

# Celebrating Women

The Cowgirl Up show has another great year



THE HOUR-LONG drive from Phoenix to Wickenburg, AZ, starts out with a slog through suburban sprawl. Soon enough, though, the strip malls give way to open space, and then to a two-lane road that winds through a gently rolling landscape full of saguaro cactus, an endless sky, and not much else.

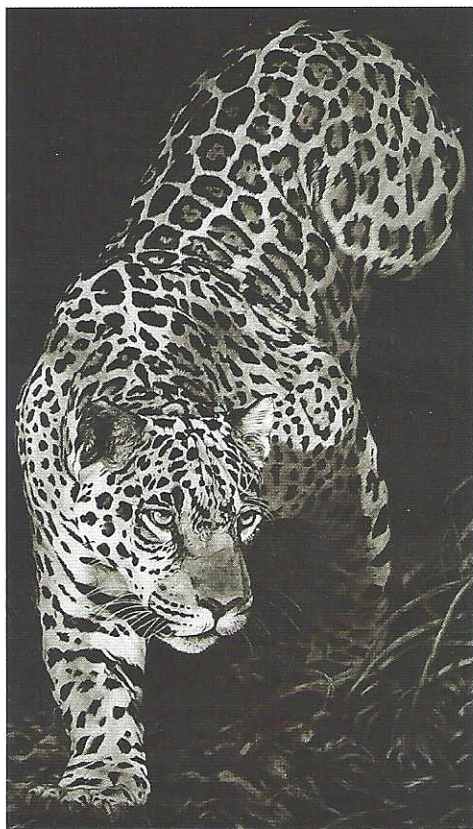
Before you know it, you're a world away from the big city.

At least, that's how it felt to me when I made my first trip to Wickenburg recently for the annual Cowgirl Up show at the Desert Caballeros Western Museum. I'd been hearing great things about the

show for quite some time: Artists and collectors alike talked about the fun atmosphere, the great sales, and the genuine hospitality they've found there. Organizers have worked hard over the relatively short nine years of the show's existence to make its presence felt in the world of western art events, which seems to grow more crowded with each passing year.

What I found in Wickenburg did not disappoint: A small, hometown museum packed to capacity with a slew of enthusiastic patrons eager to welcome all comers and with work by some of the top women in the genre, such as Sophy Brown, Ann Hanson, Krystii Melaine, Rebecca Tobey, September Vhay, Liz Wolf, and Star York. The museum prides itself on including in the show a wide variety of styles and approaches to the concept of "western" art, and indeed, there was everything from the very traditional to the very contemporary on display, along with an intriguing mix of emerging and established artists.

A handful of awards were handed out on opening night. Best of Show went to Donna Howell-Sickles for JANUS, First Place for a two-dimensional work on canvas went to Darcie Peet for STREAKS OF SUNRISE—CANYON DE CHELLY, First Place for a two-dimensional work on paper went to Rox Corbett for RUMORS, and First Place for three-dimensional work went to Deborah Copenhaver Fellows for WILD COW CATCHER. All of those awards were selected by an independent panel of judges. The Governor's Choice Award, selected by the office of governor Jan Brewer, went to Sheila Cottrell for NIGHT HAWK. The Museum Purchase Award went to Maura Allen for CHANGING COURSE, and the Director's Choice Award for the new artist with the best body of work went to Barbara Zaring. The People's Choice Award went to Rox Corbett, and the Artists' Choice Award went to Terry Cooke Hall.



Crossing the Border by Rox Corbett

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