational, National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- 1990-2004 Western Visions Miniature Show, National Museum of Wildlife Art, Jackson, Wyoming
- 1994 Shining Mountains, Foothills Art Center, Golden, Colorado
- 1992-2002 Governor's Art Show, Loveland Museum, Loveland, Colorado
- 1990-1994 National Academy of Western Art, National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- 1990-1991 Hubbard Museum, Ruidoso, New Mexico
- 1990 New Art of the West, Eiteljorg Museum, Indianapolis, Indiana
- 1989 American Art and Miniature Show, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma
- 1988 Plein Air Festival, San Jose Museum, San Jose, California
- 1987-1989 Artists of the West, Pioneer Museum, Colorado Springs, Colorado
- 1984-1993 Artists of America, Denver, Colorado
- 1984 Contemporary Artists of the American West, Museum of Western Art, Denver, Colorado
- 1980-1987 Northwest Rendezvous Group, Helena, Montana

Awards:

- 2013 Edgar Payne Award

Clyde received the Edgar Payne Award for Best Landscape for "Aspen Pond" 30x60" oil on linen at the 102nd California Art Club's Gold Medal Show at USC Fisher Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California.

- 2010 The Gold Thunderbird Award

Clyde won The Gold Thunderbird Award for Best in Show at the Maynard Dixon Country Exhibition and Sale. The award was presented by Paul Bingham, President and Founder of The Thunderbird Foundation for the Arts, Mt. Carmel, Utah.

- 2007 Masters of the American West Purchase Award

Presented at the 2007 Masters of the American West Fine Art Exhibition and Sale held on Saturday, February 3, 2007 at the Autry National Center in Los Angeles, California.

- 2006 Trustees' Purchase Award

In recognition of artwork designated for purchase by the Autry National Center.

- 2006 The Autry National Center John J. Geraghty Award

Established by the Autry National Center's Board of Directors to recognize an individual for his or her advancement of contemporary Western art.

- 2004 Lifetime Achievement Award

Masters of the American West Fine Art Exhibition and Sale, Autry Museum of Western Heritage.

- 2004 Artist Choice Award

Masters of the American West Fine Art Exhibition and Sale, Autry Museum of Western Heritage.

- 2003 Best of Show

The Montana Land Reliance, Fine Art Exhibition & Sale.

- 2000 Honored Guest Artist

C.M. Russell Auction, Great Falls, Montana.

- 1999 Robert Lougheed Memorial Award

Prix de West Invitational, National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

- 1998 Red Smith Award

Western Visions Miniature Show, National Museum of Wildlife Art, Jackson, Wyoming.

- 1998 Alumni of the Year Award

Montana State University, Billings, Montana.

- 1997 Prix de West Award

Prix de West Invitational, National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

- 1994 Gold Medal in Oil Painting

National Academy of Western Art, National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

- 1994 Alumni of the Year Award

Eastern Montana College, Billings, Montana.

- 1993 Robert Lougheed Memorial Award

National Academy of Western Art, National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

- 1992 Frederic Remington Award

National Academy of Western Art, National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

- 1992 Silver Medal for Oil Painting

National Academy of Western Art, National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

- 1990 Silver Medal for Oil Painting

National Academy of Western Art, National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

- 1990 Frederic Remington Award

National Academy of Western Art, National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

- 1980 & 1982-1985 Merit Award

Northwest Rendezvous Group, Helena, Montana.

Source:

Clyde Aspevig Studios, www.clydeaspevig.com