

THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE & TRADITION

ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF TIM COX FINE ART



"Trading Treasures" by Tim Cox.



Cowboy Artist

Captures the West

Tim Cox's Western realism paintings draw on decades of ranch work

Today, nearly 50 years on as a professional painter, Cox has no intention of retiring any time soon.

MICHAEL WING

Setting the mood for a cowboy painting, 65-year-old New Mexico artist Tim Cox begins mounting a smoothly primed board on an easel, and, paintbrush in hand, applies ever-so-thinly diluted washes of lightly pigmented tones of oil and spirits.

He masses-in main shapes first, fuzzy blobs—there will be plenty of time for details later—and a picture begins emerging, like a ghost, from the stark white gessoed panel surface. A pencil underdrawing ensures the composition is plotted accurately.

Storm clouds roiling across a backdrop or vast expanses of diffused blue sky or perhaps a blazing sunset help bring that Western mood to fruition. When the details start plucking forth the scene, steadily bringing it into focus, they don't stop until every depicted variety of grass, shape of animal's ear, or horse's gait bespeak

meaningfully of years lived, growing up on a ranch in Arizona in the 1970s.

Cox has been piling up eight or 12 of these panels per year for the past 47 years—since he was a teen growing up near Duncan.

"My great-grandparents had a ranch down in Douglas, Arizona," he told The Epoch Times. "I went to work on a ranch when I was 8 years old in the summertime. ... I got paid like a dollar a day, but I thought it was bigtime stuff, making \$40 to \$50 for the summer while you're out on summer break."

He trained his first horse at age 12 and lived off the grid before he even knew there was one. The nearest electrical pole was 1 1/2 hours away; the nearest shopping center, 2 1/2 hours. All this impressed upon a young imagination during those formative years. It was Cox's drawing and painting skills that first caught his teacher's eyes.

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"Summer Is Almost Gone" by Tim Cox.

🌀 Cowboy Artist Captures the West 🌀

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"My kindergarten teacher called my mom and dad to come in to see her, and I thought I might be in trouble for something," he said. "She said, 'You need to get this child art lessons.'"

"Our small town at Duncan had a pharmacist who was also an artist. And he had a place where he painted set up in the drugstore, and he would sell fountain drinks and milkshakes and malts," Cox said.

After school, Cox would walk over for a hamburger and watch the man paint. One way or another, he got the lessons he needed.

As a teen, he was already selling his paintings for \$5 a pop. His dad, who worked for Arizona State Highway, found plenty of patrons among his coworkers. Cox took art classes with Polish realist painter Frederick Taubes, who remarked on Cox's realism, in a strong

Polish accent, "Your horses are more horsey than the horse!" He received orders for paintings from all the students in the class.

At 17, he signed on with Trailside Galleries in Scottsdale. He eventually joined Cowboy Artists of America, serving as president for three terms.

In almost all of his paintings, Cox incorporates cowboys, cattle, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. In one of his favorites, "Trading Treasures," Cox incorporates cowboys trading sterling silver antiques. COVID-19 mandates even made a cameo.

"It was right after coronavirus where they had lifted a bunch of the isolation, and I just wanted to do something that represents freedom," he said.

In "Glorious Freedom," Cox depicts his granddaughter riding full-out, wind blowing through her hair, to capture how free she felt.

Visiting ranches from Arizona to New Mex-

ico to Wyoming—while living, breathing, and loving the cowboy life—Cox portrays the experience in all its glory.

Today, nearly 50 years on as a professional artist, Cox has no intention of retiring any time soon. Living in Bloomfield, New Mexico, the cowboy artist continues to hone his craft. He expected to get faster as he got older and more experienced; oddly, that's not what happened.

"I always thought the older I got, the more I learned, the faster I'd get," he said. "But I found out that the more I learned, the less I could let things slide by. I work on it to get it just right, don't just let it go. I struggle until I get it right."

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LIVING THE COWBOY LIFE

Visiting ranches from Arizona, to New Mexico, to Wyoming—while living, breathing, loving the cowboy life—Cox portrays modern day ranch life in all its glory.



1. "Gathering the Weaning Trap" by Tim Cox.

2. "When Horse Whispering Gets Loud."

3. "Glorious Freedom."

4. "If These Walls Could Talk."

5. "Bunched Up."

6. "Through Dawn's Dusty Light."

