

SUMMER 2018

POINTSWEST

MONARCH OF THE SKIES

- Four summer 2018 exhibitions ▪
- Translating and interpreting the Wild West ▪
- Montana Bill ▪



BUFFALO BILL CENTER OF THE WEST

to the point

BY BRUCE ELDREDGE

Executive Director and CEO



Periodically, we include a “Beyond our Walls” section in *Points West* (see page 23) to let readers know where they can encounter our works and content outside the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. It’s a great feeling to see our collections such a part of the museum landscape throughout the country—and the world.

However, as I look at the Table of Contents, I see that this entire summer edition of *Points West* could very well be called a “beyond our walls” issue!

First, our remarkable exhibition *Albert Bierstadt: Witness to a Changing West* brings artwork from twenty-two entities including museums, colleges, historical societies, and galleries. Any attempt to try to visit them all would be a whirlwind adventure, to be sure—a trek that would span the nation from Los Angeles to New York, from Atlanta to Tacoma! But here at the Center of the West, visitors can enjoy all these masterworks in one exhibition, coordinated by the Whitney Western Art Museum.

Next, our *Monarch of the Skies: The Golden Eagle in Greater Yellowstone and the American West* exhibition is not only beyond our walls, but beyond anyone’s walls! This exhibition focuses on the research conducted for the last ten years by the Draper Natural History Museum. Staff and volunteers monitor golden eagle habitat in the sagebrush-steppe environment east of Cody and have now adapted their work into this special exhibition that later becomes a permanent installation.

Finally, a look at this issue’s authors includes both Center of the West Researchers and those associated with the *Papers of William F. Cody*. Chris Dixon hails from Ireland, Tom Cunningham from England, and Danielle Haque from the University of Minnesota-Mankato. These folks may be beyond our walls, but they’re certainly part of the Center’s efforts.

William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody’s plan was to bring the West to the World, and we’re wholly committed to doing the same. Keep abreast of all the Center’s activities at centerofthewest.org. We look forward to your visit! ■



About the cover:

A golden eagle feeds her nestlings with Heart Mountain, east of Cody, Wyoming, in the background. (Photography by Nick Ciaravella, Moosejaw Bravo Photography, 2017.) The Draper Natural History Museum has been studying the golden eagle habitat for ten years. On June 10, an exhibition titled *Monarch of the Skies: The Golden Eagle in Greater Yellowstone and the American West*, opens to showcase that research.

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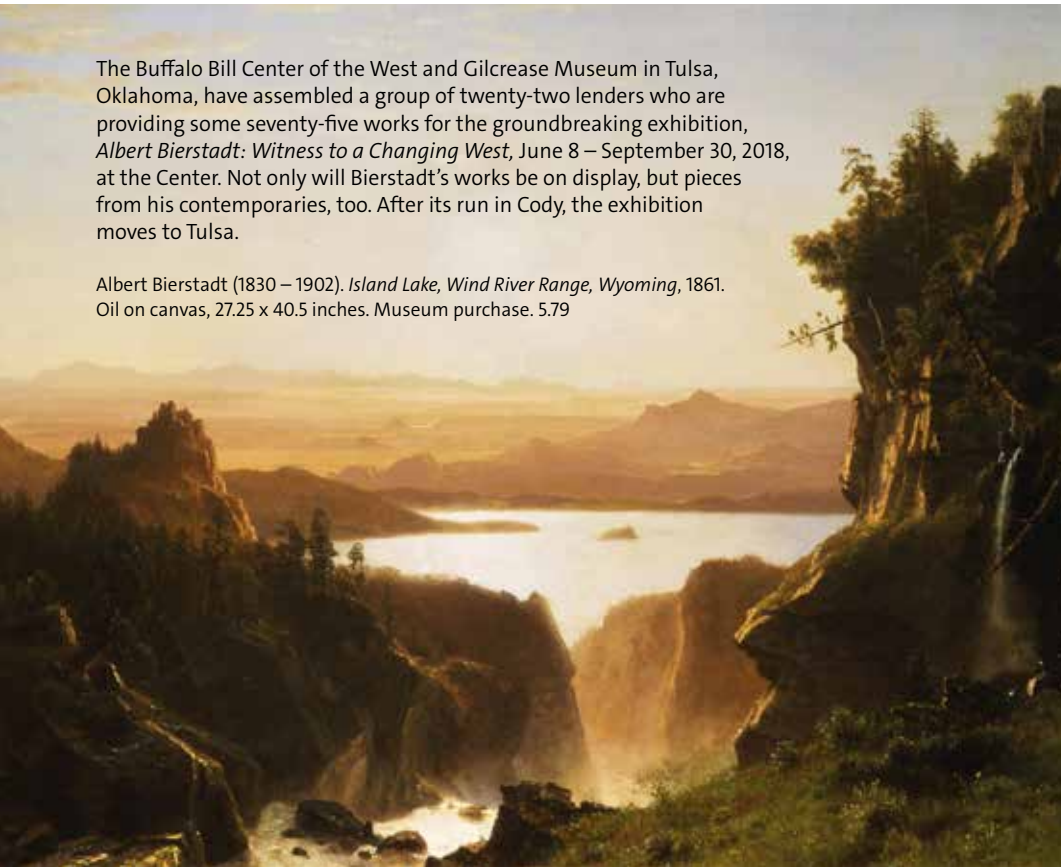
The Buffalo Bill Center of the West is a private, non-profit, educational institution dedicated to preserving and interpreting the natural and cultural history of the American West. Founded in 1917, its collections include: Buffalo Bill and the West he lived and loved, historic photographs and documents, firearms, natural science of the Greater Yellowstone region, Plains Indians, and masterworks of western art.

The mission of *Points West* is to deliver an engaging, educational magazine primarily to our members and friends. *Points West* uses a multi-disciplinary strategy to connect the reader to the nature and culture of the American West, and the Buffalo Bill Center of the West in particular, through exceptional images and appealing, reader-friendly stories.

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The Buffalo Bill Center of the West and Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma, have assembled a group of twenty-two lenders who are providing some seventy-five works for the groundbreaking exhibition, *Albert Bierstadt: Witness to a Changing West*, June 8 – September 30, 2018, at the Center. Not only will Bierstadt's works be on display, but pieces from his contemporaries, too. After its run in Cody, the exhibition moves to Tulsa.

Albert Bierstadt (1830 – 1902). *Island Lake, Wind River Range, Wyoming*, 1861. Oil on canvas, 27.25 x 40.5 inches. Museum purchase. 5.79



DEPARTMENTS

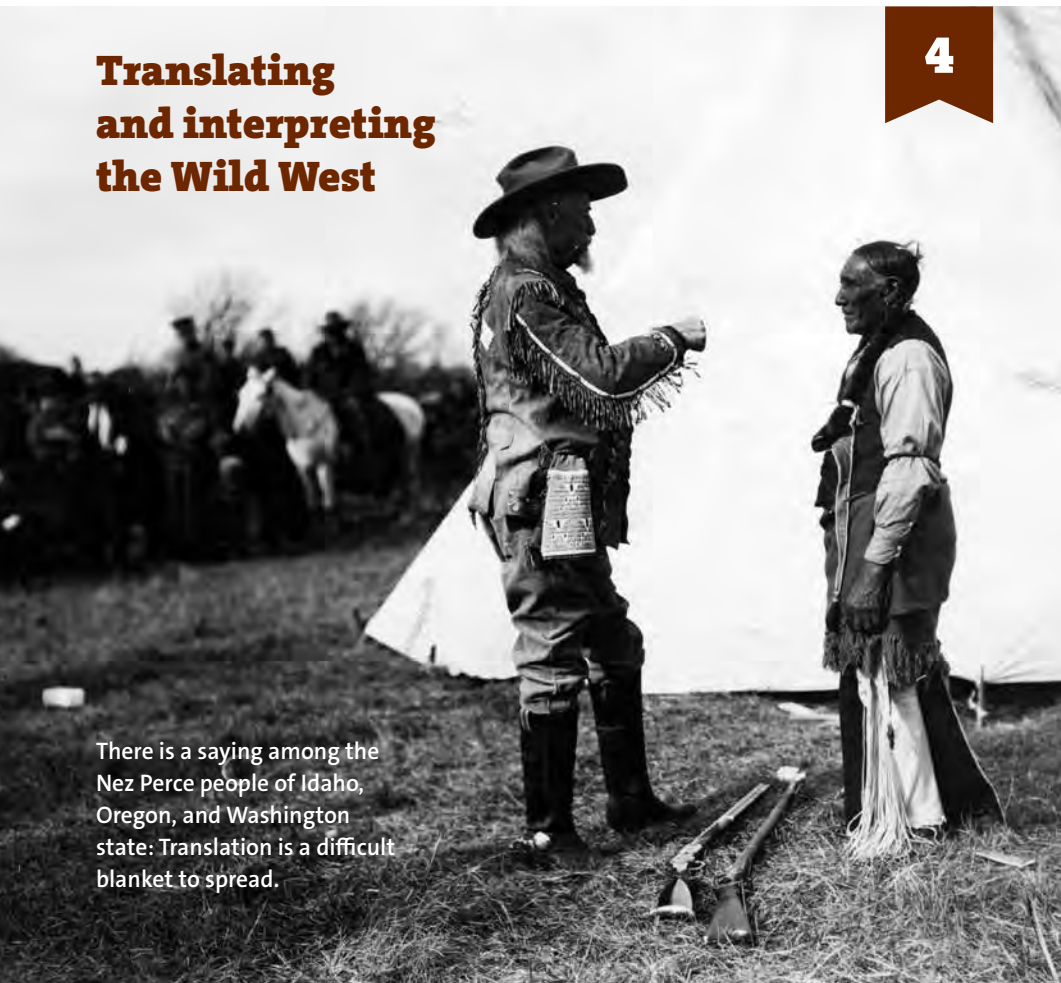
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Translating and interpreting the Wild West

4



There is a saying among the Nez Perce people of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington state: Translation is a difficult blanket to spread.



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VISIT US ONLINE | Stay in touch with all that's happening at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West; visit centerofthewest.org.

Points West is the magazine of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Cody, Wyoming.

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Translating and interpreting the

WILD WEST



Je viens ("I am coming"), Buffalo Bill's Wild West poster, ca. 1889. Original Buffalo Bill Museum Collection. 1.69.442

Unless noted otherwise, all images are from the Center's MS 006 William F. Cody Collection.

BY CHRIS DIXON

"Je viens." "I am coming."

The image on the poster is iconic, and there was no need even to say who was coming. William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody was the entertainment industry's first international celebrity, blazing a trail that was to be followed by others with the advent of the global mass media in the decades after his death in 1917. The vehicle that brought him international stardom was his Wild West exhibition.

Between 1887 and 1892, and again from 1902 to 1906, the Wild West delighted audiences in England, Scotland, Wales, and fifteen countries in continental Europe, igniting "Wild West Fever" almost everywhere it went. It offered what purported to be an authentic experience of the American frontier, complete with real cowboys and Indians.

The French poster was clearly translated from English, and yet we have no record of the translator's name. Indeed, we do not know the names of the numerous interpreters and translators who enabled Cody and company to overcome the



Buffalo Bill's Wild West performers and staff on the occasion of Buffalo Bill's birthday, February 26, 1903, London, England. P.691310

language barriers that they faced on the continent.

Official employee records located at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West include the names of thirty-nine interpreters employed either by the Wild West, or its predecessor, the Buffalo Bill Combination. The group worked to ensure effective communication among the troupe's numerous Indian performers through the more than thirty years that it operated. There are also French, German, and Italian programs in existence which consist mainly of material translated from English originals. Again, however, the translators are never identified by name.

The author of most of the English-language source material for these programs was John M. Burke, the Wild West's general manager who travelled in advance of the troupe. One newspaper account suggests that he was an accomplished linguist who could "discourse in ever so many languages," a claim not corroborated by other evidence. Moreover, the quality of the translations is so high as to suggest that it would be a remarkable feat if they were all the work of someone like Burke, a non-professional translator.

We do however know that the Wild West

employed linguists—not identified in the employee records at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West—during its European tours. Charles Eldridge Griffin, who managed the exhibition's side-show from 1902 to 1906, left a memoir in which he alludes to the difficulties they had with their interpreters in the Austro-Hungarian Empire where, "Some towns would be about equally divided between four or five nationalities, and, although they all understood German (the official language), each would insist on being addressed in his native language."

The Austro-Hungarian Empire was also the site of the only significant linguistic gaffe on record as having been committed by the Wild West in Europe. When it visited the mainly Italian-speaking city of Trieste in May 1906, the local newspaper, *L'Indipendente*, complained.

"Buffalo Bill's advance agents have flooded this city with advertising materials in Slovenian," the newspaper wrote. "...for someone coming from America and remaining only a few days among us, we can forgive their ignorance of the linguistic conditions which obtain here and not be overly critical."



The Buffalo Bill Wild West advertising brigade, Ayr Scotland, Sunday, August 27, 1904. MS6.3678.092.00

Whatever the level of ignorance of linguistic conditions in the towns and cities they visited, there can be no doubt that Cody and company generally overcame the barriers to communication which they encountered. Almost everywhere they stopped, newspaper accounts in various languages speak of the success of the show. The same press coverage also provides evidence of the intercultural dialogue and exchange that was going on.



Cody...generally overcame barriers to communication

There were parodies by theatre companies in London, Paris, and Barcelona. The magazine *Punch* adopted Wild West imagery to send up Prime Minister Gladstone, and the French press used the figure of Cody to ridicule General Georges Boulanger. The Catalan satirical magazine *La Tramontana* lampooned Francesc Rius i Taulet, the recently deposed mayor of Barcelona, caricaturing him in blanket and feathers begging for a job at the company's camp.

Within the Wild West camp there were, of course, real Indians, mainly recruited from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. They were mainly Lakota-speaking people, and communications with them presented a very different challenge for Cody and company.

Lakota and English are languages which are structurally quite distinct. Educated native speakers of English might take for granted that nouns and verbs are different grammatical categories—yet Lakota does not have the sort of noun-verb distinction that we have in English. It would be obvious to us that “man” is singular and “men” plural, but Lakota does not distinguish systematically between singular and plural. We would know that “I am eating” and “I have eaten” express different time settings for the action of consuming food. Lakota, though, expresses this notion of tense quite differently, often by means that native-English speakers would find obscure.

Throughout the centuries before they first dealt with Euro-Americans, American Indian people on the Northern Plains had developed a complex sign language to help overcome the difficulties of translating between their own different languages. Many of the “old timers,” who interacted with members of more than one Indian nation, became fluent in this gestural language. William F. Cody himself was one such, and there is a well-known film of him conversing with Lakota leader Sinte Maza (Iron Tail) in sign language.

Although there is no evidence that publicity manager John M. Burke could



Native Americans in the back lot of Buffalo Bill's Wild West, ca. 1889. P.69.2034.2



Photograph of William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody and a Native American man, ca. 1905 – 1915, captioned "Talking sign language." P.6.0651.022

speak the Lakota language, the way he writes about the great Lakota holy man Tatanka Iyotake (Sitting Bull) in the 1885 Wild West program suggests a profound understanding of native ideas about leadership. He refers to him as Medicine Man (the Sioux order of priesthood), Counselor, and Consulting Head of his nation. Burke demonstrates a grasp of Lakota terms of respect such as Wicasa Wakan, Itancan, and Wakicunza—an understanding that sadly was not a feature of most of the United States government's dealings with these people through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In the key period 1851 – 1891, official dealings between the U.S. and the Lakota nation relied on three generations of interpreters comprised firstly of men who had married Lakota women, secondly of the mixed-race children of these unions, and thirdly of full-blooded Lakota people who had been raised off-reservation in English-speaking boarding schools. Through the period that Buffalo Bill's Wild West operated, it made use of all three.

John Young Nelson, a former army scout who married Upan Zi Win (Yellow Elk Woman), an Oglala Lakota relative of the great chief Mahpiya Luta (Red Cloud), is the best-known example of the first category. He traveled with the Wild West from 1887 – 1895, featured regularly as a performer in the attack on the Deadwood Stage, usually as driver of the stage or sometimes riding shotgun. His wife and their five children traveled with him and lived in the Indian encampment, which, together with the side shows, provided additional entertainment for Wild West audiences. Their youngest daughter,

Rose, who would later take the stage name Princess Blue Waters, subsequently became a featured performer in her own right.

John Shangreau—whose name is often written without the letter "e"—is an interesting example of the second category. He was the son of French Canadian fur trader Jules Shangreau and his Oglala Lakota wife Niyan Tate Win (Breath Wind Woman, also known as Mary Smoke), who was the youngest daughter of Sota (Chief Smoke) of the Ite Sica (Bad Face) band of the Oglala Lakota. Widowed when his first wife died in May 1890, he left behind seven children in the care of his relatives in the White Clay district of Pine Ridge Reservation while he traveled to Europe with the Wild West. He married his second wife, Lille Orr, another mixed-blood Lakota employee, on January 4, 1892, in Glasgow, Scotland, while acting as interpreter for Cody and company during the run there. He would go on to father five more children with his second wife, many of whom ultimately settled back in



Translation is a difficult blanket to spread



John Young Nelson and family, ca. 1883. P.69.928

Pine Ridge where the name Shangreau can still be found to this day among the many descendants of Chief Smoke and his five wives.

Smoke's family was well represented among the Lakota performers with the Wild West. Tahu Wanica (No Neck) was the son of Smoke and his fifth wife, a Hunkpapa named Ista Gi Win (Brown Eyes Woman). In the wake of the massacre of Lakota men, women, and children by the Seventh Cavalry at Wounded Knee Creek in December 1890, No Neck and John M. Burke jointly adopted a young boy found alive on the battlefield. Adoptions are crucially important in traditional Lakota society, and this act of generosity on Burke's part did much to solidify the relationship between Buffalo Bill's Wild West and the Lakota people at a critical time of crisis which put it at risk. The child came to be known as Johnny "No Neck" Burke and traveled with the Wild West until 1901. After that, he settled on Pine Ridge with No Neck and his wife Pte San Maza Win (usually known in English as Iron Cow Woman, although her name more properly translates as Iron White Buffalo Cow Woman).

Educated at the Carlyle Indian School in Pennsylvania, Mato Najin (Luther Standing Bear) was without doubt the best known of Cody's full-blood Lakota interpreters. In addition to interpreting, he appeared as an Indian performer in the show and was one of those who threw glass balls from horseback for Buffalo Bill to demonstrate his marksmanship. His service with the Wild West was cut short by serious injuries he sustained in a 1904 train wreck, but he

went on to author several books about Lakota culture, most notably *My People the Sioux*, and to become a vocal advocate of Indian rights.

The Wild West did also employ some Lakota-English interpreters who did not fit neatly into any of these categories. William "Broncho Bill" Irving who, as his nickname suggests, is best known for his role as a cowboy with the company, also served as a Lakota interpreter. As far as we know, Philadelphia-born William had no Indian blood, but came to be fluent in both the Lakota language and Northern Plains sign language due to the adventurous spirit

he displayed from a very young age. As a teenager he ran away to the West to join the cavalry; he was judged too young to serve in the military when he showed up at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, and as such there was no suitable accommodation for him at the fort. While fort officials made attempts to contact his family back East, William was placed with the mixed-blood Bisonette family at Red Cloud Agency in Nebraska.

There is a saying among the Nez Perce people of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington state: "Translation is a difficult blanket to spread." The saying recognizes in traditional terms many of the things that today's professional translator or interpreter takes for granted. One-to-one correspondences between languages are rare; different languages express different thought patterns, which at times may seem like different ways of looking at the world. Finally, members of different speech communities have found it necessary or desirable to name different things.

There is no doubt that when languages are closely related—like Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish—and have developed in contiguous geographic regions, among speakers whose cultures have many elements in common, the leap from one language system to another is not so great. On the other hand, building the bridge between two or more such languages in the way that the translator or interpreter does, is always a decision-making process which relies on the skill, and sometimes the ethics, of the person who has knowledge of both (or all) of the languages in play in any given situation.



Luther Standing Bear (1868 – 1939), ca. July 21, 1891. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C. 20540 USA. LC-USZ62-56421



William "Broncho Bill" and family, 1887, New York City. P.69.110

BRONCHO BILL (and Family.)
Cow Boy Interpreter of the Sioux.—Buffalo Bill's Wild West.

One of the many successes of Buffalo Bill's Wild West was its linguistic accomplishment. The company found ways to ensure that communication problems were overcome between English and the languages of the European countries in which it toured—many of which are part of the same language family as English. The company also fared well with the Lakota language, which bears no relation to English at all. It was a remarkable achievement for Buffalo Bill's Wild West, and we are right to recognize it. ■



French Wild West poster, 1905, Paris. "Horses playing football." 1.69.2172

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Wild West poster, ca. 1895, with performers from around the world. Gift of the Coe Foundation. 1.69.170

ARAB PERFORMERS IN BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST

Wikipedia.
Creative
Commons.



BY DANIELLE HAQUE, PhD

In 1893, Chicago hosted the World's Fair or the World's Columbian Exposition. The electric fair has long been associated with Buffalo Bill, and by different accounts, between 2 and 3.8 million of the twenty million visitors to the fair also attended the Wild West exhibition. Camped right outside the gates of the Columbian Exposition, Buffalo Bill's show advertised in the Rand McNally official guide to the fair, stating that "All Roads Lead to Buffalo Bill's Wild West." The *Chicago Globe* confirmed this triumphant claim that same year with its headline, "All Roads Do Seem to Lead to Buffalo Bill's Big Show." The Chicago fair featured the debut of a new feature of Buffalo Bill's Wild

West, an Arab troupe, meaning that millions of Americans saw them perform. That very same Rand McNally advert boasted that the show now had “Genuine Arabs of the Desert.”

There is substantial scholarship on how the Wild West showcased the settler-colonial relationship between Native Americans and European Americans; promoted imperialism at home and abroad;



Buffalo Bill's Wild West's “Arabs of the Desert,” undated. Gift of Richard R. Finlay. 1.69.2705

In this article, I introduce some archival materials from the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, and give an overview of the Arab troupe's participation in the Wild West.

THE WILD WEST GOES INTERNATIONAL

It is unclear exactly how the Arab performers came to join the show. It's possible that Major John Burke brought them aboard, as he had previous experience managing touring Arab performers. On the other hand, an Arab troupe that visited the show in Paris in 1887 may have inspired co-owner Nate Salisbury. Undoubtedly, the decision was based on increasing attendance and on expanding the already existent non-western part of the show, which by 1893 already included Cossacks and gauchos. The trend of internationalizing a show that began as a demonstration of America's conquest of the West was directly in line with American foreign policy at the time. In the early part of the nineteenth century, U.S. foreign policy had been expansionist overseas and reached a forceful halt during the Civil War and Reconstruction.

By the 1890s, though, American industry, trade, and cultural production were expanding globally at unprecedented rates. Buffalo Bill's Wild West promoted the ideal of an expanding America both domestically and abroad. Many have maintained that the

interacted with and reinforced the race-oriented theories of Anglo-Saxonism and Aryanism; and helped create the popular images that mainstream America has about the West and Native Americans. However, there has been very little writing about the Arab performers in the show, particularly as the historical records for the non-Native American performers is sparse. Western historian and Buffalo Bill scholar Louis Warren notes that we know more about the Native American performers than any other group because of the archival footprints created by the tug of war between the show and the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs.

My larger research project addresses the absence of a historical narrative about the role of the Arab performers in the show. I also want to analyze how the representation of these performers helped create the popular image of the “Arab” in the United States.



Circa 1893 Wild West posters featuring, at left Cossacks, and, at right gauchos. Gifts of the Coe Foundation. 1.69.123 and 1.69.125

show's excursions overseas and the inclusion of the Congress of Rough Riders of the World transformed a drama about American civilization's “triumph” over the American West and its indigenous peoples, and replayed it writ large as a “triumph” that would include the entire world.

The late 1800s and early 1900s saw increasing migration to the United States from the area known as Greater Syria, which was then part of the Ottoman Empire (and had been since the sixteenth century). Many or most of the Arabs that performed through the years with Buffalo Bill immigrated to the United States from the Ottoman Empire. At the end of the nineteenth century and before World War I, the Empire, which dates from 1299, was consciously working globally to promote an image of itself as a modern, European nation. The Ottoman state did this in many ways, including art, creating the Imperial Ottoman Museum, and regulating and curating an image of its past to portray itself as a modern member of the family of nations.

Additionally, the Ottoman state hosted pavilions at international fairs such as the 1893 Columbian exposition. These pavilions presented the Arab periphery of the Ottoman Empire as a people/territory in need of civilizing—in many ways paralleling how Americans at the time perceived the Native American population. The comparison was not lost on the Ottoman people, and Ottoman poet Ziya Gökalp wrote that he hoped his homeland would become “the free and progressive America of the East.” Conversely, a 1909 program for the Wild West describes the show as including an arena where:

...the onlooker witnesses varied exhibitions of horsemanship, wherein the dusky-skinned Arabian vies with the American cowboy in displays of equestrian expertness; the camp life of the native American Indian is shown in contrast to the nomadic domiciles of the desert-born Bedouin.

The Native Americans and Arab performers—who were billed variously as Riffian Arabs, Bedouins, Moors, Syrians, and Berbers—



Parade of Arabian circus at Chicago World's Fair, ca. 1893. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA. LC-USZ62-106655

are portrayed analogously as nomadic. They were represented as somehow unattached to the national landscape while being naturally attuned to it, and depicted as a premodern culture and people disappearing from the modern nation state.



Wild West poster featuring "Race of Races," 1895. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540. LC-DIG-ds-08325

THE WILD WEST'S ARAB TROUPE

In the show, the Arab contingent performed multiple roles. In the 1898 program, the Arabs are listed as participating in the Grand Review—their featured act was called “A Group of Riffian Arabian Horsemen”—as well as being a part of the “Race of Races.” That event involved pitting the various nationalities in a race against each other. A 1904 program lists the Arabs as participating in feats of horsemanship as well, but that was their secondary performance skill. Originally the Arab performers were acrobats. *The Rough Rider Annual* of 1902 wrote that the Arabs were “athletic gymnasts of a strange kind it would repay a journey across the great desert to see.” The Arab tumblers twirled rifles so quickly they looked like “a

thousand sunbeams.” The acrobats built “high living pyramids, with the agility of cats, and the strength of tigers.”

The Arabs were able to showcase their athleticism and thespian talents in a feature called the “The Far East or a Dream of the Orient.” This feature combined a story line that begins with a group of western tourists taken hostage by a tribe of Bedouins under the very shadow of the Egyptian pyramids. With exotic animals and music, Japanese acrobats and other non-white performers were able to showcase their skills within this Arabian frame story. However, unlike many of the vignettes that featured Native Americans, the white American actors were never really under “threat” of physical harm. Instead, they are entertained by music, menagerie, and performances. At the end, there is no charge of white masculine power to rescue them; rather, the ransom money arrives, and the hostages are free.

According to Sarah Blackstone, in her book *Buckskins, Bullets, and Business: A History of Buffalo Bill's Wild West*, only four full rosters exist for the show: the years 1896, 1899, 1902, and 1911. These rosters demonstrate that through the course of the Wild West, at the very least, forty individuals performed in the Arab troupe with the show. Tracking down the career and life trajectories of some of these individuals gives a sense of the identity of these performers and how they lived outside the collective acrobatic group they represented.

One intriguing all-American connection was made in Paris in 1889, when Buffalo Bill sat down to a hearty breakfast with Thomas Edison. This Parisian summit would prove fruitful for the early film industry, the Wild West, and the Arab performers of the Wild West. W.L.K. Dickson directed two of the show's Arab performers—Hadj Cheriff as a knife juggler and Sheik Hadji Tahar as a gun juggler—and filmed them both in Thomas Edison's Black Maria Studio in West Orange,

New Jersey, on October 16, 1894. Cheriff (listed as Hadj Sheriff in the 1896 roster) was identified in both the 1896 and 1899 Route Books as a Whirling Dervish, giving insight into the way in which these acrobats also performed cultural “types” such as whirling dervishes (Sufi Muslims who use dance in their mystical religious practice), roving Bedouins, and Riffian horsemen.

In 1896, Sheik Hadj Tahar (in 1899 identified as Sheik Hadji Tahar) headed the Arab performers and later was listed as the “Chief” in the 1899 roster. After leaving the Wild West, he continued to perform with his acrobatic troupe at venues such as Chutes Park, an amusement park in Los Angeles in 1902. Tahar would acquire some notoriety as well when he became embroiled in a kidnapping scandal in San Francisco in 1908. It’s unclear with what, if anything, he was charged, and by May 1909, he was performing again in San Leandro, California. In 1913, Tahar proposed a settlement scheme in southern California for the creation of a sizable Arab colony. These ethnicity-based development plans were not that unusual at the time and ranged from lurid scams by confidence men like Herbert A. Firth to official government proposals.

Tahar appears to have had a further career in film as the technical advisor to one of the first Tarzan movies, *Revenge of Tarzan*, filmed in 1920. In a 1975 interview, actor Eddy Field stated that Tahar was 82 at the time the movie was filmed. If accurate, that

would mean Sheik Tahar was born in 1838, and thus traveled with the Wild West into his sixties.

GEORGE HAMID, BOY ACROBAT

The most famous of the Arab performers was George Hamid, who published a 1956 autobiography (as told to his son George Hamid Jr.), *Boy Acrobat*. It was reworked and expanded by his son in 2004 as *The Acrobat: A Showman’s Topsy-Turvy World from Buffalo Bill to the Beatles*. George Hamid joined the Wild West in Marseilles, France, in March 1906, during the show’s three-day stand in that city. Hamid was born in Broumania, Lebanon, (then the Ottoman Empire) and was the nephew of Ameen Abou Hamad who was identified in the 1902 and 1911 rosters as the leader of the Arab performers. Hamid disembarked with his cousins Shaheen and George Michael through Ellis Island in 1907. Arriving on the ocean liner *Potsdam*, his name was entered as Jerjy Aban Hamad, although he was listed as a performer with the Wild West under the name Gargie Abou Hamad.

Much of what Hamid describes in his autobiography is hard to verify. For instance, he claims to have been taught English by Annie Oakley, which, as Warren points out, is impossible. She was no longer with the Wild West during Hamid’s tenure.



Wild West poster with Arab horsemen and acrobats, ca. 1899. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA. LC-USZC4-3169

• Arab performers •



Still images from a film by Thomas Edison. Hadj Cheriff, Arab knife juggler, October 6, 1894, Edison's Black Maria studio, West Orange, New Jersey. Library of Congress Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division Washington, D. C. 20540 USA dcu. loc.mbrsmi/edmp.4027

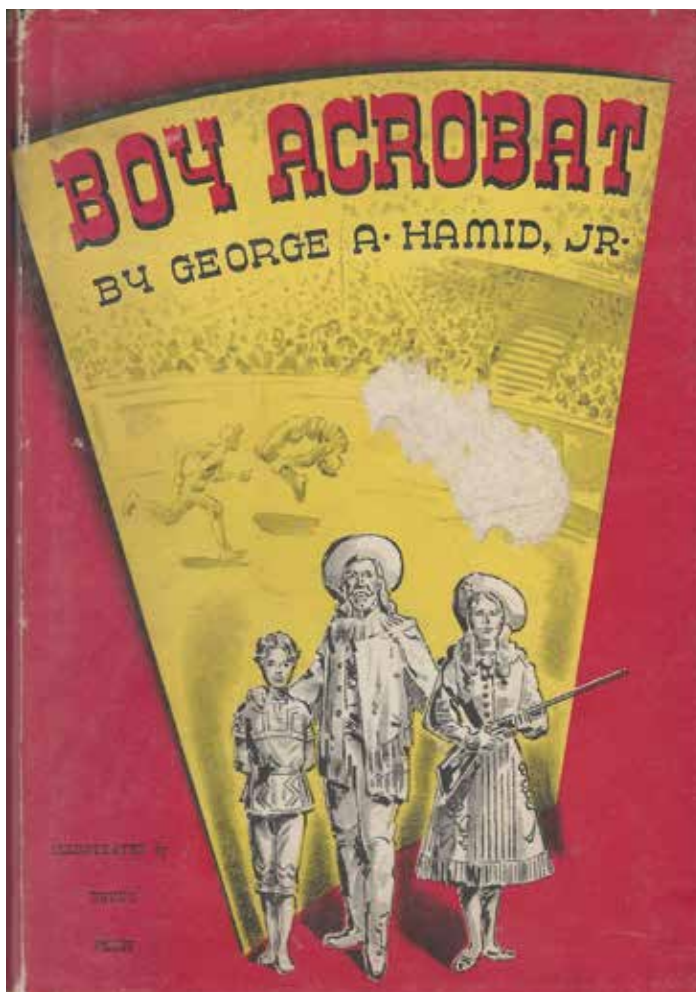
Hamid's wry autobiography includes fascinating insights into the show, his reliability aside. He writes that he had to learn to ride a horse to participate in the "Ride of Death." This indicates that the acrobatic troupe were not the "natural" equestrians of advertisements, but only learned horsemanship upon joining the Wild West. Hamid also writes that when he joined the show, three of the "Arabs" were actually not Arabs at all. Warren states that the Wild West never passed off non-Native Americans as Native

Americans, but was not entirely strict when it came to authenticity in portraying other ethnicities. Hamid's anecdote thus reveals the pageantry involved in performing "Arabness" in the show.

Hamid tells a fascinating story, including his first glimpse of William Cody in Marseilles. He describes him as "a straight square, white-haired, white-bearded man who looked like a Prophet out of Grandmother's Bible." Hamid turns the Biblical Garden of Eden on its head, telling us that his grandmother described the United States to him by saying, "I have told you stories about Bible lands flowing with milk and honey, about the Garden of Eden. There are no such places on this earth. Where you are going [America], Puabla [his nickname], is close to it."

As an immigrant to America in the early twentieth century, Hamid was part of that much larger flow of Arab migration, particularly from Syria and Lebanon, that was coming to the United States. Ironically, when the adult George Hamid returned to Lebanon after becoming a successful entertainer and promoter—eventually owning some of the major venues in Atlantic City, New Jersey, and running the New Jersey State Fair—he notes that his cousin Shaheen who accompanied him said, "George...we had to become Americans to see the Middle East."

From 1893 until 1913, Arab performers worked, traveled, and lived with Buffalo Bill's Wild West. Their inclusion in the show mirrored the increasing American interest in the Middle East as the United States strove to compete with entrenched European interests in politics, trade, and massive infrastructure railway projects like the Chester Project. The Arab performers also mirrored the growing Arab immigration to the United States which happened both in major cities like New York City and Detroit, as well as small rural areas like Mankato, Minnesota, or Ross, North Dakota. The performers, as seen in advertisements and newspaper reviews of the show, are often represented as performed stereotypes of "Arabness" for their audiences. Yet their inclusion in the show and exposure to large audiences across the United States, also points to the long, vibrant history of Arab and Arab Americans participating in and shaping American culture. ■



Boy Acrobat, 1956, by George Hamid as told to his son.

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Dr. Danielle Haque is Professor of English at Minnesota State University-Mankato. She served as a Buffalo Bill Center of the West Research Fellow in 2017 and extends a special thank you to the archivists of the Papers of William F. Cody and the staff at the Center's McCracken Research Library.

Arab performers in Buffalo Bill's Wild West,
1900–1910. MS 006 William F. Cody Collection.
MS6.4075.41.2



lies AND LEGENDS OF MONTANA BILL

Unless noted otherwise, all images are courtesy of the Bailey family of Rayleigh, Essex, UK.

BY TOM F. CUNNINGHAM

WILD WEST ECHOES IN GLASGOW

Of all the myriad objects in the collections of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, by no means the most valuable but certainly amongst the most perplexing is an undated newspaper cutting. Included in the London *Daily Mail's* "Every Picture Tells a Story" feature, the clipping is believed to be from the early 2000s.

The contributor on this occasion, Mrs. Ruby McPhee, of Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear in England, provides the commentary:

My late husband's mother, Mrs. McPhee, of Springburn, Glasgow, was a well-respected midwife. Her reputation was such that when Bill Cody (Buffalo Bill) was on tour with his circus show in Glasgow, she was asked to be midwife to more than one of his children.

Unfortunately, because the story has been passed down through the generations, the exact dates are unknown, but I believe this photo may have been taken in the 1880s. It shows Buffalo Bill with one of his children and was given to her as a memento by Bill Cody himself.

Every picture tells a story

THIS regular picture feature in the Daily Mail Readers' Letters page offers you the chance to submit your photographs. They can be previously unseen, of interesting features and events, fascinating insights into famous people or occasions, or a little bit of history you were able to witness, for publication here.

MY LATE husband's grandmother, Mrs McPhee, of Springburn, Glasgow, was a well-respected midwife. Her reputation was such that when Bill Cody (Buffalo Bill) was on tour with his circus show in Glasgow, she was asked to be midwife to more than one of his children.

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Mrs Ruby McPhee, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear.

■ SEND your pictures, with full details of who and what they depict, as far as you know it, to Picture Panel, Daily Mail, 2 Derry Street, London W8 5TT. Enclose an SAE if you want your picture returned.



Legend: 'Buffalo' Bill Cody's gift

My attempts to trace Mrs. McPhee unfortunately failed; I would have welcomed the opportunity to ask her how many of Buffalo Bill's children she supposed had been born in Glasgow. Of the two figures in the photograph, one is an unidentified little girl. The other is a very long-haired man in what appears to be one interpretation of frontier garb, who may or may not have been her father. What can be stated as a matter of certainty is that—while he has the definite look of James Cagney about him—anyone with even an approximate notion of what Colonel Cody looked like could immediately tell you: It's not him.

The gentleman in question can positively be identified as Robert Bailey Robeson, otherwise known as "Montana Bill," a U.S. citizen who lived in Glasgow roughly from the last years of the nineteenth century until his abrupt departure in 1919. During this sojourn, he achieved a modest notoriety with a trick-shooting act. He was also a cowboy actor, and there is evidence that, on occasion, he even managed to mobilize a small-scale Wild West show of his own. According to one family tradition, he used to ride his horse down the Garscube Road, just north of the Glasgow city center.



When, how, and why he first came to Scotland is one of the few remaining loose ends. However, one of the very first documented encounters with "Montana Bill, the Indian sharpshooter" is recorded in the *Dundee Courier & Argus*, January 4, 1897, in connection with the New Year Fair at the Greenmarket in Dundee:

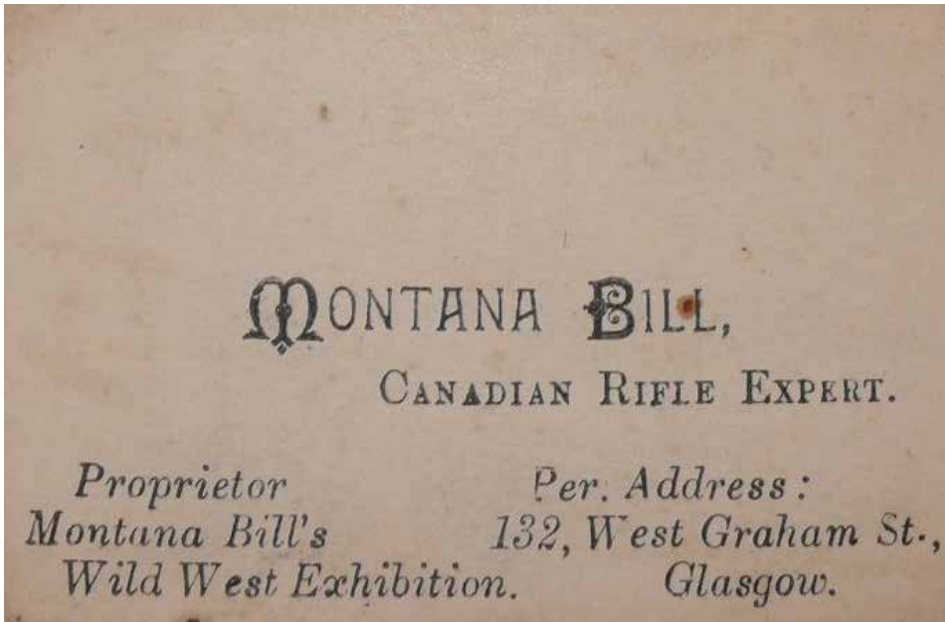
"Montana Bill" was quite a picturesque object. He wore a red shirt trimmed with barbaric ornaments, and his long, dark

locks hung down his back like a school girl. He had on his war paint, and he showed some good shooting with a Colt rifle. He finished his target practice by firing at a pipe head set on the head of the lady who acted as his marker—the William Tell feat modernized.

I had a quiet talk with Bill...He had an Indian cast of features,

and he informed me he was what was called a "half-breed." His father was a French Canadian, and his mother a squaw of the famous Sioux tribe of American Indians. He was born in the "Wild West," and learned to shoot when a child to save his life. Six or seven years ago he came over with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Since then he had performed in music halls in England and Scotland, and fulfilled engagements at from £12 [\$16.78] to £20 [\$28] a week. He seemed an intelligent, good-natured fellow, and I could not help thinking as I shook hands at parting what strange experiences some men have who are thrown on the world to live by their wits.

As any family historian will tell you, ancestors fall into a broad spectrum between those who cling to immortality and those who choose to embrace oblivion. Fortunately for his living descendants, several of whom are actively engaged in decoding the truth about their remarkable patriarch, Montana Bill lies at the top end of the range. His legacy consists of an impressive collection of photographs, press cuttings, letters, and various other



Montana Bill's business card.



"Montana Bill was quite a picturesque object."

documents including a brief but arresting hand-written manuscript. In it, he summarized his life of unbroken adventure and elaborated on the brief potted biography cited above.

LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF MONTANA BILL

Montana Bill's brief memoir is preceded by a short introduction opening with the formula 'Ladies & Gentlemen,' giving the clear impression that it was originally intended as a *viva voce* [in person] address.

It continues, with the characteristically eccentric spelling, grammar, and syntax all his own:

Dealing first with my parentage my father was a french canadian who served both Canadian and United States government in the capacity of Scout and Surveyor & was one of the few survivors of the Fort McKinnon macacre [sic] of 1838. My Mother was a Oklala [sic] Sioux belonging to the pine ridge agency. A special word... may be given in reference to my mother her name was Ne-Oska-Letta, daughter of Chief Rain-in-

the-Face fighting warrior of the Sioux nation who was...in the battle of the Bad-Lands in 1890. I was born in an Indian Teppa (Wigwam) on the Red rock river of the North two miles outside of Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada, in January 1855.

It is, of course, entirely typical of the man and of his sort that his maternal grandfather was not some obscure Indian of whom no historical record survives, but the historical chief who was long reputed as the slayer of Custer. It might also be noted in passing that the name which he attributes to his mother is not recognizably Lakota. One might also go so far as to ask what an Oglala band was doing so far north of its accustomed range.

Montana Bill was raised amongst his mother's people, and his was the classic Indian boyhood. He began to exhibit a prodigious talent with firearms, for which he received the tribal name of Short Rifle, and participated in his first battle at the age of nine. The years which followed were packed with all the familiar incidents of war and hunting:

- The manuscripts are silent, but his press releases make occasional references to a

role as an army scout in repelling the Fenian (Irish Republican Brotherhood) incursions into Canada. This is difficult to reconcile with other details which Montana Bill furnishes concerning his early life. Besides, since this particular episode took place in the years immediately following the American Civil War, it seems very doubtful, even if we provisionally accept 1855 as the year of his birth. He would have been only 10 years old.



It's not him.

- Short Rifle, or Montana Bill, as he came to be better known, was eighteen years of age before he ever saw a white woman. His first introduction to civilization came in 1873, when he was engaged as a scout in the United States Army. He supposedly had a particularly heroic role in the Massacre of Glendive, with an epic forty-mile ride for reinforcements, at the end of which, with commendable theatrical timing, his



Early on, Montana Bill had a talent with firearms.



horse dropped dead under him. Further particulars concerning this fight, even in the Internet age, are extremely hard to find.

- In the Battle of the Little Bighorn, otherwise known as Custer's Last Stand, a bullet passed through Montana Bill's left leg, killing his horse and incapacitating him for three months. He gives the date of the battle as June 26, 1876, but, unfortunately, neglects to tell us which side he was on.

- In the spring of 1879, Montana Bill was back with the Indians and was again wounded. In the course of an encounter with a band of forty horse thieves, he received a knife thrust to his left wrist while parrying a blow to his heart.

- In the fall of the same year, in the war against the Crows, a spear thrust grazed his right temple, "the scar of which I will carry to the grave." A superscripted insertion to the text states that "This lasted over 6 hours and was one of the Bloodiest Battles ever recorded in Indian History." The same incident is referred to in an undated newspaper advert as "The Crow Uprising September 18, 1879." This is seriously problematic, though, as this event, in the historical reality, was a brief and farcical affair. It culminated in a skirmish on Saturday, November 5, 1887, the very day on which, as we shall see, Montana Bill was supposedly in Birmingham, England, with Buffalo Bill.

- From 1879 until 1883, Montana Bill returned to the service of the United States government, as a scout, guide, and hunter, supplying the military posts with fresh meat in the form of "deer, antelope, bear, & buffalo." From 1883 until 1885, he assisted the Canadian government in suppressing his fellow mixed-race foes during the Riel Rebellion.

In the course of these epic endeavours, Montana Bill inevitably endured further disfigurement. He survived a rattlesnake bite, and on another occasion, a wild horse that he was attempting to subdue bit off the top of the first finger of his left hand. The manuscript account of this mishap includes the phrase "as no doubt a number of you would notice," a further indication that it was intended to be presented to an audience actually present before him. Like the spear wounds on the hands and side of the risen Christ, his various scars and injuries could scarcely have been counterfeited; as we shall see, they were real enough.

JOINING BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST

Having thus firmly established his frontier credentials, the next logical step was to sign up with Buffalo Bill:

What was an Oglala band doing so far north?

In the spring of 1886 I was approached by the representatives of Buffalo's *[sic]* Bill's exhibition to join him in his Wild West show at Erostina Staten Island. I was specially engaged by my old pard & comrade as interpreter to the different tribes of Indians...

These included "some of the most warlike tribes of them days...Apaches, Commanchies, Crows, Pawnees, Souixs, & Shayannes." That such a diverse array of western tribes was ever represented in Buffalo Bill's show is hard to reconcile with the historical record. Even if they were, how exactly Montana Bill found the time or opportunity to acquire linguistic proficiency in all their languages is an absolute mystery.

During this phase of his career, Lillian Smith and Doc Carver were but two of the



Wild West's Buck Taylor with the show's Indian encampment on Erostina Staten Island, ca. 1888. MS 006 William F. Cody Collection. P.6.201

several legendary sharpshooters whom he claims to have met and (naturally), without exception, defeated.

Montana Bill went to London with Buffalo Bill in the spring of 1887 and, of course, performed his shooting act before Queen Victoria, remaining with the show until October 1892. At that time, he wrote, "Not wishing to return to America I joined the renowned Mexican Joe's Wild West, again travelling the Brittish Isles remaining with him untill his failure at Barnsley in March 1894."

In common with such other ostensible luminaries as Chief William Red Fox and Frank T. "Hidalgo" Hopkins, no supporting record of Montana Bill's participation in the Wild West has yet been found.

However, the statement concerning Mexican Joe's financial failure at Barnsley during March 1894 is actually correct. This,

taken together with a wealth of other details, demand the conclusion that Robert Bailey Robeson—Montana Bill—quite probably was a member of Mexican Joe's troupe during the period in question. Even the name of Montana Bill's "Lakota" mother, Neoskeleata, was a Mexican Joe influence. It had previously been the *nom de plume* of one of the "Apache" women in his show—more prosaically, the Winnebago, Nana Jefferson.

ROBERT BAILEY ROBESON, THE TRUTH

Amongst Montana Bill's effects is a birth certificate. It notes that the as-yet-unnamed male child of C.A. Robeson, a miner, originally from Ohio, and Fanny M. Bailey, birthplace New York, was born

on January 1, 1870, in New York City. Since Robeson and Bailey are otherwise established as Robert's parents, and it is known from other evidence that he was their only child, this is unquestionably the birth certificate of Robert Bailey Robeson.

"Montana Bill," or "Manhattan Bob" as he might have been more appropriately called, was therefore fifteen years younger than he claimed to be—far too young to have participated in the various frontier incidents in which he was supposed to have played a decisive part.

Certainly, such a dramatic conclusion should be reached only on the most compelling of evidence. A so-called smoking gun does exist, however, in the form of an 1884 entry for "Robeson, Robert B." in the *Register of Enlistments of Apprentices in the United States Navy to serve until they shall arrive at the age of*



No supporting record of Montana Bill in the Wild West has been found.

twenty-one years.

This confirms his date of birth as January 1, 1870, when, so we have been given to understand, he was already an adolescent Sioux warrior! He had enlisted on January 25, 1884, when, so his legion of admirers was led to believe, he was on a government assignment in the wilds of Canada.

According to the register, he was 5 ft. 2 in. in height; his hair and eyes were brown; and his complexion was fair. We are borne beyond the realms of simple coincidence by the entry under “Permanent Marks or Scars,” where there is noted “Scar above rt eye. Tip of index finger l. hand gone.” How exactly these wounds had been acquired, the Registrar neglected to determine. If ever a Crow spear or a wild horse bore any share of the blame, though, the record remains silent on the matter.

Young Robert probably saw the Wild West in New York as a spectator, though the inessential detail of Canada intrudes into so many contexts that one might suspect that a genuine Canadian sojourn may have been involved.

In Part 2 of “The lies and legends of Montana Bill” (*Points West*, fall/winter 2018), Tom Cunningham continues his tale of Montana Bill, focusing on Bill’s professional and person life. ■

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For the last two decades and more, Tom Cunningham has pursued an intensive study of Native American history with particular emphasis on connections with Scotland. He is the author of The Diamond’s Ace—Scotland and the Native Americans, and Your Fathers the Ghosts—Buffalo Bill’s Wild West in Scotland, with much of his research conducted at the Center of the West.



An ad for the Perth Theatre in the *Perthshire Advertiser*, June 5 and 9, 1915, called Montana Bill “The Renowned Indian Fighter & Canadian Scout | The Most Remarkable Marksman Living | Buffalo Bill’s Righthand Man.” With his letterhead (above), Montana Bill had several other claims to fame and added the quip “A DRAWING CARD FOR ANY BILL.”

- Incomparable rifle and pistol shot
- Certified Scout and Indian Interpreter with 17th Canadian Rangers and “K” Coy, 4th U.S. Infantry.
- Member of North-West Rangers, Silver Star, Brotherhood of Cattlemen, Frontiersman.
- Late Buffalo Bill’s Wild West, 1886–1892.
- Mexican Joe’s Wild West, 1892–1894.

EXHIBITIONS 2018



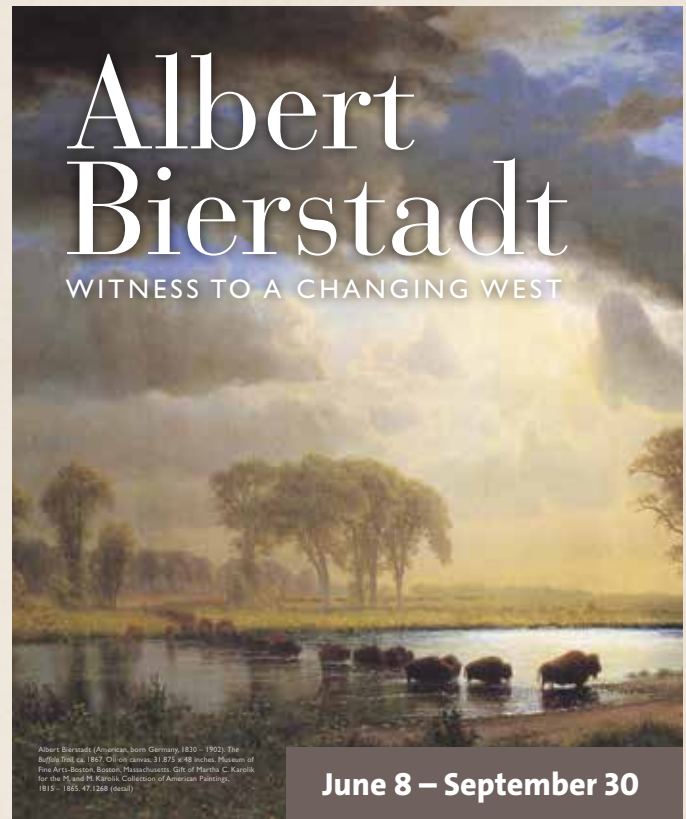
Draper Natural History Museum
MONARCH OF THE SKIES

*the Golden Eagle in
Greater Yellowstone and the
American West*



Opens June 10

HOOSEJAW BRAVO PHOTOGRAPHY



Albert Bierstadt

WITNESS TO A CHANGING WEST

Albert Bierstadt (American, born Germany, 1830–1902); The Buffalo Hunt, ca. 1867. Oil on canvas, 31 8/75 x 48 inches. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Boston, Massachusetts. Gift of Martha C. Karolik for the 75 and 88 Anniversaries. Collection of American Paintings, 1815–1885. 47.1268 (overall)

June 8 – September 30

YELLOWSTONE DISCOVERED

*William Henry Jackson's Lost Prints
Reveal the Park for America*



Now thru August 12



NATIVE NATIONS NOW

An Exhibition of Contemporary Native Art

May 17 – October 29



BEYOND OUR WALLS

Charles M. Russell (1864 – 1926).
Cowboys from the Bar Triangle, 1904. Watercolor on paper.
Gift of William E. Weiss. 59.72



It is often said of our namesake, William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody, that he brought the West to the world. Continuing that legacy, the Buffalo Bill Center of the West shares its own extraordinary object collection, exhibitions, and expertise beyond our walls with a national—and indeed international—audience.

From the loan of a few artifacts to complete traveling exhibitions, the Center of the West takes the authentic stories of the American West on the road. Read on to find out where you might happen to meet the Center’s collections!

UNITED STATES EMBASSY

Tokyo, Japan

Art in Embassies program through the U.S.

Department of State.

Eleven works by Frederic Remington, Albert Bierstadt, and Charles M. Russell.

Thru December 2020

YELLOWSTONE ART MUSEUM

Billings, Montana

Nature’s Cadence: Paintings by Clyde Aspevig

Thru July 8, 2018



Clyde Aspevig (b. 1951). *Navajo Peak, Indian Peaks Wilderness*, 1995. Oil on canvas. Gift of H. Peter Kriendler in memory of Jeannette E. Kriendler. 5.95

PEABODY ESSEX MUSEUM

Salem, Massachusetts

T.C. Cannon: At the Edge of America

Thru June 10, 2018

UPCOMING VENUES:

Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma,

July 14–October 7, 2018

Smithsonian National Museum of the

American Indian, New York City,

March 16–September 16, 2019

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WILDLIFE ART Jackson Hole, Wyoming

*Invisible Boundaries: Exploring Yellowstone’s Great Animal Migrations**

June 1–August 19, 2018

UPCOMING VENUE

Natural History Museum of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, summer 2019

**Center of the West* exhibition

COUSE-SHARP HISTORIC FOUNDATION Taos, New Mexico

Two J.H. Sharp personal objects for exhibit at historic site of artist neighbors’ homes:

Eanger Irving Couse (1866 – 1936) and Joseph Henry Sharp (1859 – 1953)

Thru November 2018



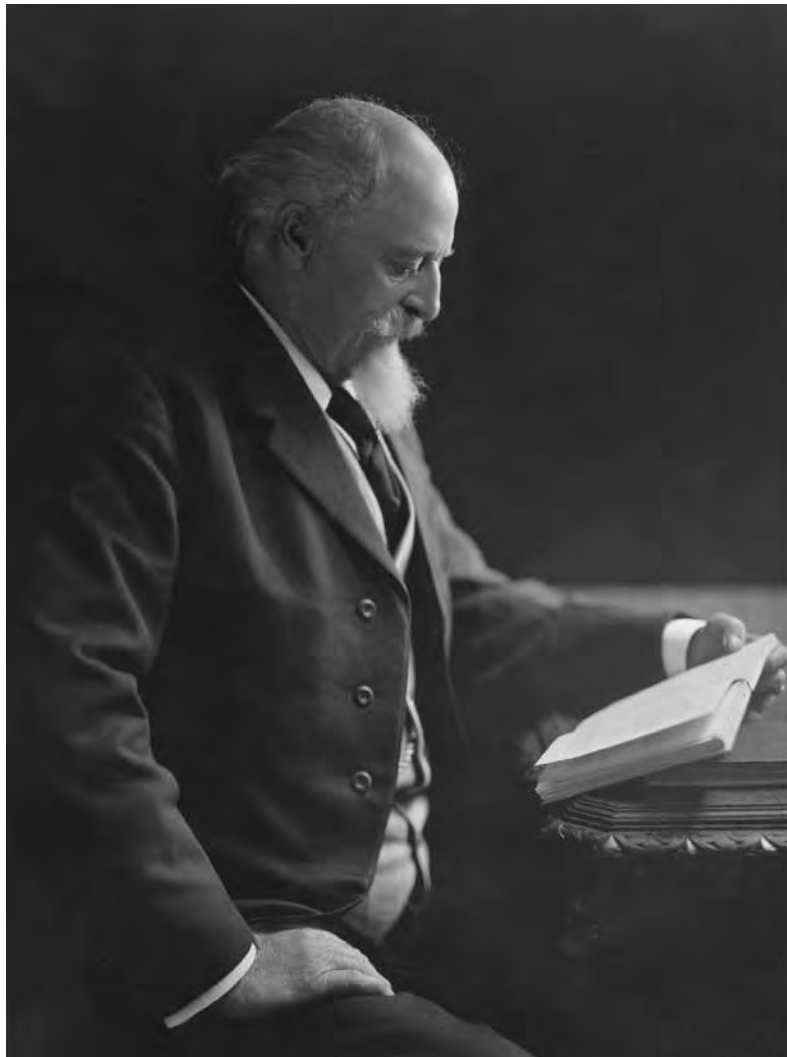
BRINTON MUSEUM Big Horn, Wyoming

Carrie Ballantyne Comes Home
June 3 – July 22, 2018

Carrie Ballantyne (b. 1956) *Great Basin Buckaroo*, ca. 2004. Colored pencil on paper. William E. Weiss Purchase Award – 2004 Buffalo Bill Art Show. 10.04

“No swearing or drinking in my Company since I got good”:

BUFFALO BILL *finds God*



BY STEVE FRIESEN

This excerpt was originally published in the Winter 2003 edition of *Points West*. All images are from the MS 006 William F. Cody Collection.

William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody sat alone in his French hotel. It had been over two months since he learned of the dismissal of his divorce suit. The judge had rejected all his charges against Louisa. Then the judge went further, commenting that, despite Louisa’s wifely devotion, Bill had been “cruel to her and heaped indignities upon her.” Those words had been rolling around in his head ever since he saw them in the newspapers. All his life, he had tried to do the right thing. He had thought that a divorce would make both Louisa and him happier. But the trial just seemed to make everything worse.

Daughter Arta died, and Louisa accused him of murdering her by breaking her heart with the divorce. And the demands of the Wild West had nearly exhausted him since the death of his friend and partner Nate Salsbury two years earlier. So many of his old friends, and three of his four children, had passed on. Maybe his sister Julia was right about God and the promised land, perhaps he needed to change his life. Bill clasped his hands and bowed his head.

This scenario may or may not have occurred. But it is often in the darkest times that people experience a spiritual awakening. Something happened to Buffalo Bill in the spring of 1905 that gave him a change of heart about his life. His sister Julia Cody Goodman, a devout and active Christian, had written to him at least one time about the state of his soul before that date.

He had replied to her 1901 letter, “You speak about the promised land—And my accepting Christ. Now Julia, no one wants to do right more than I do, and I propose to lead an honest life—doing good helping my fellow creatures

William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody, ca. 1912. P.69.0118



Arta Lucille Cody, 1882, Chicago. P.69.1797

when and wherever I can.” He went on to say he did not want to go to church on Sunday, and then cheat his neighbor on Monday, implying that many Christians were hypocritical. He concluded, “If I am too wicked to pray to God, I will ask my Angel Mother and children, who are in Heaven to speak a good word for me to God.” Perhaps that good word, combined with all of the emotional and other struggles he was facing, brought Buffalo Bill a spiritual awakening in spring of 1905.

William Cody wrote Julia from France on June 14, 1905:

And it’s in my old age I have found God— And realize how easy it is to abandon sin and serve him. When one stops to think how little they have to give up—to serve God. It’s a wonder so many more don’t do it. A person only has to do right. Through this knowledge I have quit drinking entirely. And quit doing rash things simply by controlling my passions and temper when I find myself getting angry.

Cody’s experience that year was more of a spiritual awakening than a full conversion experience. Unlike some people who rejected religion outright, Buffalo Bill had never really lost God. He did rail at God once after forty-four days of rain nearly ruined his season. In a letter to his partner Nate Salsbury he complained that “God, Christ, and the devil is against me.” Characterizing himself as a Jonah, he wrote “I am an Ingersol man from inside out. And a damned Joner disgusted with myself and the world—there is no heaven—if so it can stay there and be damned.”

Despite his reference to Ingersol, a well-known atheist of the

time, he was apparently just letting off steam. He continued to close occasional letters to his sister Julia and her husband Al with the words “God bless you.” Prior to 1905, his feelings about God could be best characterized as ambivalent. His sister Helen Cody Wetmore wrote in her biography of Bill, “He was not averse to church-going, although he was liable even in church to be carried away by the rollicking spirit that was in him.”

Buffalo Bill had always had a soft spot in his heart for the poor and downtrodden. When his show opened at Madison Square Garden, he announced a special Orphan’s Day, inviting charity organizations from all over Manhattan to bring their children. Free admission was extended to more than 5,000 children. Most appearances by Buffalo Bill’s Wild West in major American and European cities included such free days, as well as donations to charitable organizations.

Buffalo Bill also gave money to churches and counted North Platte, Nebraska, minister George Allen Beecher among his friends. Beecher remarked upon Cody’s honesty in his autobiography as well, noting, “I learned to respect this man for his virtues, and to be patient with his faults.”

And Cody did have his faults, the most prominent being a love of women and alcohol.

Buffalo Bill was accused of being a womanizer and may have had several affairs. His fame, wealth, and good looks made him very attractive to women, and his marriage to Louisa was filled with conflict. Their life together was a cycle of arguing, separating, and then making up. Their first separation occurred briefly in 1877. Bill then made a first attempt to divorce Louisa in 1883. Bill’s nephew Ed Goodman observed the cycle when he was with the Wild West show in 1887. In 1902, Bill wrote Julia that he was living a life of misery and his marriage grew “more unbearable each year.” That letter marked the beginning of a three-year effort at divorce that ended in failure in 1905.

In his younger days, Buffalo Bill acquired a reputation of being a prolific drinker, although most accounts suggest that he was in control of the alcohol rather than it being in control of him. And he generally kept away from alcohol during the show season, saying, “I’ve got 600 men here and I abstain for the sake of example.”

Buffalo Bill’s spiritual awakening was a largely private experience. On rare occasions, he did mention his beliefs in public. In a 1907 interview he stated, “I believe that a man gets closer to God out there in the big, free West...You feel differently about your fellow man out there in the West. He’s nearer to you, and God’s nearer to you. You are filled with a true religion and a bigger realization of life.”



William F. Cody with sister Julia Cody Goodman on the porch of the Irma Hotel, ca. 1910 – 1916. P.6.0851



Buffalo Bill and his Wild West always held an attraction to youngsters, and from all accounts, the feeling was mutual. Here children peer underneath the Wild West show tent, ca. 1890 – 1900. P.6.228b

In 1909, he gave a special performance of the Wild West for the inmates at Auburn prison in New York. He introduced the show with a brief speech saying he had brought it to them since they could not come to him. He concluded, "I hope that when you get out that you will come to see my show. Look to God and put your trust in Him. Think it over now and when you get out, God will help you."

Buffalo Bill opened up about his beliefs most to his sister Julia. In 1906, he wrote Julia that he wanted Minister Harper to come to the TE Ranch outside Cody and deliver one of his "blessed sermons" at a dinner for the neighbors "to bring us closer to God." In 1914 he wrote, "Let us show the Lord we are Christians. And will carry our cross. God ever bless you my patient brave sister. Remember our brave Christian mother and what she endured." His letters also reminded Julia that he prayed for her each night.



Buffalo Bill's Wild West cast and crew at Auburn Correctional Facility, Auburn, New York, ca. 1914. P.69.1961

"being good" years later in 1914 when he wrote that he was "trying to live on earth as God would be pleased to have me live. I slip up sometimes, then I ask God's forgiveness."

With the change in his spiritual life, Buffalo Bill made changes in the rest of his life just as he had said he would. On May 16, 1906, he wrote Julia, "No swearing or drinking in my Company since I got good." He was still working on

.....



One of the last photos ever taken of William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, pictured with Dr. William W. Crook, Glenwood Springs, Colorado, 1917. P.69.0999

On January 9, 1917, Buffalo Bill was baptized by Father Christopher Walsh at the Denver home of his sister Mary Cody Decker. He told the priest that he had never belonged to any religion, but that he had always believed in God. He knew he had only a short time to live, and he wished to die in the Catholic faith. Father Walsh asked the appropriate questions, and then administered the sacrament. Twenty-four hours later, surrounded by friends and family, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody entered his promised land. ■

.....

Steve Friesen, now retired, is the former Director of the Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave in Golden, Colorado.



New income tax law and philanthropy

Many of you have asked us how the new tax law impacts your giving.



2017 STANDARD DEDUCTION

- **\$6,350:** Individual
- **\$12,700:** Married, filing jointly

2018 STANDARD DEDUCTION

- **\$12,000:** Individuals
- **\$24,000:** Married, filing jointly

For many taxpayers accustomed to itemizing their deductions—including charitable gifts—they might be better off taking the standard deduction when filing their 2018 taxes.

So you might well ask, “Are there ways to give that allow me some tax benefits, even if I can’t itemize?” The answer is: Yes!

Strategies going forward

- 1 If you own appreciated stock, you can donate that instead of cash.
 - If you transfer the stock directly to a charity (your broker can do this for you), you won’t have to pay capital gains tax on it (neither does the charity).
 - If you want to stay invested in the stock, buy more with the money you would have sent the charity. That makes your basis the current stock price instead of the much lower one you had before. Consequently,

when you sell the stock in the future, you’ll have lower capital gains.

2 If you’re older than 70 ½ and taking mandatory distributions from a traditional IRA (Individual Retirement Account), you already know that those dollars must be counted in your income for the year because, unlike a ROTH IRA, the monies were deposited into your IRA pre-tax. You may direct your IRA custodian to send your distribution—or some portion of it—directly to a charity (for example, the Buffalo Bill Center of the West!). Since you don’t actually receive it, it won’t be counted in your income for that year.

You may have noticed these two methods have a caveat in common: The proceeds must go directly to the charity. You cannot convert the stock to cash, or receive the IRA distribution, and then make a cash gift to the charity for these gifts to qualify.

3 Two other methods involve increasing your philanthropy in one year to reach the threshold for itemizing. For example, you may double the amount you give to your charities in 2018, and then give less, or nothing, in 2019. Please be sure to inform your charities of your plans so they can budget accordingly. If a number of donors implemented this strategy, it could really throw 2019 budgets into chaos!

4 Another idea is to set up a Donor Advised Fund (DAF) with one of the many institutions that offer them. You could deposit a large amount in one tax year, and then direct gifts to charities, as you normally would, for many years afterward. There are limitations to DAFs, however—an important one being that you cannot use those funds to pay off pledges since, technically, you no longer control those dollars.

As always, consult with your own financial advisor to ensure these tactics work in your situation. He or she may even have other tax-efficient ways for you to make your desired gifts to charity this year.



Why do you give?

If you’re used to being able to take a tax deduction for your charitable gifts, and this year you won’t have enough deductions to do so, you may be disappointed. But honestly, is that the reason you donate to the organizations you do?

Probably not. More than likely, you value the work the group does, and you want to be a part of ensuring it continues. The tax deduction is nice, but we’re betting it’s not the motivation behind your giving. You could view the increase in the standard deduction as the government’s way of simplifying things for everyone by assuming you’ll give to charity and giving you credit for it up front!

The charities you’ve supported in the past still need you. We hope you can continue to support them—and us!—in 2018 and into the future.

Federal agency grants make an impact

On March 12, we submitted a Capacity Building Challenge Grant proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)—and with that came good news and some not-so-good news



The good news? The funding available is substantial: as much as \$500,000, provided we raise \$1.5 million to match it. The not-so-good news? We had only seven weeks to complete the application, and now we are competing with other great institutions across the United States.

Naturally, we had to ask ourselves these questions:

- Is this \$500,000-dollar grant potential worth the effort? Absolutely!
- Can we meet the urgent deadline? It'll take teamwork.
- Are we able to secure the matching funds? Yes, with help from our passionate donors.



These grants—actually all federal grants—are very competitive; we knew our proposal needed to be excellent. How competitive? According to the NEH website, in its first two competitions, the Public Humanities Projects program (a category in which we are seeking support for the Cody Firearms Museum Reinstallation) received an average of 101 applications per competition. The program extended an average of sixteen awards per competition, for a funding ratio of 16 percent. If you're a baseball player, that's a .160 batting average—not good enough to make the big leagues and

probably not good enough even for the minor leagues.

Clearly, there are no guarantees of funding, but we have a few things working in our favor when it comes to federal grants.

REPUTATION: First, we are nationally and internationally known for the quality of our collections and programs. That gives the non-agency evaluators and agency administrators confidence that we will succeed in what we propose. It also helps the granting agencies fulfill their own missions; with a one-hundred-year history, they know we are a good bet.

PLANNING: Second, we have a comprehensive planning process. We prepare one-to-three-year business plans based on our dynamic strategic plan. The plans prioritize projects seeking funding and evaluate the impact those projects likely will have with our audiences.

PROJECT ON DECK: Next, we just happened to have a project ready that fits the mission of this NEH opportunity. It is the long-term, engineering master plan that details the work needed for our facility to preserve and protect our collections and maintain a comfortable environment for all our visitors. The project includes replacing thirty-year-old boilers and chillers, installing new air handlers and air-conditioning systems, replacing corroded pipe systems, and replacing roofs, windows, and doors. If we're fortunate enough to receive the award, this NEH grant could support ongoing systems upgrades for up to ten years, which fits the schedule recommended by our engineering firm.

It's important to note that federal agencies do not entirely fund any project. They require the organization receiving funding to contribute at least as much from other fundraising sources as the grant provides. For our challenge grant, we must match each federal dollar with three new dollars. It's a successful private/public partnership model with leverage and reputation working



both ways. Our thriving donor support network makes an enormous difference in the amount we can be awarded in federal grants.

TRACK RECORD: Finally, our track record speaks volumes about our fitness to manage a federal grant. After all, we have received significant federal funding in our history, listed below in approximate and rounded dollars:

- Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS): \$1.77 million total since 1984
- National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH): \$1.95 million total since 1988
- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA): \$435,000 total since 1987
- Department of the Interior/Bureau of Land Management (DOI/BLM): \$108,000 total since 1995

Our track record also shows we consistently raise the matching funds required, complete projects supported by grants, and submit the required reports that substantiate the work and the outcomes we committed to achieve.

In addition to funds from private sources and operations income, we have received critical support from one or more federal agencies for each of the familiar projects on page 29.

While we may prefer that granting agencies communicate on a predictable schedule with plenty of lead time, we'll never pass up an opportunity to apply for funding that allows us to fulfill our mission and enhance our reputation.

As for the NEH Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grant? Stay tuned. We won't know the outcome until August... ■





Cody Firearms Museum Reinstallation project: NEH, IMLS, additional grants pending



Multi-year Papers of William F. Cody project: NEH



Multi-year Golden Eagle Ecology Field Research: DOI/BLM



Albert Bierstadt: Witness to a Changing West exhibition: NEA



Enduring Legacies, the catalogue of the Paul Dyck Plains Indian Buffalo Culture Collection: NEA

treasures

FROM
OUR
WEST



**BUFFALO BILL
MUSEUM**

Nate Salsbury's Traveling Desk

This mahogany traveling desk served Nate Salsbury as he managed Buffalo Bill's Wild West during its various tours. He was born in Freeport, Illinois, in 1846, and became an orphan at the age of eight. Salsbury then lived with his stepfather, Jedutha Fuller, but ran away after years of being overworked and abused.

At age fifteen, Salsbury enlisted in the Union Army's 15th Illinois Infantry as a drummer boy, serving one year. In 1863, he enlisted in the 89th Illinois Infantry and served until mustered out in February 1865. After the war, Salsbury briefly attended a commercial college in Aurora, Illinois, before deciding to become an actor. He later organized the comedy troupe Salsbury's Troubadours and produced a show titled *Black America* with an all African-American group of five hundred performers. Salsbury joined William F. Cody in 1884 to form Buffalo Bill's Wild West, and served as vice president until his death in 1902.

Salsbury and his second wife Rachel Samuels had four children: two sons, Nathan and Milton, and twin daughters, Rachel and Rebecca, who were born in England during the Wild West's second tour of Europe. Rebecca gave this desk to her nephew, Warren James Oakes, shortly before her death in 1968. Oakes donated it to the Buffalo Bill Museum.



Traveling desk,
mahogany,
ca. 1898 – 1905.
1.69.1788

*Special thanks to Ellen Salsbury,
Nate's great-granddaughter, for
contributing the biographical information.*



Kevin Pourier (Lakota). *Dakota Floral Horn Cup*, 2012. Buffalo horn cap, mother of pearl, lapis, malachite, sandstone, turquoise, coral, pipestone, cotton cloth, and sage. In Memory of Dr. Dilworth “Buz” Sellers. NA.106.1002



**WHITNEY
WESTERN ART MUSEUM**

Albert Bierstadt’s *A Bull Buffalo*

Albert Bierstadt is best known for his landscape paintings, but he was also a skilled painter of animals. Following his first trip west in 1859, Bierstadt began featuring western wildlife prominently in his art. He portrayed pronghorn antelope, elk, mountain goats, and even prairie dogs, but he was especially enamored of the plains bison, the largest land mammal in North America.

Bierstadt celebrated bison (buffalo) as our nation’s most emblematic animal and strove to inspire empathy for remnant herds in the West. During the artist’s lifetime, bison populations dwindled to the hundreds where once the species roamed in great herds. Hunters killed bison in excess, and mass settlement and development of the region diminished their habitats. Bierstadt used art to decry the near-extirmination of the animal in works like his final masterpiece, *The Last of the Buffalo* (ca. 1888).

A Bull Buffalo is a sensitively rendered portrait revealing Bierstadt’s keen and enduring interest in bison. The painting is included in the special exhibition, *Albert Bierstadt: Witness to a Changing West*, on view at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West June 8–September 30, 2018. Co-produced with Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma, the exhibition provides new perspectives on Bierstadt’s contributions to debates around wildlife conservation in the West.

IMAGE: Albert Bierstadt (1830 – 1902). *A Bull Buffalo*, 1879. Oil on paper, 13.25 x 15.25 inches. Gift of Carman H. Messmore. 1.62



**PLAINS INDIAN
MUSEUM**

Dakota Floral Horn Cup

New acquisitions come to the Center through various means and are a momentous but sometimes bittersweet occasion. The purchase of *Dakota Floral Horn Cup* was made in 2017 to honor Plains Indian Museum Advisor Dr. Dilworth “Buz” Sellers (1936 – 2016). After Buz’s passing, friends and family, including his widow Judy, made donations to the Plains Indian Museum in his memory. It took a bit of time and thought to find exactly the right piece to represent Buz. Curator Rebecca West says, “Buz was a man of intellect and focus during his professional life and an avid historian. What many of us remember most fondly was his kindness and warmth. The piece needed to represent a sense of tradition and strength as well as his softer side.”

West had a chance encounter with the creator of the piece, Lakota artist Keven Pourier, at a conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 2017. Pourier, known for his work with buffalo horns and his ability to blend traditional materials with a contemporary aesthetic, showed *Dakota Floral* to West. She admired the contrast of the intense jet-black shine of the buffalo horn with the more delicate floral inlay pattern made from mother of pearl, lapis, malachite, sandstone, turquoise, coral, and pipestone. Significant as a vessel made from the horn cap of the buffalo, an animal revered for its power and for the resources it has provided to Native cultures for centuries, Pourier further notes, “The floral design is so beautiful and represents all the medicines that we used and still use today. The Buffalo Spirit lives in the horn cap.” The artwork embodies Buz’s role as a physician and healer in his own right as well as his generosity and compassion.

Dakota Floral Horn Cup received first place in the Northern Plains Indian Market Art Show in 2017 at Sioux Falls, South Dakota. As of mid-May 2018, it is on exhibit in the Contemporary Native Arts Gallery on the lower level of the Plains Indian Museum. ■

bits & bytes

NEWS, ACTIVITIES, & EVENTS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS | JUNE – OCTOBER

CENTER HOURS

- Through SEP 15: 8 AM–6 PM daily
- SEP 16 – OCT 31: 8 AM– 5 PM daily

SPECIAL EVENTS

37th Annual Plains Indian Museum Powwow, JUN 16–17

- Grand entries noon and 6 PM Saturday, and noon Sunday. Competitive dance, Native arts vendors, Indian tacos, and fry bread. \$10 adults; \$5 youth; 6 and younger free; participating dancers, drums, and their families free.

25th Annual Buffalo Bill Shootout, AUG 9–11

- At the Cody Shooting Complex. The public is invited to observe the shooting competition.
- Welcome reception for competitors and their guests at the Center, **AUG 9**
- Awards dinner for competitors at the Center, **AUG 11**

42nd Annual Patrons Ball, SEP 22

- **6 PM.** Our annual black-tie fundraising gala and the finale to Cody's Rendezvous Royale week. Learn more at centerofthewest.org/event/patrons-ball.

SUMMER INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

Draper Museum Raptor Experience

- Through **MAY 31:** Relaxing with Raptors, 1–1:30 PM daily

- **JUN 1–AUG 15:** Three programs daily:
 - **10–10:30 a.m.** The Night Shift—Owls of the Yellowstone Region
 - **2:30–3 p.m.** Superheroes of Nature
 - **4:30–5 p.m.** Talon Talk
- **AUG 6–SEP 15:** Relaxing with Raptors, • **10–10:30 AM and 2:30–3 PM**
- **After SEP 16:** Relaxing with Raptors, 1–1:30 PM daily

Chuckwagon cooking demonstrations—and samples!

- **MAY 21–SEP 21:** On the Center's front lawn, **MON–SAT, 9:30 AM–3:30 PM**

Guided Tours

- **MAY 29 – SEP 21,** daily
 - *Wildlife of the West*, 11 AM
 - *People of the West*, 1 PM
 - *Yellowstone: Yesterday and Today*, 3 PM

Artists-in-Residence

- **JUL 30–AUG 3:** Ben Pease, Plains Indian Museum
- **AUG 6–10:** Ernest Gendron, Plains Indian Museum

WORKSHOPS, FIELD TRIPS, AND DAY CAMPS

Made possible through a generous grant from the R. Harold Burton Foundation. Registration information at centerofthewest.org/learn/family-programs. Scholarships may be available: emilyb@centerofthewest.org or 307-578-4110.

- **June 13:** *Hiking into the Sunlight*, ages 8–15, **8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.** A kids' day hike in the Absaroka Mountains to explore

geology and flowering plants. \$10/member, \$15/non-member.

- **June 19–21:** *Picturing Nature*, ages 11–15, **8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.** each day. Develop writing, photography, and painting skills with nature. Instructors: nature photographer Kathy Lichtendahl, professor Sarah Shearer, university student Emily Reed. \$50/member, \$60/non-member.
- **July 2:** *Family Art Night*, 5–7 p.m. Kids and adults explore their creative, artistic sides with artist Michelle Farrier. \$20/member families, \$30/non-member families.
- **July 11–13:** *Teton Adventure Discovery Field Trip*, ages 11–15. A canoe and camping trip for middle schoolers to explore Jackson Lake's shores and islands, and the geology of the Teton Range. \$85/member, \$95/non-member.
- **July 23, 25, 27:** *Little Aspiring Artists*, ages 4–5, **9–10:30 a.m.** A preschool class designed to engage and inspire young minds with art. \$20/member, \$25/non-member.
- **July 24:** *Floating through Time*, ages 11–15. Middle schoolers raft the Shoshone River exploring geology with Rich Davis. \$30/members, \$35/non-member. Alternate rain date July 26.
- **July 30–August 3:** *Colorful Creations*, ages 6–9 (**9–10:30 a.m.** each day), ages 10–12 (**1–3 p.m.** each day). Elementary school students unleash their creative minds as instructor Sarah Shearer leads projects focusing on colors and textures. \$30/member, \$35/non-member.
- **August 7:** *Family Bike and Rock Talk*, **4:30–6:30 p.m.** Geologist Dan Miller leads a free family bicycling experience through geologic history exploring the rock layers visible in Shoshone Canyon.

- **August 7–9:** *Science on the Mountain*, ages 11–15. A three-day, two-night Big Horn Mountains adventure with the Draper Natural History Museum’s scientist researchers. Explore varied ecosystems, plants, and animals. \$85/member, \$95/non-member.
- **August 15 and 16:** *Horsin’ Around*, ages 8–10, **9 a.m.–3 p.m.** An end-of-summer adventure of horseback riding and fly fishing. \$85/member, \$95/non-member.

LUNCHTIME LECTURES AND EVENING TALKS

Lunchtime Expedition

Organized and hosted by the Draper Natural History Museum; supported in part by Sage Creek Ranch and the Nancy-Carroll Draper Foundation.

- **JUN 7, 12:15 PM:** *From Sagebrush Sea to Pacific Ocean: Golden Eagle conservation in the Big Picture* by Brian Woodbridge. Lunchtime Expedition.
- **JUL 5, 12:15 PM:** *The Wyoming Natural Diversity Database* by Gary Beauvais. Lunchtime Expedition.
- **JUL 27, 5:15 PM:** *Images of the Sagebrush Sea* by Dave Showalter. Draper After Dark lecture.
- **AUG 2, 12:15 PM:** *Wildlife in Rock Art* by Larry Loendorf. Lunchtime Expedition.
- **SEP 6, 12:15 PM:** *Wind Energy in Wyoming* by Holly Copeland. Lunchtime Expedition.
- **OCT 4, 12:15 PM:** *Golden Eagle Conservation in the Wyoming Basin Ecoregion* by Zach Wallace. Lunchtime Expedition.

SYMPOSIUM

Albert Bierstadt: Witness to a Changing West

- **JUN 16, 9 AM – 5 PM** (doors open at 8 AM): Our Whitney Western Art Museum hosts a symposium in conjunction with the special exhibition *Albert Bierstadt: Witness to a Changing West*. Presenters include scholars and art historians who explore the life and work of this premier western landscape artist, who was also a renowned history painter. Sessions address Bierstadt in context of his treatment not just of majestic mountains and lakes but more prominently of bison and American Indians, whom he

approached as key subjects for his art.

- **Registration:** \$25 for students, \$55 for Center members, and \$65 for non-members. Register online at tickets.centerofthewest.org.

MEMBERSHIP EVENTS

Business Friend Days

- **JUN 2–3, 8 a.m.–6 p.m.**
 - A weekend of appreciation for our Business Members, whose employees and families enjoy free admission to the Center.

Coffee & Curators:

Members gather for coffee, refreshments, and a curator’s talk inspired by the Center’s collections—and special up-close or behind-the-scenes access. Select Saturdays, 10–11:30 a.m. Space limited so reserve in advance at membership@centerofthewest.org or 307-578-4008.

- **JUN 2:** Buffalo Bill Museum
- **AUG 4:** Whitney Western Art Museum
- **SEP 8:** Cody Firearms Museum
- **OCT 6:** Plains Indian Museum

Members Opening

- **JUN 8, 5–7 PM:** Center of the West members enjoy a special evening reception celebrating the opening of two exhibitions, *Albert Bierstadt: Witness to a Changing West* and *Monarch of the Skies: The Golden Eagle in Greater Yellowstone and the American West*. Light refreshments and a cash bar.

CODY FIREARMS RECORDS OFFICE SPECIAL HOURS

Regular office hours: MON–THU 8 AM–4:30 PM, FRI 8 AM–3 PM

- **JUN 9:** In office for National Gun Day (Louisville, Kentucky)
- **JUL 13 – 15:** Attending Winchester Arms Collectors Show (Cody, Wyoming); also covering Ohio Gun Collectors Show by phone
- **AUG 4:** In office for Big Reno Show (Reno, Nevada)
- **SEP 8–9:** Attending Ohio Gun Collectors Show (Wilmington, Ohio)
- **OCT 13–14:** In office for Texas Gun Collectors Show (Denton, Texas)
- **OCT 27:** In office for National Gun Day (Louisville, Kentucky)



DAN MILLER’S COWBOY MUSIC REVUE

- **JUN 1–OCT 6** (and select dates in MAY): Enjoy authentic cowboy music and entertainment, and a delicious western buffet at this evening dinner show, celebrating its 14th season in Cody—and third at the Center of the West.

- Dinner and show: \$41 plus tax per person.
- Dinner begins at 5:30 PM.
- Show begins at 6:30 PM and concludes in time to make it to Cody Nite Rodeo!

Reserve your seats early at tickets.centerofthewest.org for this popular show! Or take advantage of our best value combination: Center admission plus the Dan Miller dinner and show for \$59.50 plus tax per person.

Stay abreast of all the Center’s activities activities at centerofthewest.org/calendar.



Patrons Ball set for September 22

Staff and volunteers have shifted into “high gear” as plans move forward for the Center’s 42nd Annual Patrons Ball on September 22. The black-tie affair—complete with a gourmet meal and dancing—is the finale to *Rendezvous Royale*, a week of the best of absolutely everything western in Cody. Information about the nationally recognized Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale, the best in western design and décor with *By Western Hands*, and many other events is available at rendezvousroyale.org. For more about Patrons Ball, visit centerofthewest.org/event/42nd-annual-patrons-ball.



Powwow readies for 37th year

After more than three-and-a-half decades, the Buffalo Bill Center of the West's longest running public event is still amazing audiences. Now in its 37th year, the annual Plains Indian Museum Powwow takes place Saturday and Sunday, June 16 and 17 at the Center's Robbie Powwow Garden. The Powwow celebrates the Native cultures of the Plains as it brings together Native dancers, drum groups, and families, along with artisans and appreciative spectators.

Grand entries launch the celebration at noon and 6 p.m. Saturday, and noon Sunday as dancers of all ages compete for more than \$25,000 in prizes. Also onsite are vendors, concessions, and popular Learning Tipi.

For more information, visit centerofthewest.org/event/plains-indian-museum-powwow.



The Center's new electric vehicle charging station.

Center installs electric car charging station

The Buffalo Bill Center of the West now hosts an electric car charging station, installed appropriately enough, in time for April's Earth Day 2018.

Installed by Wild West EV, the charging station is capable of the fastest level 2 AC charging specification of 80 AMPs. It can be used on any of the latest electric car models on the market. Depending on the type of vehicle, the charging speed can vary. For instance, drivers can expect to add fifty to sixty miles of range per hour on a Tesla with a

dual or high amperage onboard charger. The system also works on the BMW i3 and i8, Chevy Bolt, Nissan Leaf, and with plug-in hybrids like the Prius Prime or Chevy Volt.

With the J1772 industry standard plug, the charger is safe to use in all weather conditions. The high power is only sent after payment by credit or debit card, and the car is safely connected. Then the vehicle and the charger conduct quick automatic safety checks before supplying the high volt and amperage to start charging the car.

The vehicle can take as much power as the onboard AC to DC charger can handle. In the company's testing with a

2012 Chevy Volt, the vehicle only used 14 amps of the 80 amps available.

As the network grows, Wild West EV notes that they're looking to place stations an appropriate distance apart, allowing electric cars to cruise anywhere in Wyoming. At no cost to the business, Wild West EV pays for the installation and electricity.

For a map of all the electric vehicle charging stations in Wyoming, visit Wyoming Department of Transportation's interactive highway map at map.wyoroad.info/wtimap/index.html. To see a video of the Center's charging station in operation, see centerofthewest.org/event/earth-day.



THE RACE IS ON!

In honor of Earth Day, kids created cars using only recycled materials, and then on April 21, they raced them down a ramp across the Draper Museum tile map. Staffer Phil Anthony helped kids load their vehicles into the starting gate. Winners were: ages 10 and younger, 6-year-old Charlotte McQuiston; ages 11 and older class, 11-year-old Grant George; and Judges Choice, the “Lean Green Recycle Machine” by Megan George. Read more at centerofthewest.org/event/earth-day.

Center receives NEA grant for Bierstadt exhibition

As the Buffalo Bill Center of the West gets closer to the opening of the exhibition *Albert Bierstadt: Witness to a Changing West*, it gratefully acknowledges the aid it received from a \$30,000 Art Works grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The exhibition is on view at the Center June 8 – September 30, 2018, and then it travels to Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Center’s award supports both the Bierstadt exhibition and the accompanying catalogue.

Art Works is the NEA’s principal grants program. The Center’s latest award helps defray some of the costs of the exhibition and accompanying catalogue. Through project-based funding, Art Works supports public engagement with, and access to, various forms of excellent art across the nation. The projects may be large or small, existing or new, and may take place in any part of the nation’s 50 states, the District of



Napoleon Sarony, Portrait of Albert Bierstadt, ca. 1870. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Gift of Larry J. West.

Columbia, and U.S. territories.

Bierstadt (1830 – 1902) is best known as America’s premier western landscape artist, but he was also a renowned history painter, a rarely-discussed aspect of his legacy. This exhibition offers fresh views on the artist’s complex legacy and his contributions to debates around wildlife conservation, our national parks, and the fate of Indigenous peoples of the West.

The exhibition is co-produced by the Center of the West and Gilcrease Museum, and supported by many private and organizational donors, and now, in part, by the NEA. ■

The Popular Frontier:

Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Transnational Mass Culture

EDITOR: FRANK CHRISTIANSON

The team at the *Papers of William F. Cody* is proud to announce that their latest book, *The Popular Frontier: Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Transnational Mass Culture*—the fourth book in their William F. Cody Series on the History and Culture of the American West, published by the University of Oklahoma Press—has garnered the Ray & Pat Browne Award for Best Edited Collection in Popular Culture and American Culture from the Popular Culture Association (PCA). The award was formally presented at the PCA annual conference in Indianapolis, Indiana, on March 29, 2018, to Dr. Frank Christianson, the Senior Editor of the *Papers of William F. Cody* and



Dr. Doug Seefeldt receives the PCA Award on behalf of Dr. Frank Christianson.

editor of this collection of essays. Co-Series Editor Dr. Douglas Seefeldt was on hand to accept the award on Christianson's behalf.

The individuals who comprise the PCA are a group of scholars and enthusiasts who study popular culture. The organization offers a venue for those interested in popular culture to come together and share ideas and interests about the field or about a particular subject within the field.

"In these concise, accessible essays, eleven scholars direct our gaze through an unlikely window upon the transatlantic travels of Buffalo Bill's Wild West," wrote Dr. Louis S. Warren, historian, author, and Turrentine Jackson Professor of Western U.S. History at the University of California-Davis. "In showing how Europeans transformed America's frontier mythology to meet their own cultural needs, the essays—instructive, interlocking, and colorful, even kaleidoscopic, much like the Wild West show itself—also reveal how the exhibition's international journeys redefined the nation for its American audiences."

University of Oklahoma Press (OU Press), the book's publisher, references Christianson's introduction in observing, "for the first four years after Cody conceived it, the Wild West exhibition toured the United States, honing the operation into a financially solvent enterprise. When the troupe ventured to England for its first overseas booking, its success exceeded all expectations. Between 1887 and 1906, the Wild West performed in fourteen countries, traveled more than 200,000 miles, and attracted a collective audience in the tens of millions."



The book answers such questions as "How did Europeans respond to Cody's vision of the American frontier?" "How did European countries appropriate what they saw on display?"

"The contributors to this volume consider how the Wild West functioned within social and cultural contexts far grander in scope than even the vast American West," OU Press says. "Among the topics addressed are the pairing of William F. Cody and Theodore Roosevelt as embodiments of frontier masculinity, and the significance of the show's most enduring persona, Annie Oakley."

To learn more about *Popular Frontier*, listen to the Center's own multimedia journalist, Kamila Kudelska—Wyoming Public Media's northern Wyoming correspondent—as she interviews Dr. Christianson: centerofthewest.org/2018/02/09/new-book-explores-buffalo-bills-wild-west-exhibition-impact-europe. ■

Dr. Frank Christianson is Associate Dean, College of Humanities-English at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. He specializes in nineteenth-century American and British literature. He is Senior Editor of the Papers of William F. Cody.

December 4, 2017. University of Oklahoma Press Norman, Oklahoma | 264 pages | illustrated ISBN: 9780806158945 William F. Cody Series on the History and Culture of the American West, Vol. 4

The Popular Frontier: Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Transnational Mass Culture is available through the Center's Museum Store.



Kit Carson Cody
(1870 – 1876), ca. 1876.
William F. “Buffalo Bill”
Cody’s only son.
MS 006 William
F. Cody Collection.
P.6.1654

1000 words



This photo gives no hint about the tragedy that would soon befall the Cody family. As for any parent, the greatest sadness of Buffalo Bill’s life was the loss of his only son, Kit Carson Cody. In his 1879 book, *The Life of Hon. William F. Cody, known as Buffalo Bill, the famous hunter, scout and guide. An autobiography*, the author wrote about his breaking heart:

For the season of 1875 – 1876, Texas Jack and I reorganized our old Combination, and made a very successful tour. While we were playing at Springfield, Massachusetts, April 20th and 21st 1876, a telegram was handed me just as I was going on the stage. I opened it and found it to be from Colonel Gr. W. Torrence, of Rochester [New York], an intimate friend of the family, who stated that my little boy Kit was dangerously ill with the scarlet fever. This was indeed sad news, for little Kit had always been my greatest pride.

I sent for John Burke, our business manager, and showing him the telegram, told him that I would play the first act, and making a proper excuse to the audience, I would then take the nine o'clock train that same evening for Rochester, leaving him to play out my part. This I did, and at ten o'clock the next morning I arrived in Rochester, and was met at the depot by my intimate friend Moses Kerngood who at once drove me to my home.

I found my little boy unable to speak but he seemed to recognize me and putting his little arms around my neck he tried to kiss me. We did everything in our power to save him, but it was of no avail. The Lord claimed his own, and that evening at six o'clock [April 22, 1876] my beloved little Kit died in my arms. We laid him away to rest in the beautiful cemetery of Mount Hope amid sorrow and tears...

One picture is worth a thousand words.

The McCracken Research Library at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West offers access to thousands of historic images, maps, and other documents for research and publication, thanks in part to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). To learn more, contact the library at 307-578-4063, or visit library.centerofthewest.org.

**BUFFALO BILL
CENTER
OF THE WEST**

720 Sheridan Avenue
Cody, Wyoming 82414
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