

Joe Beeler

Joe Beeler (b. 1931-)

A pioneer in the field of contemporary Western art, and a founding member of the Cowboy Artists of America, Beeler has combined a lifetime of experience on the range with formal art training at Tulsa University and the Art Center School of Design in California to become one of the nation's preeminent artists working in western genre today.

Whether sitting at his easel or in the saddle, Joe Beeler has always enjoyed telling a good story and nowhere is that more apparent than through his art. A self-confessed romantic, he strives to go beyond just technique and convey feeling and mood in both his painting and sculpture. While much of his subject matter is contemporary, Beeler particularly enjoys creating historical scenes. Much of his reference material comes from his personal collection of Indian artifacts, cowboy paraphernalia and an extensive library of western books.

A native of Joplin, Missouri with a hefty dose of Cherokee blood, Beeler's keen interest in the West manifested itself through his childhood drawings, impressions he experienced while growing up in an area rich with colorful history and the enduring pioneer spirit. His professional career began in illustration at the University of Oklahoma Press. From there, he pursued a career as a full-time artist.

After a stint in Korea with Uncle Sam, Beeler met and married Sharon McPherson in the summer of 1956. Back in Osage country after just a year out West, the Beelers settled in a small rural cabin where Joe struggled to paint for a living with time off daily to shoot something for supper. Tough times measure a man's mettle. Beeler painted neighboring ranchers' prize bulls and horses, and worked tirelessly on more meaningful pieces in the tradition of his hero, Charlie Russell. Recognition came slow, but it came, and in 1961 the Beelers left the Oklahoma hills for the red rocks of Sedona, Arizona. With new country and fresh inspiration, Beeler's talent quickened to a gallop.

In 1965, he helped found the Cowboy Artists of America, an organization credited with much of the popularity of western art today. From that association of like-minded people flows a stream of fine art works that are eagerly anticipated and commercially successful.

#13 Lufkin City Hall – Watercolor painting on paper. Two wranglers with calf in field. Signed.