

COLORFUL COLORADO! • MARTY KAISER: FIRST MUSIC GROUP IN SECOND GRADE

# ETOWN

ENID'S LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

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**RICH &  
ROMANTIC**  
WEDDINGS

*Spirit*  
**OF THE WEST**

INSIDE THE STUDIO  
WITH H. HOLDEN

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THEM  
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HOMEMADE CAKES MAKE  
CELEBRATIONS SUPER SPECIAL

ETOWN: WHERE WE LIVE

# *Joining the* **HEART AND SPIRIT OF WESTERN HERITAGE**

By Liz CADY



H Holden with Homesteaders Monument  
(Photo by Phil SHOCKLEY)



ABOVE: Oil painting  
 "School Days" by Harold T. Holden  
 LOWER LEFT: Bronze  
 "Caught in a Blizzard"  
 by H. Holden (Photo by Mark KILLAM)

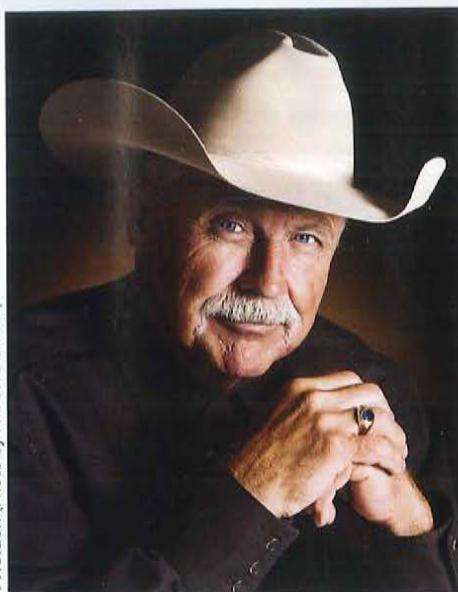


With its vast plains and open land, it is easy to understand why Oklahoma is cowboy country.

The history and allure of the Wild West are inspiring, and it comes as no surprise how one man could use this inspiration for art, which captures the allure of the Wild West. Artist Harold T. Holden, widely known as H. Holden, uses his paintings and sculptures to tell the history of days long gone and of people filled with determination and gumption to start a new life in an unknown land.

"I can't think of anything more interesting than the history and heritage of the West, and living in Oklahoma has certainly given me a lifetime of subject matter. My father was a horseman, which probably led me down that

H Holden (Photo by Phil SHOCKLEY)



path, and having such great models for my work in my friends that are cowboys, has made it much easier," H. Holden describes.

In April, H. Holden will receive the honor of being inducted into the Hall of Great Westerners at the National Cowboy Museum. It is an award the association describes as "presented to men and women who have revered the land, cherished freedom of individuality, inspired others, and found strength of character to overcome tremendous adversity." H. Holden will be the first Oklahoma artist to be inducted since the inception of the award in 1955. For H. Holden, when he received the call, it was almost unbelievable, "My first thought was they had made a mistake [when they called]. Joining the ranks of some of my heroes and friends is very humbling."

H. Holden's wife Edna Mae wears her pride for her husband on her sleeve, "I am so proud of H and so excited about this award. H is the most unassuming and modest artist I know and is mortified of public speaking, so I know he is dreading that part of the induction ceremony, but it will be a time for his peers, family, and friends to recognize his great talent and contributions, which is so wonderful!"

While H. Holden gets to take a moment and soak in the awe of his induction, that doesn't mean his work comes to a stop. "I have a certain number of shows that I participate in that require new pieces each year, but I also want to do new pieces. I always have a list of ideas I want to get to, and [my wife] Edna Mae encourages me pretty consistently to try and make the deadlines I need to." In addition to being inducted into the Hall of Great Westerners in April, H. Holden is having a two-man art show at the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City.



TOP: Bass Reeves maquette (Photo Provided)  
ABOVE: Will Rogers Monument in clay.  
(Photo by MotoPhoto)



Although April already appears to be quite busy, H. Holden is again taking part in the Pioneer Cellular Smokin' Red Dirt Youth Art Show, acting as judge for the students' submissions. Since 2017 marks the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first herd of cattle to the Great Western Stock Yards in Abilene, KS and laying way to the Chisholm Trail, students' will submit their art inspired by that cattle drive, a great subject mat-



"Reflections" oil painting by Harold T. Holden, models were Ivan Blake and H's cousin Jeff Holden (Photo Provided)

ter for H. Holden's passion for historic and contemporary Western art.

H. Holden isn't new to judging as he participated in prior years and says of the experience, "I am looking forward again to judging the wonderful art entries submitted by the students. Every year the participants up their submissions and continue to surprise and impress me with their creativity, design, and composition." In past years,

he has received over 300 pieces to judge, but he always judges each piece individually no matter how many. To be part of an upcoming generation of artists is a way for H. Holden to continue his work without deadlines. Instead, a new generation gets to be inspired and in awe when an artist, such as H. Holden, admires pieces they have put forth.

As H. Holden joins the mere 200 men and

women honored on the walls within the Halls of Great Westerners, the Chisholm Trail, though its wagon tracks fade with time, gains another permanent etch in history. After all, had those men and women not forged an untaken path through the west, there would be no cowboys to tell tales, no inspiration 150 years later for a western artist. With this award, the cowboys of H. Holden's life take to the plains once more.