



Paper Talk: Charlie Russell's American West

Charles Marion Russell

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Dust jacket notes: "Charles M. Russell, the Cowboy Artist, was just a teenager from the East when he arrived in Montana in 1880. Acting out his boyhood dreams, he worked for years at cattle ranches and on roundups, acquiring first-hand knowledge of the Old West while he sharpened his skills as an artist. Sketching whenever he had the chance, he began to transform the elements of frontier life into art even as the West itself was passing into memory, a memory that he continued to celebrate with growing mastery and richness for the next forty years. This hugely appealing collection of his classic Western art - including his marvelously illustrated letters, poems, Christmas greetings, (what he called 'paper talk') and some of the great oil paintings that had their genesis in the sketches of Russell's restless pen - gives us a fresh, vigorous perspective on both the Old West and the artist who did so much to immortalize it. Here, in full color, are cowboys roping steers, lassoing mounts from the remuda, being thrown by broncos, drinking in frontier saloons, range riding in the heat of the Great Plains summer and the cold of the winter. Here are Indians, drawn with full dignity and respect; horses brilliantly evoked in a few incisive lines; Russell's beloved buffalo ('nature's cattle'); the closely observed details of tack and cowboy gear. And here, too, emerging form the letters - beginning when Russell was just a poor wrangler and continuing into the days of his great renown - is the funny, gregarious, self-deprecating Cowboy Artist himself, a man of whom his friend Will Rogers said, he would have been great even if he 'couldn't whitewash a fence.' Assembled under the aegis of the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth (a repository of much of Russell's art and memorabilia) - and expertly annotated by historian Brian W. Dippie - this book is a monument to the artist and to the American West he loved so much and knew so well."

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