



Jeffrey Brosk

FINE ARTIST JEFFREY BROSK HAS ALWAYS LIVED IN NEW YORK CITY, BUT HE HAS IDENTIFIED WITH AND celebrated the West in his art since his first trip there in 1971. Geographically, his fourth-floor studio in SoHo is far removed from the deserts, mesas, valleys, and mountains he loves. But spiritually, while he's creating, it's close indeed. Of late, Brosk has been working on West-inspired woodscapes for a show in Houston he purposely scheduled to coincide with the city's 2018 rodeo and livestock show. "This was done because of the big influence the Western landscape has had on my work—and also because I have not missed that rodeo for 25 years," he says. In anticipation of his upcoming exhibition, we talked with Brosk about how the Western landscape became his muse.

"As a young architecture grad student in the early 1970s, I had volunteered to work for Paolo Soleri, a well-known visionary architect, doing construction at the Arcosanti project near Prescott, Arizona. I thought if I was to be an architect I needed some building experience. I did learn about pouring concrete and other construction methods, but the most important experience was seeing the expansive Western landscape for the first time. This experience was the most important visual event in my career. It totally changed my artistic and spiritual view of the world. I cannot overemphasize the spiritual impact the Western landscape had and continues to have on my life view. It remains my spiritual and aesthetic guide.

"When I turned from architecture to fine art, I initially used wood as a medium because it was more affordable than concrete and steel. But I started to be drawn to the beauty of it and was taken with the possibility of collaborating with wood as a distillation of the larger notion of nature. Today, my whole body of work in wood can be seen as an homage to the Western landscape—it is abstracted and distilled in all my pieces. In some, I have undulated wood to bring to mind the wavelike prairies. In others, wood that has been stained then partially sanded can evoke the sky or flowing rivers. The texture and grain of the wood might recall details in canyon walls or the light and shadow of the plains.

"My wife, Patti, and I often horseback ride and hike in remote areas of Western states to experience the beauty, spiritual nature of the landscape, and the power of the expansive vistas. I'm always learning visual lessons on these outings. The first time I saw Monument Valley, I realized that a sculpture should have an impact from a distance, and that when you approach it there should be details that are not visible until you get closer. The Western landscape has taught me so much—not just about things like perspective, scale, and the play of light and shadow, but also about myself and how to live life every day.

"The exploration of the power and majesty of nature in the western United States is critical to my inspiration. There is beauty in all environments, but the Western landscape touches something in my inner soul that has been a continual blessing."

—Dana Joseph

Jeffrey Brosk's one-man show *Shadow Space* will be on view March 8 through April 7, at Gremillion & Co. Fine Art Inc. in Houston (gremillion.com). Find more on the artist at jeffreymbrosk.com and jeffbrosk.com. Read our interview in its entirety at cowboysindians.com.

ABOVE: *Montrose Tale*.