**William Acheff**

William Acheff was born on January 28, 1947, in Anchorage, Alaska, of Georgian, Russian, Scottish, Dutch, and Athabascan/Inuit Native ancestry. His maternal grandfather headed for the Klondike gold rush in 1897, eventually settling in Alaska.

At age five, Acheff moved with his family to northern California. In high school, his interest in art flourished while enrolled in the abundant drawing and painting classes that were offered. Not wanting to become an art teacher, he avoided further academic art studies beyond high school.

Acheff’s art career began with a chance meeting with Italian artist Roberto Lupetti in 1969. During the first drawing class, Lupetti immediately noticed his artistic potential. A few months later, he offered to train Acheff for the sole purpose of becoming a professional artist, and Acheff’s artistic potential and restless energy found a direction.

In 1973, energized and searching for artistic inspiration, Acheff discovered the small and inspiring town of Taos, and within several months of his arrival painted his first Native American artifact–related painting, a motif that would define his career. Forty-eight years later he is still in Taos, ever restless, while discovering and exploring new visions—and the excitement persists. Acheff’s style was originally influenced by the Dutch still-life painters from the 17th century and later by the American 19th-century Harnett trompe l’oeil movement.

His first big exposure came from the result of an invitation from CAA artist Gordon Snidow to show in the *Western Heritage Sale and Auction* in Houston in 1979. By 1981 his career had taken off. He has since participated in the Artists of America show, Hubbard Awards show, the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum’s *Prix de West* *Invitational Art Exhibition & Sale*, and the Autry Museum of the American West’s *Masters of the American West*.

In 1989 and 2004, he received the *Prix de West* Purchase Award at *Prix de West*. At the Autry’s inaugural *Masters* in 1998,Acheff was awarded the first Masters of the American West Purchase Award, and he was honored in 2019 with the John J. Geraghty Award in recognition of his advancement of contemporary art. His work was included in *Covering the West,*a traveling exhibition in conjunction with *Southwest Art*magazine’s 25th-anniversary edition. He has been featured in numerous Western art magazines since 1981.

He has professed to be semiretired as of 2017, but that never works for an artist.

William Acheff is represented by Nedra Matteucci Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico; Settlers West Galleries Inc., Tucson, Arizona; and Trailside Galleries–online.

**419 words**