

BOARD APPLICATION FORM  
YELLOWSTONE COUNTY, MONTANA

APR 15 2026

NAME: Elyssa Leininger HOME PHONE: (406) 839-6086

ADDRESS: 3560 King Ave E WORK PHONE: (406) 839-6086

CITY: Billings STATE: MT ZIP: 59101

BUSINESS OR JOB: Artist

E-MAIL ADDRESS: elyssaleininger@gmail.com

BOARD OR COMMISSION APPLIED FOR: Yellowstone Art Museum Board

Please describe your experience or background that you believe qualifies you for service on this Board or Commission (attach additional sheets if needed):

I am a professional Western and wildlife artist with more than a decade of experience in both fine art and public art. I have painted more than 15,000 square feet of murals in the city Billings, in collaboration with schools, nonprofits, and other community organizations. I currently serve on the Board of Directors for the Montana Pro Rodeo Hall and Wall of Fame and my artwork has now helped to raise more than \$100,000 for various charitable causes. Please see attached for a more detailed description of my experience and qualifications.

Why do you wish to serve on this Board or Commission?

I care deeply about art and its impact on communities, and the Yellowstone Art Museum plays an important role in connecting both residents of Yellowstone County and visitors to art. As a lifelong Montanan and a professional artist and muralist, I am passionate about making art accessible, engaging, and reflective of a wide range of experiences, including our Montana culture and heritage. Please see attached for additional information.

Additional information that you feel is pertinent (attach additional sheets if needed):



Signature

04-15-2026  
Date

Return application to: Board of County Commissioners  
P.O. Box 35000  
Billings, MT 59107-5000

OFFICE USE ONLY:		
APPOINTED:	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/> DATE _____
TERM EXPIRATION DATE: _____		
(Circle one)		
ORIGINAL APPOINTMENT	REAPPOINTMENT	TERM NO: _____

Elyssa Leininger  
3560 King Ave E  
Billings, MT 59101  
elyssaleininger@gmail.com  
(406) 839-6086

April 14, 2026

Board of County Commissioners  
P.O. Box 35000  
Billings, MT 59107-5000

Dear County Commissioners,

I am writing to express my interest in serving on the Yellowstone Art Museum Board. As a lifelong Montanan and a professional artist born and raised in Billings, I have a deep appreciation for both the arts and the traditions and heritage of our region, and I value the important role the museum plays in our community.

My work is rooted in a strong appreciation for the landscapes, wildlife, and Western heritage that define Montana, and I am committed to creating art that is accessible, engaging, and meaningful to a broad audience. Throughout my career, I have worked extensively with schools, nonprofits, and various community organizations, using art as a way to bring people together and serve the community in a tangible way. My murals have beautified more than 15,000 square feet of public spaces in Billings, and my fine art has raised more than \$100,000 for local charitable causes.

My perspective has also been shaped by experiences beyond Montana, including studying art in Italy for a semester and teaching art at an orphanage in Ethiopia. These opportunities broadened my understanding of the role art plays across cultures, while reinforcing the importance of honoring and representing one's own community, heritage, and way of life.

In addition to my work as an artist, I currently serve on the Board of Directors for the Montana Pro Rodeo Hall and Wall of Fame, which, in addition to honoring our Western heritage, is the largest provider of collegiate rodeo scholarships in the nation. There, I contribute to organizational planning, fundraising, outreach, and heritage preservation. This experience has strengthened my understanding of board service and the responsibility of supporting organizations that serve the public and preserve our culture.

I have great respect for the Yellowstone Art Museum's commitment to contemporary art and diverse perspectives. I would be honored to support the museum and contribute to its continued growth and community engagement that serves both residents and those who visit our region.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
  
Elyssa M. Leininger

Elyssa Leininger  
Yellowstone County Board Application – Yellowstone Art Museum  
Supplemental Responses

**Question 1 – Please describe your experience or background that you believe qualifies you for service on this Board or Commission**

I am a professional Western and wildlife artist born and raised in Billings, with more than a decade of experience in both fine art and public art. In 2017, I graduated with honors from Rocky Mountain College with a Bachelor of Arts in Art, earning a 4.0 GPA in my art coursework, and receiving the college's Art Award. I have since painted more than 15,000 square feet of murals in public spaces in Billings. Much of my work has been created in partnership with schools, nonprofits, and community organizations, giving me a substantial background in collaborating with people from all walks of life and creating fine art that is meaningful and available for everyone to enjoy.

I have successfully led community-driven projects involving volunteers of all ages and abilities, and I have extensive experience in teaching, public speaking, and engaging with individuals of all backgrounds, including those from underserved communities. These experiences have strengthened my ability to communicate effectively, build partnerships, and contribute to projects that serve the community. In addition to my murals, my fine art has raised more than \$100,000 for charitable causes.

In addition to my professional art career, I currently serve on the Board of Directors for the Montana Pro Rodeo Hall and Wall of Fame (MPRHWF), a local nonprofit organization that not only honors and preserves our Western heritage, but is also the largest provider of collegiate rodeo scholarships in the nation. To date, the MPRHWF has awarded more than \$800,000 in scholarships to Montana high school rodeo athletes. I have served on the MPRHWF Board of Directors for six consecutive years, contributing to organizational planning, fundraising efforts, community outreach, and heritage preservation.

My background combines artistic expertise, leadership experience, and a strong commitment to making art accessible by all, which would allow me to meaningfully contribute to the mission and growth of the Yellowstone Art Museum.

Elyssa Leininger  
Yellowstone County Board Application – Yellowstone Art Museum  
Supplemental Responses

Question 2 – Why do you wish to serve on this Board or Commission?

I wish to serve on this board because I care deeply about art and its impact on communities, and the Yellowstone Art Museum plays an important role in our community, connecting both residents of Yellowstone County and visitors to art in meaningful and lasting ways. As a lifelong Montanan and a professional artist, my work is rooted in a deep appreciation for the landscapes, culture, and heritage of our region, and I am passionate about making art accessible, relevant, and engaging to a broad audience.

I have great respect for the museum's commitment to contemporary art, diverse perspectives, and art education initiatives, and I believe there is an opportunity to continue expanding connections with the local community by celebrating a wide range of artistic voices, including those regionally, and fostering a strong sense of place, honoring our local heritage. Thoughtfully incorporating these elements alongside the existing framework can enrich the visitor experience, as well as strengthen the museum's role as a resource for both residents and visitors.

Through my experience in public art and community collaboration, I would bring a perspective that emphasizes connection, accessibility, and community engagement. I would be honored to support the Yellowstone Art Museum's continued growth and its role as a valuable community institution that inspires, welcomes, and resonates with both the local community and those who visit our region.

# Elyssa Leininger - Western & Wildlife Art

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Billings, MT 59101

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## Personal Summary

I am a professional Western and wildlife artist passionate about creating bold, dramatic, and uplifting public and private art that celebrates the landscapes, wildlife, and heritage of the American West. With a degree in Art and over a decade of experience, I specialize in murals, large-scale paintings, and color-driven works that intentionally evoke positivity, tranquility, and connection through color psychology. As one of Montana's largest creators of public art, I have painted over 15,000 square feet of murals, many in collaboration with schools, nonprofits, and community organizations, raising more than \$200,000 for charitable causes. My work seeks to make beauty and fine art accessible to everyone while giving back to the communities that have supported me.

## Skills

I am proficient in a wide range of mediums, including oil, acrylic, watercolor, and latex paints, stains, clay, oil pastels, charcoal, pencil, photography, and artistic software. My strong attention to detail allows me to create original works without reference photos, while my creativity drives innovative, conceptually rich pieces. Experienced in public speaking and community engagement, I excel with people from all walks of life, I excel at leading volunteer mural projects, produce live art demonstrations, collaborating with clients, and teaching art to people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

## Education

<b>Rocky Mountain College</b>	Billings, MT
• <b>Bachelor of Arts in Art</b>	December 2017
• <b>Bachelor of Science in Biology</b>	December 2017
• <b>Minor in Psychology</b>	December 2017
• <b>Art GPA</b>	4.0

## Art Associations

<b>Western Heritage Artists Association</b>	2018 - present
<b>WaterWorks Art Museum Artist Member</b>	2018 - present
<b>Western Art Rodeo Association</b>	2018 - 2019
<b>Cowgirl Artists of America</b>	2024 - present

## Notable Art Exhibitions

<b>Art of the Cowgirl Quick Draw</b> Wickenburg, AZ	February 2026
<b>Western Heritage Artists Show &amp; Sale</b> Great Falls, MT	March 2019, 2022 - 2025
<b>Legacy 2025 Art Show - Bozeman</b> Bozeman, MT	April 26, 2025
<b>Legacy 2025 Art Show - Billings</b> Billings, MT	May 3, 2025

<b>Montana Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame Banquet Invitational Exhibit</b> Billings, MT	2019-2025
<b>Corks &amp; Canvas Fundraiser Featured Artist</b> Billings, MT	September 2023
<b>WaterWorks Art Museum Annual Art Auction Art Exhibit</b> Miles City, MT	2017, 2021, 2022, 2023
<b>Inspire 2023 Art Show</b> Billings, MT	May 2023
<b>Barnes &amp; Noble Featured Artist</b> Billings, MT	November 2022
<b>Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Featured Artist</b> <b>Red Lodge ArtWalk</b> Red Lodge, MT	2022
<b>Rocky Mountain College Alumni Art Exhibition</b> Billings, MT	August 2022
<b>Generations 2022 Art Show</b> Billings, MT	May 2022
<b>Big Sky Blaze &amp; Graze Invitational Exhibit</b> Billings, MT	August 21, 2021
<b>Wyoming Collectible Conservation Stamp Art Show</b> Cheyenne, WY	March-May 2021
<b>Hilands Golf Club Private Exhibition</b> Billings, MT	December 19, 2020
<b>WaterWorks Art Museum Juried Art Show</b> Miles City, MT	January 31 - March 5, 2020
<b>The Cowboy Club Invitational Solo Exhibit</b> Billings, MT	August 15 - 17, 2019
<b>Western Heritage Artists Footprints on the Trail Art Show</b> Great Falls, MT	March 20 - 24, 2019
<b>Western Art Rodeo Association Competition</b> Great Falls, MT	March 23 - 24, 2019
<b>North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame Painter-Poet Exhibit</b> Medora, ND	June - July 2018
<b>Ryniker-Morrison Gallery Invitational Horse Exhibit</b> Billings, MT	April - May 2018
<b>Big Horn County Historical Museum Featured Artist</b> Hardin, MT	June - October 2017
<b>Straight'n Arrow Featured Artist 2017 ArtWalk</b> Billings, MT	May 2017
<b>Ryniker-Morrison Gallery Senior Art Exhibition</b> Billings, MT	April - May 2017
<b>Villa Pieve Gala and Art Exhibition</b> Corciano, Italy	November 2014
<b>Montana Fair Art Exhibit</b> Billings, MT	2014, 2015, 2016
<b>Ryniker-Morrison Gallery Student Exhibition</b> Billings, MT	2013, 2014, 2015, 2016

## **Public Art**

(Please note, this is not a complete list of murals completed. These are simply some highlights and my most prominent works accessible by all members of the public.)

### **Walmart Murals**

I was contacted by Walmart and NOW Art, in June of 2023 to create a mural for the Walmart in Laurel, Montana, as a part of the Walmart Community Mural Project. This mural depicts a cowboy on his horse overlooking a locomotive in the valley, surrounded by sandstone rimrocks and the distant Beartooth Mountains. I have since partnered with Walmart and NOW Art to create a variety of murals across the country depicting landscapes, native wildlife and plants, and structures local to each area. Each mural incorporates themes provided by the local Walmart store managers. I now have murals in Walmart stores in Laurel, MT, Havre, MT, Helena, MT, Crossett, AR, Salem, MO, Dodge City, KS, Salem, OR, and Stamford, TX.

### **Miles City Mural**

I was commissioned by the Miles City Art Walk in the summer of 2025 to design and create a mural reflecting the landscape and culture of Eastern Montana. This mural depicts big skies with vibrant clouds, rugged badland hills, horses, and native plants. This mural was created on panels and installed on the You 1<sup>st</sup> Insurance building on Main Street in Miles, City, MT.

### **Billings Public Schools Special Education Classrooms**

In May of 2025, I volunteered my time to work with special education students at Billings Senior High School to create three uplifting murals in their classrooms. The students primed the surfaces, painted the background colors, and varnished the murals, while I painted the details. After spending a day conversing with students, we decided to create murals that featured the school colors and depict themes the students were interested in. One was a cow and calf bison, one was the school mascot, a "bronc," and the final one was a bull bison and an eagle. All the murals depicted local scenery and had native plants and butterflies for added interest. This project was special to me, as my brother is disabled and was in special education classes in the Billings Public Schools. I plan to continue this project in the coming months by painting murals in the special education classes in the other two Billings Public Schools.

### **Suicide Prevention Coalition of Yellowstone County**

In the summer of 2023, I partnered with the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Yellowstone County to create two uplifting murals that incorporate 988, the crisis hotline. These murals were aimed to provide beauty, art, and joy for two at-risk populations. One was in the YWCA shelter for abused women and children, and the other was on the Mental Health Center in the North Park neighborhood, which Billings' most at-risk neighborhood with the lowest income and highest number of suicide-related 911 calls. Both murals utilize color psychology to feel uplifting and soothing. The YWCA mural depicts a warm sunrise over a meadow with an abundance of wildflowers, butterflies, ladybugs, birds, and a cow and calf bison, with ponderosa pine trees branching out around the corners and down the halls. During the creation of the mural, I allowed the mothers and children staying in the shelter to paint with me, making the project even more meaningful.

The Mental Health Center mural depicts the scene from Four Dances Natural Area, which is on the rimrocks overlooking Billings and the Yellowstone River. It features bison, elk, a variety of native plants, hidden creatures, sandstone rocks, and ponderosa pines. This mural is located in Billings' most low-income and underserved neighborhood with the highest rate of suicide and mental health-related calls in Billings. This was one of my most rewarding projects, as I interacted with countless individuals, many of whom lived on the streets, who expressed gratitude for my work and for the beauty in a disadvantaged neighborhood.

## **Big Timber Mural**

In June of 2024, I was commissioned by Vitality Partners of Big Timber to paint a mural on McCleod Street in Big Timber, MT. This mural says, "Welcome to Big Timber," and depicts sunglasses reflecting the Crazy Mountains, local wildflowers, and elk antlers. This mural was designed to brighten up the down and serve as a photo opportunity for tourists.

## **South Park Murals**

I currently have two murals located in South Park in Billings, MT. In the summer of 2023, I partnered with a Girl Scout troop from one of the most underserved neighborhoods in Billings, Montana to paint a mural on the neglected 110-year-old building that houses the locker rooms and equipment for the oldest pool in the city. This mural features warm, vibrant colors, Western landscapes, Montana wildlife, and the phrase, "You are worthy of love and belonging." All materials for this mural were donated by local stores and community members, and my time and work were volunteered and donated. Throughout this process, the Girl Scouts painted large blocks of color and learned all the steps behind creating a mural.

In the spring of 2024, I was asked by Raza Unida (the Hispanic heritage club for the Billings Public Schools) to design and paint a mural on South Park's maintenance equipment building and involve the students in the process. This mural depicted Our Lady of Guadalupe over traditional Aztec patterns and featured various elements of Billings, monarch butterflies, pink roses, the bitterroot flower, and a blooming prickly pear cactus, as well as all the flags of the Spanish-speaking countries. Paint was donated by a local painting and contracting company, and I donated all my time and work. The kids filled in major blocks of color and sketched the design with chalk using a projector, while I painted all the details. I spent roughly one hundred hours on this mural. We have now added flower beds and a community library box filled with free books and several catholic churches in the state have made pilgrimages to the mural.

## **Bloomberg Philanthropies Asphalt Art Project**

In September of 2021, the Billings Industrial Revitalization District (BIRD) and Billings Mayor Bill Cole received the Bloomberg Philanthropies Asphalt Art Grant for the City of Billings. I was selected by a committee in the summer of 2022 to design and paint murals on the streets near North Park in Billings. I created 16 individual murals in the intersections of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and North 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and North 19<sup>th</sup> Street. These "bump-out" teardrop-shaped murals were designed to slow traffic by funneling the vehicles into the center of the road as they approach the intersection. The goal of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Asphalt Art Project was to create a safer environment near the park for both pedestrians and traffic, and to generate community pride by adding public art to a historically low-income neighborhood. These murals depicted bears, eagles, bison, elk, and mule deer, with vibrant skies, mountains, and sagebrush, and were surrounded by white reflectors.

## **Community Crisis Center Mural**

In April of 2022, I was selected by the Community Crisis Center in Billings, Montana to design and paint murals on three walls of their waiting room. These murals depict bison roaming the Yellowstone Valley, birds, the Yellowstone River, and native plants. This mural is trauma-informed, depicting images and colors that evoke only positive emotions. The purpose of this mural was to provide a welcoming and uplifting atmosphere for individuals in crisis. Several of the individuals who have visited the Crisis Center have visited with me while creating other public art, and they expressed gratitude for the transformation of the space in which they sit during the worst days of their lives.

## **"Rise and Shine: A Mural for the Community" – 6<sup>th</sup> Street West Underpass Mural**

In May of 2020, I was selected by the Billings South Side Neighborhood Task Force to work with members of the community to design and paint a 2,100+ square foot mural on the western wall of the 6<sup>th</sup> Street West Underpass in Billings, Montana. This was my very first mural and the most special to me. After more than

1,000 hours of work, I completed the initial mural on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The mural depicts a warm sunrise engulfing the recognizable landscapes surrounding the Yellowstone Valley and features 70 creatures. In 2021, I again partnered with the South Side Neighborhood Task Force to expand the mural. The expansion was an additional 1,200 square feet and covered the ceiling and columns of the underpass walkway to create an art immersion experience, as well as sections on the eastern side of the underpass, to create the feel of a public art installation. This project was designed to bring fine art to an underserved area of town, to foster community pride, and to encourage and inspire individuals from all walks of life. There is a scavenger hunt list on my website and often posted in the underpass where people can hunt for all the hidden creatures, objects, and Montana state symbols. School classes, group homes, nursing home residents, and various other groups have taken trips to complete the scavenger hunt. The entirety of my stipend was spent on supplies, but throughout my time working there, I received hundreds of random acts of kindness from strangers and the project was life-changing.

### **“Gateway to the Yellowstone” - North 13<sup>th</sup> Street Underpass**

In August of 2021, I partnered with the Billings South Side Neighborhood Task Force to paint a 1,200 square foot mural on a section of the North 13<sup>th</sup> Street underpass in Billings, Montana to coordinate with the “Rise & Shine” mural. This initial portion was completed in September of 2021. In August of 2022, I obtained permission and received an encroachment permit from the Montana Department of Transportation to expand the mural, as an individual. Working without an agency or organization, the expansion was completely voluntary and I funded the project myself, with the help of a few small donations from community members. The expansion nearly tripled the mural size, making it approximately 3,500 square feet. This mural depicts a view of the Yellowstone Valley from Swords Park and features a herd of bison, as well as small hidden creatures.

### **Walk-In Coolers - Dickey’s Barbecue Pit and The Marble Table**

In May of 2021, I was commissioned by the local restaurants The Marble Table and Dickey’s Barbecue Pit to paint two walk-in coolers in an alley in downtown Billings, off Montana Avenue behind the restaurants. These two murals depict Western themes, including warm sunrises, cowboys, horses, cattle, and bison.

### **“Along the Yellowstone” - Downtown Billings, Montana Traffic Signal Box**

In October of 2019, I was commissioned by Downtown Billings Alliance to create a custom design that was printed onto a wrap that covers the traffic signal box at the intersection of 27<sup>th</sup> Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North in Billings, Montana. The wrap was installed in 2020. “Along the Yellowstone” depicts the changing of the seasons along the Yellowstone River and it features a cowboy on his sorrel horse, a bison, a bull elk, and two mule deer.

### **Notable Awards**

<b>Best of Montana by <i>Distinctly Montana</i> Best Montana Artist</b>	2025
<b>WaterWorks Art Museum Art Auction Top Selling Piece</b>	2025
<b>Western Heritage Artists Association Artists’ Choice Award</b>	2022, 2023, 2024, 2025
<b><i>Portfolio</i> Western Art Week Most Distinguished Body of Work</b>	2024
<b><i>COWGIRL Magazine</i> 30 Under 30 Award</b>	2024
<b>WaterWorks Art Museum People’s Choice Award</b>	2024, 2021
<b>Ambassador For Peace Award</b>	2024
<b>Western Heritage Artists Association People’s Choice Award</b>	2023
<b>Billings 40 Under 40 Award</b>	2023
<b>Top 4 Billings Remarkable Women of the Year</b>	2021
<b>Montana Pro Rodeo Hall &amp; Wall of Fame Catalog Cover Artist</b>	2021
<b>Wyoming Collectible Conservation Stamp Art Show 4<sup>th</sup> Place</b>	2021
<b>Rocky Mountain College Art Award</b>	2017
<b>George and Charlotte Ainslie Art Scholarship Endowment</b>	2016, 2017
<b>Rocky Mountain College Art Scholarship</b>	2015, 2016, 2017
<b>Montana Fair</b>	
• <b>Montana Fair Best in Show</b>	2016

- **Montana Fair Judge's Choice Award** 2016
- **Montana Fair Decorative Arts First Place Oils** 2016
- **Montana Fair Decorative Arts First Place Acrylics** 2016
- **Montana Fair Art Barn Choice Award** 2015
- **Montana Fair Fine Arts First Place Watercolor** 2015
- **Montana Fair Best in Show** 2014
- **Montana Fair Sculpting First Place** 2014

## Notable Publications

<i>Distinctly Montana Magazine</i>	Autumn 2025
<i>Portfolio Art Magazine</i>	March 2020, 2025
<i>COWGIRL Magazine</i>	February 2024
<i>Prime Connections Magazine</i>	August 2022
<i>Wyoming Wildlife Magazine</i>	April 2021
<i>Yellowstone Valley Woman Magazine</i>	November 2020, 2021
<i>The Russell Catalogue</i>	March 2020
<i>Treasure State Lifestyles Montana Magazine</i>	March 2019, 2020
<i>Cowboys and Indians Magazine</i>	May 2019

## Other

- My work has raised approximately \$200,000 for local charities and Montana Veterans. I donate countless pieces to auctions and fundraisers benefiting charities and organizations, including the Montana Pro Rodeo Hall & Wall of Fame, the Northern International Livestock Exposition (NILE) Foundation, Ronald McDonald House Charities, Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Veterans Navigation Network, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Special K Ranch, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Boys and Girls Club, etc.
- I created a license plate design for the Veterans Navigation Network (VNN), an organization that provides resources for Montana veterans and their families. This license plate design became available for all Montana drivers in March of 2024 and in one year, it raised \$100,000 for VNN.
- I have created four murals in bedrooms in the Residential Support Services group home for disabled individuals, catering the murals to each of the individuals' personal interests.
- In October of 2023, I was honored with the opportunity to deliver a TEDx Talk about the power of public art at the 2023 TEDxBillings event. It was aired nationally on the TEDx YouTube channel.
- I regularly speak at events and fundraisers, and to various clubs, organizations, and schools, about my story, public art and its importance, color psychology, fostering creativity in youth, and pursuing one's passions.
- Through my public art, I have had the opportunity to teach and work with a diverse array of volunteers of all ages and walks of life, including members of Billings' homeless community, prison prerelease individuals, and people who don't speak English.
- In the winter months of 2020 and 2021, I volunteered to help provide shelter at First Christian Church for individuals experiencing homelessness. During my shifts, I brought paints and supplies and painted with the individuals at the shelter.
- In 2018, I went to the New Hope Orphanage in Ethiopia, to which I brought 50 watercolor kits, more than 500 oil pastels, boxes of pencils, and paper. There, I shared my passion for art and the American West and I taught the children how to paint and draw.
- In 2014, I spent a semester in Italy studying art.

## **Artist Biography**

Born and raised amid the rugged beauty of Montana, Billings artist Elyssa Leininger creates dramatic, vivid paintings inspired by her Western lifestyle and love for the American West. At 17, Elyssa underwent a heart operation that resulted in complications. Upon recovery, she viewed the world and life as more vibrant and sacred, and it inspired the artistic visions she now shares through her work. During a semester abroad in Italy, she discovered a profound passion for art that would shape her career.

Elyssa graduated with honors from Rocky Mountain College in 2017, earning bachelor's degrees in Art and Biology, a minor in Psychology, and the Rocky Mountain College Art Award. Since then, she has completed more than 15,000 square feet of murals, including monumental works on Billings' busiest underpasses, establishing herself as one of Montana's largest creators of public art.

Committed to giving back to the community that has given her so much, Elyssa's work has raised around \$200,000 for charities and nonprofit organizations. She is an active member of the Western Heritage Artists Association and Cowgirl Artists of America and serves on the Board of Directors for the Montana Pro Rodeo Hall and Wall of Fame. Through her art, Elyssa celebrates the landscapes, wildlife, and people of the American West, creating works that are accessible, inspiring, and deeply connected to her community.

## **Artist Statement**

Growing up in Montana, surrounded by its rugged landscapes, wildlife, and Western heritage, I am constantly inspired by the land and the animals and people who inhabit it. My art expresses my emotions, experiences, and deep love for the American West, its animals, and the cowboys and cowgirls who carry on its legacy. As a colorist, I intentionally use color psychology to evoke specific emotions, connecting viewers to the scenes I create. While the act of painting fulfills my own need for self-expression, my ultimate goal is to share the spirit of the West with others, creating works that inspire, engage, and make fine art accessible to all, while allowing the viewers to experience my passions.