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hen visiting Colorado, you simply cannot ignore the monumental and awe-inspiring presence of the many peaks and natural wonders of the Rocky Mountain range or the "Southern Rocky Mountains." Colorado is home to the highest of the peaks in the entire range that spans around 3,000 miles between Canada and New Mexico. Many creatives, for many years and across generations, have been hypnotized by its allure—compelling them to try their very best to not only capture the indescribable beauty of the Rockies, but a taste of Colorado itself.

Renowned artists like Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902), known for his large landscape paintings of the American West inspired by trips of the Westward Expansion, depicted the Rockies in several significant paintings, and captured the Colorado Rockies in Estes Park, Longs Peak,

1877—depicting a dramatic landscape scene of the town that sits at the base of the Rocky Mountain National Park.

"[Bierstadt's] painting Estes Park, Longs Peak represents a romanticized style of landscape painting and bears exaggerated details characteristic of Bierstadt's art,





such as the added height of Longs Peak and the dramatic clouds," says Nicole A. Parks, a past curatorial assistant in the Petrie Institute of Western American Art (PIWAA) at the Denver Art Museum, Bierstadt was a member of the Hudson River School movement, in which works were painted in amazing detail and dramatic elements—the most important being light.

The PIWAA at the Denver Art Museum showcases Bierstadt's painting and others that depict the Denver area and the Rocky Mountain region, with additional holdings that "date from the early 1800s to the present and include an impressive mix of paintings, sculpture and works on paper by renowned artists who worked in and depicted the West," reads the museum website. "Our collection of bronze sculptures, several significant paintings by members of the Taos Society of Artists, and examples of 20^{th} -century modernism make our collection one of national significance."

Further educating and celebrating the artistry to come

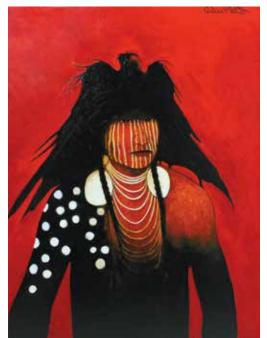
out of Colorado, the museum also discusses Moraine Park by Charles Partridge Adams (1858-1942), a self-taught artist that lived in Colorado for more than 30 years. The piece departs from Bierstadt's view of the Rockies in that it is "based on the painting tradition of naturalism (or a realistic description) rather than exaggeration or romanticism," savs Parks,

She continues, "Adams was able to capture the light and atmosphere of the Rocky Mountains, a reflection of his direct and intimate knowledge of the landscape. Moraine Park is located within Rocky Mountain National Park and can be seen today as Adams depicted it."

Fast forwarding to today, we see Colorado artists, galleries and art institutions continuing in the footsteps of these iconic artists. While the Rockies do not solely define the state as a whole, the landscape remains a powerful influence for many. Continue to read through this section to hear insights from the artists and institutions that are keeping the Colorado Western art scene alive and well.



Sorrel Sky Gallery interior view with owner Shanan Campbell, right, and gallery manager Masha Halavach.



Sorrel Sky Gallery, Black Bird, acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 24 x 18", by Kevin Red Star.

SORREL SKY GALLERY

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44 t Sorrel Sky Gallery, we believe Aart matters," says owner Shanan Campbell. Now in its 20th year, Sorrel Sky features contemporary and traditional Western and Native American fine art and jewelry, photography, sculpture and more.

"Our enduring goal is to create lasting connections between the artist and the art enthusiast, either new or experienced," Campbell says. "We proudly represent acclaimed and renowned artists such as Kevin Red Star, David Yarrow, Star Liana York and former U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse. This past year, we welcomed several new artists to the gallery. Among them are painters Matthew Grant and Julie Chapman, sculptor Rosetta and jeweler Nayla Shami."



Sorrel Sky Gallery, Pals, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 40", by Thom Ross.