

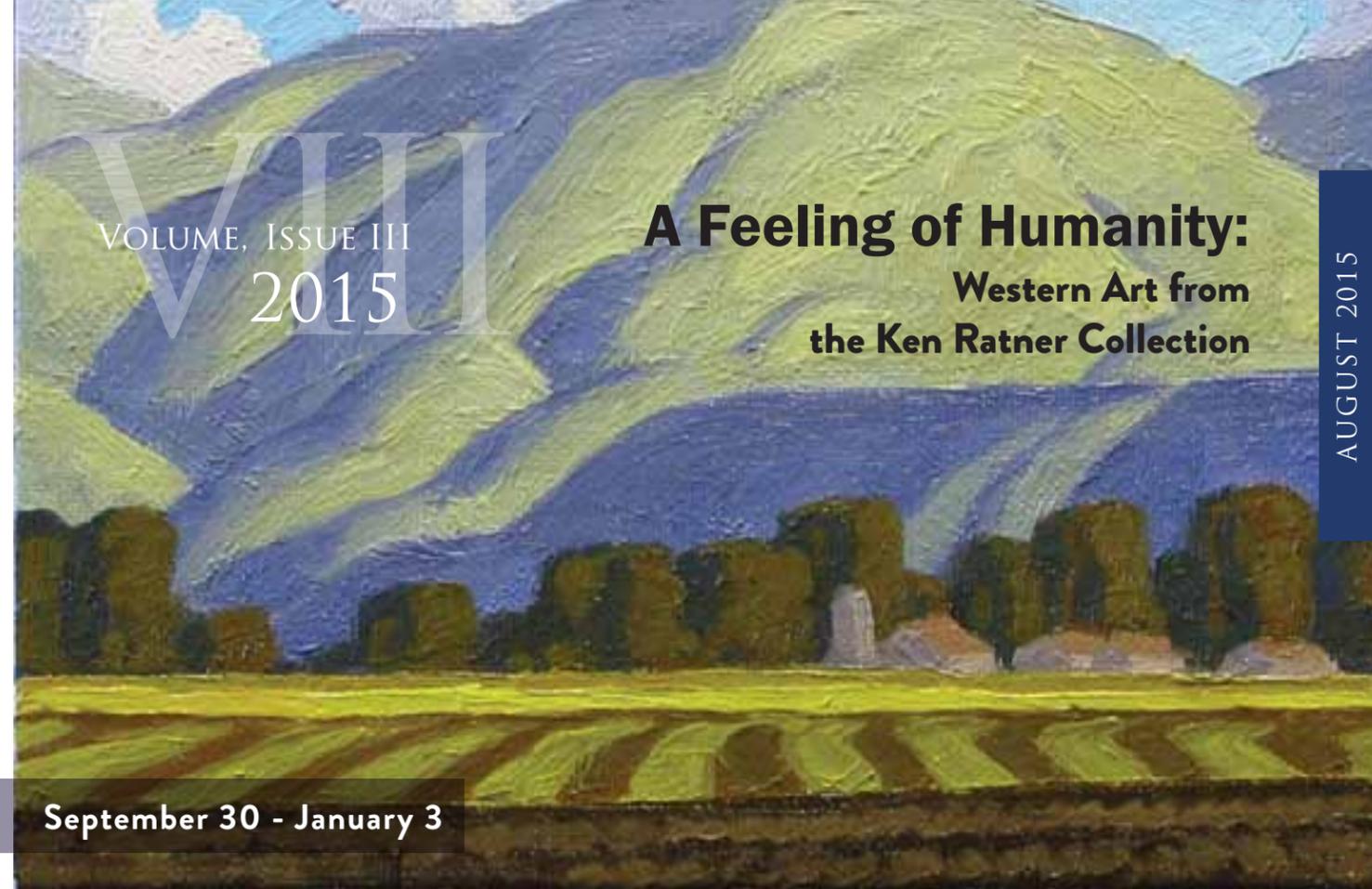
# BONE CREEK

MUSEUM OF AGRARIAN ART

575 E Street | David City, NE 68632

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# VIII

VOLUME, ISSUE III  
2015

## A Feeling of Humanity: Western Art from the Ken Ratner Collection

AUGUST 2015

September 30 - January 3

bonecreek.org

PEOPLE TO THE LAND THROUGH ART

# CONNECTING



**T**his collection of contemporary Western Art is the latest gathering of pieces by New York City collector Ken Ratner.

Ratner, who has an extensive collection of paintings from the Ashcan School and interests in many periods of art history, began to look for artists who were painting scenes of everyday western life; not realist city painters such as Robert Henri and Thomas Eakins or those who looked back to the romance of westward expansion for their inspiration such as Charles Russell and Frederic Remington.

In 2008, he discovered the work of Gary Ernest Smith, a living regionalist painter who said that "art is a way of addressing humanity." Ratner found Phil Epp, Tony Eubanks, Caroline Norton and many others who were representing the human experience in an honest way. Ratner describes their

subject matter as "vital, real, truth," seeking "inherent beauty in the commonplace."

In this exhibition are 74 glimpses into something beautiful that an artist saw or a story they wanted to tell. There is, in each one, sensitivity to what it means to respect people and place. A feeling of humanity connects them all together.

An observant eye is required to see beauty in simple things. Many of these painters skillfully turn the simple into the sublime; capturing a burst of light through the clouds, brilliant colors in nature, the pleasing shape of a figure.

"A Feeling of Humanity" also offers a glimpse into the activities of an art

collector. While Ratner is an avid collector, he is very humble and accessible in his means of collecting; purchasing pieces that are modest in size and price. Ratner lends entire collections of his, such as this one, to

museums because he feels it is important to honor the artists' wish to not just have one collector enjoy their work but to have many people see their pictures. Logan Maxwell Hagege and V...Vaughan, two



Monument Clouds

artists who have shown with Bone Creek, are also part of this collection.

Bone Creek is the last stop on this collection's tour at four art museums from New York to Utah.

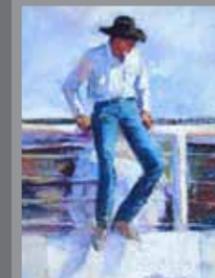
BONE CREEK  
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Agriarian Art  
NEWSLETTER

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### IMAGES

Top: Rob Colvin, *Morning Light, Chandler Farm*, oil, 6x8".  
Middle: Erin Hansen, *Monument Clouds*, watercolor, 10x17".  
Bottom left: Trish Stevenson, *Lanky Cowboy*, watercolor, 14x12".  
Bottom right: Patricia Melvin, *Sausalito Shacks*, watercolor, 9.5x14", All images in the collection of Ken Ratner.



**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

- 09 SEP** Bill Ganzel: Dust Bowl Descent  
East Butler High School  
Sept. 9, 2015, TBA
- 13 SEP** Closing of Ballad exhibition  
Screening of documentary  
Sept. 13, 2015, 1:30pm
- 30 SEP** Opening: A Feeling of Humanity:  
Western Art from the Ken Ratner  
Collection, through Jan. 3, 2016
- 29 OCT** Halloween on the Square  
Activities after parade  
October 29, 2015, 4-7pm

**Museum Hours**

Wed - Sat 10am-4pm,  
Thurs 4-8pm  
Sunday 1pm-4pm

Appointments and tours available

FREE admission

575 E Street | David City, NE 68632  
402.367.4488

**Farewell from the Director**

As I write my final message from the Director, I feel a variety of emotions. I'm excited to begin my work as development director for the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha. Yet I'm already starting to feel how much I will miss working with the Bone Creek Museum family. Together, we have accomplished a great deal toward Bone Creek's mission of connecting people to the land through art.



I am personally gratified that our exhibitions and programs have resonated with so many people – bringing more than 250 people to David City on May 23, for example, to see *Ballad of the Farm: Then, Now, Tomorrow*. The exhibition has been created by the energy and creativity of so many people: artists; farm families; sponsors; board members; volunteers (including all of my brothers and sisters); staff; 4-H members; students; and visitors.

Since becoming director in November, 2012 I have been guided by the simple, yet powerful idea that the museum belongs to everyone who wants to participate in experiencing agrarian art and the discussion and new ideas it sparks.

I am confident that the progress we have made together will continue. As a volunteer, I hope to see you again soon. Thank you for the opportunity to help my hometown show that small communities can offer programs that inspire, educate, and enlighten people from throughout the nation.  
-Carol Kobza

**Upcoming Event**

Stay tuned for more information about a Wine Dinner to support Bone Creek. New board member Carey Potter is working with Nebraska wineries to host a wine pairing dinner event.



IMAGE: Wendy Hall, *Two Calves in May*, 2013, oil on canvas, 24x30", Acquisition made possible by Anna Nolan Covault, in honor of Carol Ann Kobza

**Become A Member**

An important part of our funding comes from you. We invite you to become a member of Bone Creek or renew your membership. Your membership dollars help us to fulfill our mission of connecting people to the land through art.

**Membership levels:**

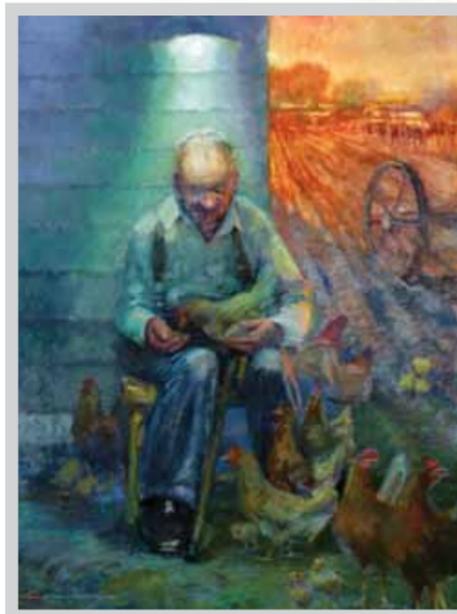
- \$25 Gardener
- \$50 Sower
- \$100 Harvester
- \$250 Sodbuster
- \$500 Homesteader
- \$1,000 Pioneer
- \$2,500 Sustaining Benefactor
- \$5,000 Grand Benefactor

Visit [bonecreek.org](http://bonecreek.org) to become a member!



**BALLAD OF THE FARM**  
THEN, NOW, TOMORROW

Many visitors have enjoyed tours led by assistant Gabrielle Comte. There is still time to schedule a tour. No group size is too small.



Guest curator James Jones announced the artists who received awards for their artworks following the May reception. Purchase Award: Steven Ramsey "This is my Homestead" sand cast glass with photograph, ground and polished with glue-chip alterations; silver leaf and paint; steel; Curator's Choice: Keith Graham, "Exploded Family Portrait" 2015, silkscreen prints on handmade paper; Farmer's Choice: V...Vaughan, "The Rest" 2015, oil with paper towel on clay board (pictured above); Corporate Sponsor Award: Amber Hansen, "Big Bird" 2015, graphite on paper with paint.

**Ballad Documentary**

On Grandparents Day, Sept. 13, Bone Creek will celebrate the success of *Ballad*, the experimental project that brought together artists and community members.



There will be a 1:30pm screening of the documentary about this project. Photo lenders, artists, staff, and the public were interviewed about farming then and now.

After the movie, Pilgrim Country Classic will be performing at 3pm at David City High School Auditorium, sponsored by the Butler County Arts Council.

Image: Guest curator James Jones and artist Kristine Hansen-Cain.

**DALE NICHOLS CORNER**

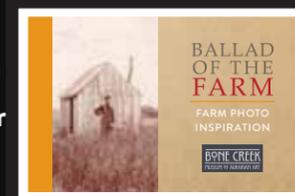


Work by Regionalist artist Dale Nichols continues to be at the center of collection activities. Inquiries about paintings in private collections, requests for authentication, and appraisal referrals are all ongoing requests. "By now I shouldn't be surprised at how popular his art is, but I still am," said A. M. Guenther, curator. Bone Creek's book *Dale Nichols: Transcending Regionalism* (2011) is available for purchase at the museum and on the website at [bonecreek.org](http://bonecreek.org).



Dale Nichols, *Grain Elevator*, 1935, oil on canvas, Private Collection

Ballad Catalogs  
\$15 ea. or \$25/pair



SHOP

Purchase details online at [bonecreek.org](http://bonecreek.org)