



A WESTERN
ARTIST WHO
PAINTS THE SOUL
OF TEXAS
WHILE CAPTURING
THE DAY-TO-DAY
JOYS OF FAMILY.

WET BUT ALMOST HOME

Jack

Sorenson

ART FOR ALL

BY MELISSA ORSAK

Step into a vibrant world where the adventurous Wild West and family focus leap off the canvas, with an energy that makes your heart race and your spirit soar. This breathtaking realm is brought to life by the legendary Texas artist Jack Sorenson, whose timeless paintings embody the essence of exploration and the untamed beauty of the American frontier. Every brushstroke is infused with a sense of innocence and a longing for the rugged yet simple lifestyles and landscapes his art celebrates. His ability to create paintings that resonate with every heart is truly divine.



he do now?" The teacher elaborated, explaining that she had never encountered a first grader capable of drawing with such finesse and detail. Fueled by this early recognition, Sorenson devoted countless hours to honing his craft, drawing from dawn until dusk. The flickering images on

EARLY INSPIRATIONS

Born in 1954 in the heart of Amarillo, Texas, Sorenson's artistic journey began at an early age, deeply influenced by his surroundings. As a child, he found joy in the simple act of sketching his family dog, an energetic bundle of fur that never seemed to stay still long enough to be captured on paper. His mother recalls the amusing sight of young Jack, frustrated and determined, throwing his sketchbook when the dog wiggled away.

a television screen hardly distracted him. For Sorenson, the call of the canvas was far more compelling.

Growing up immersed in the hard-working lifestyle of a cowboy, Sorenson's early years were shaped by the expansive landscapes of ranch life. His father, a seasoned trainer of cutting horses, held a more traditional view of his son, believing that pursuing art was a futile endeavor. He sought to prove this point, convinced



as fate would have it, with Six Gun City being short-staffed. That afternoon during a mock robbery, his older brother, tasked with exciting the audience, forgot to fire his pistol skyward. Instead, he aimed it straight at Sorenson's face. The unexpected discharge caused Sorenson to jump, spooking the mule pulling the stagecoach, which then ran over his leg. Remarkably, the sandy terrain cushioned the impact, allowing him to escape with no broken bones.

Near misses with disaster were a recurring theme in Sorenson's life. During a particularly treacherous day of horse breaking, he and a spirited steed tumbled over a steep hillside, plummeting a harrowing 40 feet, tragically resulting in the horse's demise. Sorenson often quips that when he enters heaven, he'll seek out his guardian angel to offer a grateful handshake, joking, "I made them work overtime!" His life is a testament to the thrill of adventure combined with the artistry he so passionately pursued, leaving an indelible mark on both his heart and his canvases.

**GOALS ON THE HORIZON:
CHILDHOOD AMBITIONS**

In an area devoid of art galleries and museums, Sorenson found inspiration in the unfiltered beauty of his surroundings. Beyond simply capturing his daily adventures on canvas, he immersed himself in the world of art through the cherished Western Horseman magazines and Leanin' Tree catalogs that his parents had used



and collected over the years. For hours on end, he would page through these issues, studying the vibrant illustrations and the distinctive styles of the artists featured within. With a burning passion in his heart, his dream blossomed: he



aspired to not only paint with enough skill to grace the cover of Western Horseman but also to create exquisite Christmas cards for Leanin' Tree.

Driven by this ambition, he meticulously compiled a list of 27 artists whose work inspired him deeply—artists he longed to learn from. Over the years, he took classes from 23 of them, dedicating himself to honing his craft. His perseverance bore fruit; to date, no one has had more covers than Sorenson published in Western Horseman. For 30 years, he has been an esteemed artist for Leanin' Tree, with more than 100 images licensed to the company. As he continued to grow as an artist, his aspirations expanded. He yearned to join the ranks of his artistic heroes and become a member of the prestigious Cowboy Artists of America (CAA), a dream he proudly accomplished in 2021.

FAMILY LIFE

The love of his life, Jeanne, entered his world in a rather fortuitous manner when she decided to skip an English class with her friend to ride horses at the livery stable, where Sorenson

worked as a guide. On that fateful day, he felt an instinct that whispered he would one day marry her. After the girls left, he confided in a fellow cowboy about his feelings, only to be met with laughter. The cowboy, seasoned by experience, humorously informed him that Jeanne would never be interested in him.

Despite the odds, Sorenson was undeterred. After two years of unwavering determination, he and Jeanne tied the knot. Their early years were spent living in a rustic barn attached to his family's farm—a challenging setting. The relentless flies were a nuisance, and the lack of insulation made for extreme temperatures. Jeanne hails from an affluent family, and Sorenson took it upon himself to reassure her father, who was financially concerned. He promised that he would not pursue the less profitable and dangerous life of breaking horses. Ironically, he dedicated himself to the pursuit of becoming an artist.

Together, Sorenson and Jeanne cherished



that artists could never carve out a sustainable livelihood, and one day permitted young Jack to display four paintings in a family friend's saddle shop. To everyone's astonishment, all the pieces sold on that very day with a request for more. Reflecting on the experience, Jack expressed, "It backfired on my dad, but here's what I believe: If God didn't want me to do this, he wouldn't have given me the talent and the drive to do it. So, I never thought about failure. I knew I'd be a success, and it's only because I knew it was a gift. I've had a wonderful career. It's been unbelievable."

While focusing on the brush, Sorenson had ample experiences to inspire his art. As a youth he spent time galloping across open pastures, breaking 96 horses in just five short years, donning the guise of a performance gunfighter, and wielding the reins of a stagecoach for six years at his family-run Wild West theme park, Six Gun City, nestled in Palo Duro Canyon.

Adventure seemed to be a constant companion in Sorenson's life. One unforgettable day, a stagecoach filled to the brim with eager passengers inadvertently ran over him. It began,

those formative years, nurturing their bond and creating a beautiful legacy with their five children. This year, they joyously celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary, a testament to a lifetime of love, resilience, and shared artistic vision.

EMPOWERED BY COMMUNITY

The Sorenson family feels indebted to the countless acts of kindness and support they have received throughout their journey. Sorenson is profoundly grateful for the many individuals who have played a role in his life, with a special place in his heart reserved for his loving wife. A particularly fond memory that stands out to him involves his grandfather, who generously gifted him the 11 acres where he now resides.

When his grandfather entrusted him with the land, he lovingly directed Sorenson on where to build his future home, even taking the time to create a small pile of rocks to mark the exact



spot for a well. Unfortunately, it took Sorenson 38 years before they could afford to build on the land.

As he prepared to dig for water, the local well driller conveyed some alarming news—that, given the current trends in the area, finding water might be an uphill battle, with a hefty cost of \$17,000 for each borehole to determine the water supply. The worker had just completed drilling 13 holes on a neighboring plot. Sorenson realized that he could afford only one, maybe two, attempts to find water on his own property. Remembering his grandfather's well-placed wishes and the carefully marked spot, Sorenson chose to trust in that guiding memory. The outcome was nothing short of miraculous, as the drilling yielded an abundant supply of water—more than the surrounding area had seen in years.

In gratitude for the support he has received, Sorenson is devoted to giving back to his community and contributing to local charities. Each year, he generously donates a painting to his church, Saint Thomas. Additionally, he provides beautiful prints to Partners In Palo Duro, an organization dedicated to

protecting the stunning Palo Duro Canyon State Park. On average, the park sells one of Sorenson's prints daily, allowing the beauty of his work to benefit others. With a passion for nurturing creativity, he also enjoys inspiring the next generation by conducting workshops for local high school students and sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm for art.

WISDOM FROM THE EASEL

Sorenson is a profoundly encouraging individual, dedicated to illuminating the talents of those around him. He inspires aspiring artists with his poignant words: "In the history of the world, there's never been anyone with your unique mind, your eyes, and your heart. So, show us how you see the world. Paint what touches you, what moves you." He possesses a faith-focused perspective on livelihood, expressing, "If you're working from your heart, you'll naturally make a living."

Sorenson generously shares his artistic wisdom with artists eager to enhance their skills, emphasizing the importance of drawing with a focus on negative space. By drawing attention to the shapes that surround the focal point, artists can shift their efforts from the intricate details of the main subject to the simplicity of the surrounding space, enabling a more accurate depiction of their vision.

Over the years, Sorenson has come to a revealing understanding: "The periphery of my paintings is never as finished as the focal point. I do that on purpose so I can

direct your eyes where I want you to look. The more you know, the more you know what you don't have to put in the painting."

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

With each dynamic brushstroke, Sorenson brings to life vivid scenes of cowboys riding under an expansive boundless sky, children exploring the wonders of their world with wide-eyed innocence, and breathtaking landscapes that vividly capture the rugged beauty of the West. His paintings transcend mere artistry; they are immersive portals, rich with connection and infused with a passion for his land. To check out his art, visit his website at www.jacksorensonfineart.com, follow him on Instagram at [jacksorensonfineartactual](https://www.instagram.com/jacksorensonfineartactual), or discover his designs on pillows sold through Sweetwater Trading Company.

