

Nominee: The Russell: An Exhibition and Sale to Benefit the C.M. Russell Museum

Award: Event of the Year

Statement of Nomination:

Since 1969 Western art collectors, enthusiasts, and artists have gathered in Great Falls, Montana to celebrate the legacy of Charlie Russell through an auction whose proceeds go to the C.M. Russell Museum. Now, The Russell: An Exhibition and Sale to Benefit the C.M. Russell Museum boasts thousands of attendees from around the globe who flock to the city to witness record-breaking sales that in 2015 topped \$8.1 million, netting half the museum's operating budget.

2015 attendees of The Russell came from 36 states, 80 Montana cities, Canada, Greece, and Sweden, answering the call from a broad and thorough advertising campaign including outlets such as Cowboys & Indians, Western Art and Architecture, Western Art Collector, Southwest Art, Fine Art Connoisseur, Calgary Herald, and many more regional media.

The cornerstone of Western Art Week in Great Falls, The Russell Exhibition and Sale takes place each March near the birthdate of Charles Marion Russell (1864 – 1926). The C.M. Russell Museum dedicates itself to preserving and interpreting the culture, life, and country of Russell's West.

Three Western art auctions, an educational symposium, and numerous additional programs form The Russell. Each year the quality of art improves, increasing attendance, revenue, and excitement. In 2016, six significant Russell works as well as a Thomas Moran, estimated to gavel between \$3.5 and \$4.5 million, are at auction. Through its success, The Russell uplifts Great Falls as a center of culture and the arts, surpassing the Jackson Hole art auction and closing in on Scottsdale's.

Website or relevant link: <https://www.cmrussell.org/the-russell>

Website or relevant link: <http://www.southwestart.com/events/the-russell-feb2016>

Website or relevant link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVFF16tvPCs>

