

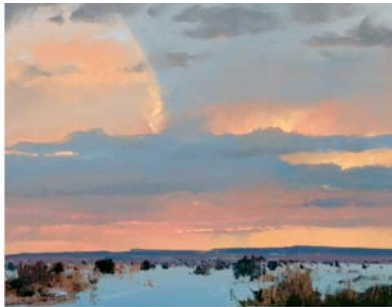
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UNDER WESTERN SKIES

Kenneth Bunn, Arturo Chavez, John Encinias, Walter Matia, Matt Smith & Bart Walter

July 30, 2010 - October 17, 2010

Opening Reception: Friday, July 30, 2010 5 -7 p.m.
Contact: Maria Hajic, Director, Department of Naturalism
Phone: (505) 954-5719
Fax: (505) 954-5754
Email: mhajic@gpgallery.com
Gallery Hours: Monday – Saturday, 10 – 5 pm



Images clockwise from top left: Walter Matia, Arturo Chavez, Bart Walter, Matt Smith, Kenneth Bunn, John Encinias.

Gerald Peters Gallery of Santa Fe is pleased to present UNDER WESTERN SKIES: KENNETH BUNN, ARTURO CHAVEZ, JOHN ENCINIAS, WALTER MATIA, MATT SMITH and BART WALTER, opening July 30, 2010. This exhibition will feature recent sculpture and painting from these award-winning, master artists from our Naturalism Department.

Color and light values, mathematics, emotion, and the illusion and immensity of space all conspire to make Arturo Chavez' Western landscape paintings come alive. Chavez was born near Taos, New Mexico and, eventually, mentored by landscape master Wilson Hurley. Interested in "painterly realism", he says, "I'm always drawn to the contrast between these massive solid rocky structures and the vast spaces around them. I'm striving to convey the sensation of space and that sensation in turn evokes an emotional response from the viewer." In 2006, he won Best of Show at the Western Artists of America exhibition at the Hubbard Museum of the American West, Ruidoso, New Mexico.

Born in 1935, sculptor Kenneth Bunn has had a lifelong interest in the anatomy, physiology and behavior of animals. Bunn's sculptures employ a blend of realism and impressionism in a strong interpretive style, using loose, flowing sculptural surfaces to convey life and implied or anticipated movement without unnecessary detail. His sculptures range in size from the miniature to the monumental. As Bunn has stated, *"In my mind, a great piece of art lets the viewer know something was churning inside the artist, that he was really 'turned on' by the creative process."* He enjoys memberships in the National Academy of Design, the National Sculpture Society, the National Academy of Western Art and the Society of Animal Artists. His awards include the Frederic Remington Award and the Robert Lougheed Memorial Award at the Prix de West International Exhibition, among others.

A native New Mexican, painter John Encinias is now based in Denver, Colorado. Encinias, who describes his technique as "impressionistic realism", prefers painting directly from his subjects, whether still lifes or landscapes. He works to bring his subjects to life at the level of the senses, using paint to convey smell, touch, temperature – even sound. Although his palette often consists of just six hues and a basic white, his lush canvases capture all the subtleties of color that he sees in his subjects. Encinias is a longtime member of the National Academy of Western Art and has been a regular participant at the Prix de West since 1985. His work has been shown at the National Wildlife Art Museum in Jackson, Wyoming, The Albuquerque Museum, The Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma and the American Embassy in Rome, Italy.

In 1964, when he was eleven, sculptor Walter Matia and his family visited New York City's World's Fair, but it was the Paul J. Rainey Memorial Gateway at the Bronx Zoo - the fanciful, animal-festooned Art Deco arches sculpted by Paul Manship in 1934 - that made the more lasting impression. *"That's really what put the desire to do bronze sculptures of animals into my head."* Matia describes his work as gesture sculptures, choosing to concentrate on unique and subtle qualities that bring out the character of a subject rather than strict anatomical detail. His larger sculptures grace such disparate locations as the Merrill Lynch regional offices, the formal garden of Blair House, (the official guest house of the President of the United States), the Botanic Gardens in Wichita, Kansas and American University in Washington, D.C.

Plein air painter Matt Smith has spent much of his adult life in Arizona. After graduating from Arizona State University, Smith became disenchanted with the academic emphasis on abstract art and began an intensive study of the works of classic landscape masters - Maynard Dixon, W.H. Dunton and Edgar Payne - and took workshops with their contemporary counterparts, including M.W. "Skip" Whitcomb and Michael Lynch. Building on these traditions, Smith paints landscapes (mostly of his beloved Sonoran desert) uninterrupted by either human or animal life. As Smith has said, *"What I feel outdoors is important to me . . . My paintings are more than just a re-creation of a particular view. I try to imbue them with the feel of the wind, the sounds of wildlife, and the smell of the fresh air."*

Sculptor Bart Walter's portfolio spans more than 20 years of working in wood, clay, wax, bronze and charcoal. The kind of representational art he has developed over time does not render realistic forms. They are more like impressions, but his lions, cheetahs, chimpanzees, mountain gorillas, giraffes, elephants and other wildlife seem to possess the urgency and energy of their living counterparts. A self-taught artist, Walter primarily sculpts his subjects from life, preferably in the wild during his extensive travels. He was elected a professional member of the National Sculpture Society in 1993 and because of his numerous awards and achievements was commissioned to design the Jane Goodall awards for International Conservation and Lifetime Dedication.

The Gerald Peters Gallery is located at 1011 Paseo de Peralta in Santa Fe – just one block from Canyon Road. The gallery is open Monday through Saturday 10-5pm.

For more information contact: Maria Hajic, Director, Department of Naturalism, Gerald Peters Gallery, (505) 954-5719 or mhajic@gpgallery.com

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