

# Buffalo Bill Center of the West Awards Proctor Fellowship to Erika Bolstad

*Journalist and author explores the legacy of American monuments through the lens of sculptor Alexander Phimister Proctor.*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Erika Bolstad Honored with 2024 Proctor Fellowship for Monumental Research Project

The [Buffalo Bill Center of the West](#) is pleased to announce that award-winning journalist and author Erika Bolstad has been named the recipient of the 2024 A. Phimister Proctor Fellowship. Bolstad, a Pulitzer Prize finalist, is undertaking a significant research project titled "Monumental," a documentary and nonfiction book examining the artistic and symbolic legacy of sculptor Alexander Phimister Proctor and his impact on American monuments. The project centers on Proctor's 1922 sculpture of Theodore Roosevelt, Rough Rider, which was toppled by protesters in Portland, Oregon, in 2020. Bolstad's work will investigate how communities across the American West are reinterpreting, reaffirming, or removing such monuments and exploring the role of public art in shaping civic identity and historical memory.

## The Proctor Collection and Its Enduring Significance

The Proctor Collection is one of the most treasured elements of the Whitney Western Art Museum, part of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. Established through the generosity of the A.P. Proctor Foundation and Sandy Church in 2015, the Proctor Endowment Fund supports the maintenance, conservation, and scholarship of the collection. Alexander Phimister Proctor (1860 - 1950) was a preeminent sculptor whose work, including the Rough Rider monument, has played a crucial role in shaping the visual legacy of the American West. His monumental sculptures, situated in landscapes from New York to Denver, remain pivotal in discussions about



Photo of Erika Bolstad

national identity, historical narratives, and public art. As part of her research, Bolstad will have access to Proctor's letters, photographs, and other archival materials as well as the original plaster molds used for the Rough Rider sculpture, enriching her project.

### Erika Bolstad's Groundbreaking Research on America's Monuments

Bolstad's research delves into the complex and evolving narratives surrounding public monuments in the United States. With "Monumental," she examines how Proctor's works, especially the Rough Rider statue, are being reconsidered in light of changing societal values. Her book and documentary will document the statue's toppling, its future, and broader discussions about the role of monuments in American society. By utilizing the resources of the Whitney Western Art Museum and McCracken Research Library, Bolstad will bring historical depth and fresh perspectives to her exploration of public memory, art, and democracy.

### Apply for Future Proctor Fellowships

The Proctor Fellowship, inaugurated in 2020, supports innovative research on Alexander Phimister Proctor's life, work, and artistic legacy. Applications are open to scholars, historians, and artists. For information on how to apply for future fellowships, please visit the Buffalo Bill Center of the West's website at

<https://centerofthewest.org/research/fellowship-program/> or contact Fellowship Coordinator,



Alexander Phimister Proctor stands next to his Rough Rider sculpture. From MS 242 Alexander Phimister Proctor Collection. P.242.1036



Alexander Phimister Proctor's "Rough Rider" Sculpture as it is displayed in the Whitney Western Art Museum. Gift of A. Phimister Proctor Museum with special thanks to Sandy and Sally Church. 11.06.724-740

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