



Jason Lee Tako

ARTIST OF THE AMERICAN WEST

FSHS CLASS OF 1990

After graduating from FSHS in 1990, Jason attended what later became McNally Smith College of Music, graduating with honors. After some time in the field of music, he went to school for applied visual arts at Dakota County Technical College and was encouraged to pursue a career in fine art. Finding a home in historical Native American subjects, his love of landscapes of the American West combined with his interest of history has resulted in his expression depicting cultures and ways of life that are forever etched into the American West.

Jason paints historical Native American subjects in Western landscapes. He primarily works in oil and through direct observation from nature, such as plein air painting (with a strong sense of open air). His work explores themes of restoration, solitude, and reconnecting with nature.

Jason's work has been exhibited all across the United States, including the C.M. Russell Museum and Legacy Gallery. He has been the Featured Artist at prestigious events such as the Southeastern Wildlife Expo and NatureWorks. Jason is one of the foremost Western, wildlife, and historical Native American painters.

Jason expressed, "For me, painting is a way to capture the fleeting feeling of a place and time. I tend to be a bit nostalgic and I love nature. When I'm in the mountains or on the prairie, I get overwhelmed with the beauty and deep emotions of peace, purity, and mystery I sense there. Through my work I first internalize it, and then visually express it to give the viewer the same feeling of being there.

"I have always been fascinated with the American Indians and how they lived, immersed in this beauty when it was still unspoiled. They had the unique privilege of experiencing this on a daily basis before it was taken from them; a tremendous loss as they were removed from their refuge of nature and put somewhere they didn't want to go."

His nominator stated, "Although a highly successful artist, he gives his time and talents freely. He is often sharing his knowledge online, encouraging and coaching other artists. He's also making a significant contribution to Native American heritage in documenting their history and culture."