



Center for the Advancement and Study of Early Texas Art  
PO Box 3726  
San Angelo, TX 76902  
Ph 325.212.4872 Fax 325.658.6800

May, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information Contact:  
Valerie C. Bluthardt OR  
Howard J. Taylor (325) 212-4872

CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT AND STUDY OF EARLY TEXAS ART  
GIVES ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS AT ANNUAL MEETING

**The Center for the Advancement and Study of Early Texas Art (CASETA) recognized individuals and institutions with nine achievement awards during the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium and Texas Art Fair held in Houston, Texas, April 24 – 26, 2015.** CASETA annually gives awards to recognize individuals and institutions who have made significant contributions to the advancement and study of early Texas art during the previous calendar year and service to the organization for an extended period of time.

Those recognized include:

**Bobbie and John Nau of Houston, Texas, received The Bill and Mary Cheek Patron Award. This award named for one of CASETA's founders is given to an individual or couple for providing substantial leadership, resources and inspiration in advancing our understanding and appreciation of the rich visual arts heritage of the State of Texas.** In the nomination for this award Mr. and Mrs. Nau are acknowledged for, "collecting, preserving and documenting outstanding examples of Texas art which denotes their passion for both the past and future of the state of Texas." They have also supported numerous exhibitions of Texas art and history financially and by lending works from their extensive collection. Both individually and as a couple, Bobbie and John Nau have participated in civic, community and philanthropic organizations within Houston, Texas, and throughout the United States. They are long-time patrons of CASETA and participate regularly in the organization's annual Symposium.

**Three individuals were awarded CASETA's Lifetime Achievement Award which is presented to an individual who has distinguished himself or herself with a lifetime involvement with Texas art as an artist, a patron, collector or scholar of early Texas art.**

**J. P. Bryan of Houston, Texas,** founder and chairman of Torch Energy Advisors was recognized for his lifelong devotion to the preservation of Texas history and early Texas art. Mr. Bryan has served as president of both the Texas Historical Foundation (THF) and the Texas State Historical Association (TSHA) and spent two decades restoring the Gage Hotel in Marathon, Texas, and has received many awards for his efforts. Most recently, Mr. Bryan purchased and restored the old Galveston Orphans Home in Galveston, Texas, which will soon open as The Bryan Museum and house the Bryan Collection of more than 70,000 historical artifacts and works of art which has been assembled over a lifetime by Mary Jon and J.P. Bryan. Mr. Bryan is a long-time supporter of CASETA.

--continued--

**Holly Thurston Cox and Sanford Cox, Jr. of El Paso, Texas,** were recognized for, “being two of CASETA’s most loyal and staunchest supporters since the beginning of the organization. They have both served as members and officers of the Board and have been tenacious about insuring that people know about artists who worked in the western most tip of the State of Texas. In addition to their collecting and study of early Texas art, Holly is a producing artist who comes from an illustrious family of artists who worked have worked in El Paso for three generations. In 2014 the Coxes showed their passion for early Texas Art by endowing a professorship in art the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) that will support a faculty member whose teaching and research will focus on early Texas art. This is the first time that anyone or any organization involved with early Texas art has made such a bold move to provide a significant amount of money to endow a university faculty position to insure that research and teaching related to early Texas art will continue in perpetuity. “

**Francine Carraro, PhD, of Wichita Falls, Texas, was awarded the Distinguished Service Award. CASETA’s Distinguished Service Award is to be presented to an individual who has given long-time and distinguished service to CASETA and the promotion of early Texas art.** Dr. Carraro, Director of the Wichita Falls Museum of Art at Midwestern State University (WFMA), has had a long association with CASETA including serving as a board member. Her devotion to the study and preservation of early Texas art began during her graduate student days at the University of Texas at Austin in the 1990s where she did research for her dissertation on Jerry Bywaters which was eventually included in the book, *Jerry Bywaters: A Life in Art*. She went on to teach art history at Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University) where she became a tenured professor. Her research on early Texas art continued, resulting in some 20 publications and numerous presentations. Dr. Carraro then pursued a career in museums both out-of-state and within Texas including Executive Director of The Grace Museum in Abilene, Texas and her current position at WFMA. During that time she organized numerous exhibitions and championed the cause of early Texas art. She is recognized for her, “leadership as an early scholar of early Texas art, her many contributions to CASETA, and her general promotion of the advancement and study of early Texas art.”

**Publication Awards were presented to one individual and one institution, “who have made the most important contribution to the published literature on early Texas art during the previous calendar year.”** The publication awards were given for the book, *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas* by Katie Robinson Edwards which was published by the University of Texas Press who published the work in 2014.

**Katie Robinson Edwards, PhD, is currently Curator of the Umlauf Sculpture Garden & Museum in Austin, Texas, but was teaching modern and contemporary art history at the Allbritton Art Institute, at Baylor University in Waco, Texas when she wrote the book.** Presenting research and artwork that had never before been published, Dr. Edwards examined the contributions of many modernist painters and sculptors in Texas, with an emphasis on the era’s most abstract and compelling artists. The award reads, “before Abstract Expressionism of New York City was canonized as American postwar modernism, the United States was filled with localized manifestations of modern art. One such place where considerable modernist activity occurred was Texas, where artists absorbed and interpreted the latest, most radical formal lessons from Mexico, the East Coast, and Europe, while still responding to the state’s dramatic history and geography. This barely known chapter in the story of American art is the focus of *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas*.”

--continued--

The University of Texas Press in Austin was also acknowledged with an award as the publisher of ***Midcentury Modern Art in Texas*** in 2014.

**The final two awards were given to two institutions that had, “organized and presented outstanding exhibitions on early Texas art during the previous calendar year.”**

**Exhibition Award given to the University of Houston-Downtown, for the exhibition, *The ‘Left Bank’ on the Bayou: Avant-garde Art and Theater in 1930s Houston* shown from September 4 — October 16, 2014 at the O’Kane Gallery. The ‘Left Bank on the Bayou: Avant-garde Art and Theater in 1930s Houston** was an exhibition produced by the O’Kane Gallery at the University of Houston-Downtown, intent on recreating the flavor of that early spark that set the tone for acceptance and tolerance for a broad range of arts that are apparent in today’s thriving Houston art scene.

**Exhibition Award presented to The Grace Museum, Abilene, Texas, for the exhibition, *Home on the Range, exhibited May 8-August 9, 2014.*** This exhibit was a celebration of the art and history of Central West Texas, an often mislabeled 200,000+ square mile area of the Lone Star State. The region’s 22 sparsely populated counties share a 19th and early 20th century history as an important concourse for indigenous people, ranchers, farmers, and merchants. Artwork by important artists who documented early impressions of the area, historic photographs, oral histories and rarely-seen artifacts from private and public collections revealed a cherished historical link to the past that still exists in the area.

The Center for the Advancement and Study of Early Texas Art (CASETA) is a state-wide organization whose mission is to promote the preservation, study and appreciation of Texas visual arts and its history. For more information on CASETA awards, programs, membership, and general information visit CASETA’s website at [www.caseta.org](http://www.caseta.org) or contact the CASETA office in San Angelo, Texas, at 325.212.4872.