

**UPCOMING SHOW**Up to 25 works on show  
Feb. 28 – March 9, 2008Legacy Contemporary  
7176 Main Street  
Scottsdale, AZ 85251  
(480) 945-1113**SHOW LOCATION SCOTTSDALE, AZ****J.E. KNAUF**

## Stories and abstract space

After spending his career obsessing and perfecting the look and depiction of the human face in his contemporary western paintings, J.E. Knauf spent the last two years exploring, studying and traveling in order to enlighten and expand his conception of the Western Art genre.

"I started in 1993 with a core interest in combining the human figure with all kinds of non-objective backgrounds and having them make sense from a formal standpoint," says Knauf. "Over a ten year period I became more obsessed with faces and just zeroed in on the landscape of the face and absolutely love it."

Knauf's recent hiatus, though, gave him a chance to do some thinking and experimenting. During this time Knauf realized that he wants to continue working on the major theme of his career which is refining and expanding the general understanding and preconceptions of western art. Along the way, he also decided to spend less time with the faces and more time with the entire space around his figures.

"I did a lot of paintings during that time that will never see the light of day, but all of that experimentation allowed me to step outside the path I was on and do some things that were anything from traditional representational paintings on canvas to highly contemporary flat pieces. It was just important for me to let it go and pick up some new tools and approaches. And, when I came back, this time I'm forcing myself away from the faces and spending more time on the figures in space. Before everything outside of the face lost focus and I'm now going back to looking at the whole painting."

Knauf's newest paintings are a juxtaposition of traditional subject matter with contemporary and abstracted backgrounds. The imagery depicted ranges from cowboys and cowgirls to solitary horses to Native American dancers. While the subjects of each painting are recognizable, the meaning behind them is always open to interpretation. This is something that Knauf is after because he doesn't want to dictate a certain story or idea to the viewers of the work.

"I've never had a narrative for a painting in my life but want the narrative to be found after I've finished them," says Knauf. "I want to do justice and honorably treat everyone I paint because I find them beautiful and intriguing and only paint the ones I feel compelled to paint. I'm absolutely certain there is a story there, in fact there are lots of stories there but I want the viewers to be able to find them and bring their own stories to these spaces."

Knauf sees his style as being much different than traditional Western Art that prides itself on historical accuracy and heavy details. For Knauf, what is important isn't worrying about what bees Native Americans had access to and what time in history, but rather creating work that is entirely unique and individual and coming from his one aesthetic and artistic viewpoint.

"I want to make a painting that I've never seen before and one that fits into my core interest and allows me to refine a pathway for myself," says Knauf. "Once it's done and is sitting there, stories appear and then people just seem to start telling me about their experiences with the painting. It's like bringing the other half



Previews of Works For Sale at Upcoming Shows FEBRUARY 2008

### WESTERN ART COLLECTOR



*Lookin' for Girls*, oil on board, 36 x 36"



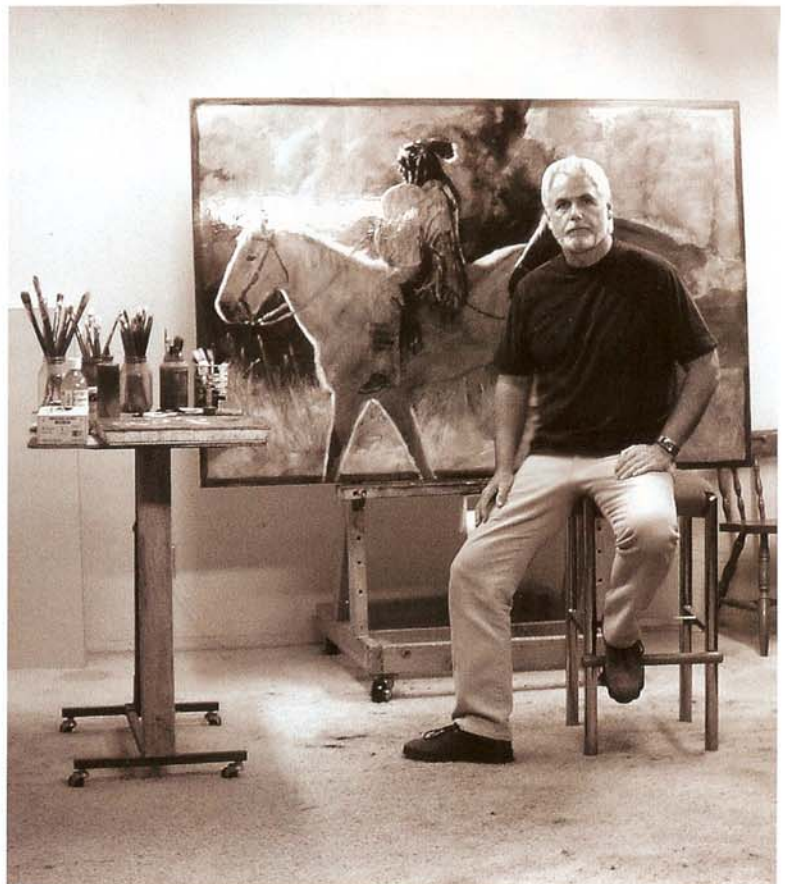


*High Grass, oil on board, 29 x 48"*

*The Gallery Says...*

*"In his latest work, J. E. Knauf has directed his attention to the space surrounding his subjects and his exploration of that space takes up from ephemeral landscapes to blatant abstractions, weaving human figures into a vision entirely his own."*

*—Janell Richardson, Director,  
Legacy Contemporary*



J.E. Knauf at work in his Arizona studio





*Buffalo Dance*, oil on board, 36 x 36"


of the art to the piece. I'm not painting a particular painting with a particular emotion. I've never felt that was my job. I want people to bring their own stories and let them work it out."

Technically speaking, Knauf also wants collectors to see the contrast he creates between the presumed flatness of the work and the actual texture of the surface. This is another way he sees his work as having more of a contemporary edge.

"I'm painting the illusion of texture but on a flat surface," says Knauf. "I'm trying to move paint around in a certain way so that it could provide the same visual interest you would get if you had a heavy impasto brush stroke and more of a spontaneous feeling to it. I do that as an illusion, as an illusion of texture on a flat surface. And, when you get up close, you can see that there are a lot of color variations and details, like a miniature abstract painting."

Knauf also hopes that his new exhibition will help highlight the group of artists who enjoy working with western subject matter in a contemporary way and collectively seek to expand the understanding and appreciation of Western Art to an increasing collector base.

"There is a small group of people who are using Western iconography in their paintings but don't fit into that traditional mold at all," says Knauf. "So, I see working in this manner as a way to surprise and delight." 🍷

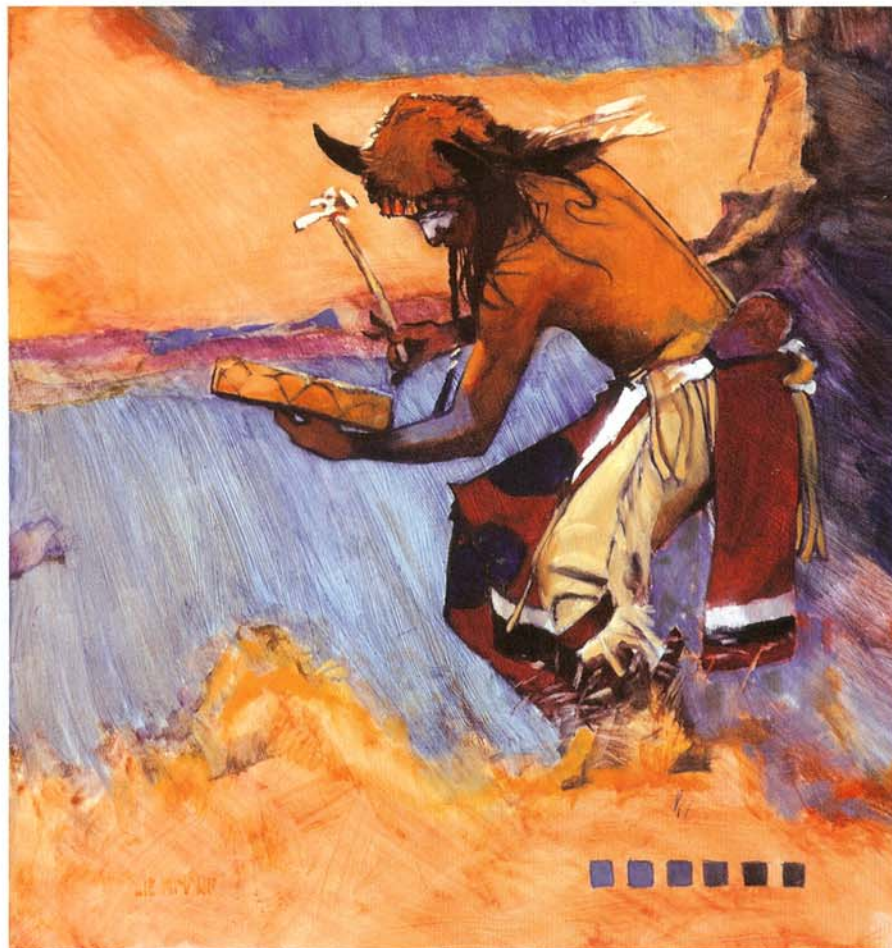
For a direct link to the exhibiting gallery go to 

[www.westernartcollector.com](http://www.westernartcollector.com)

### Price Range Indicator

*Our at-a-glance Price Range Indicator shows what you can expect to pay for this artist's work.*

	Small	Medium	Large
2008	\$1,700	\$6,000	\$10,000



*The Drummer*, oil on board, 36 x 36"