

A Masterpiece Finds a New Home at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West: Albert Bierstadt's 'Wind River Country, Wyoming'

The Buffalo Bill Center of the West receives Bierstadt's "Wind River Country, Wyoming" as a gift, now prominently displayed in the Whitney Western Art Museum.

CODY, WY, UNITED STATES, January 28, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Buffalo Bill Center of the West](https://www.buffalobillcenter.com/) in Cody, Wyoming, is pleased to announce the addition of Albert Bierstadt's "Wind River Country, Wyoming" to its esteemed Whitney Western Art Museum's collection. This breathtaking piece of American landscape art, gifted by the Thomas and Elizabeth Grainger Family, captures the majesty of the Wind River Mountain Range, and is now on display alongside another Bierstadt painting, "Island Lake, Wind River Range, Wyoming." Both works of art were created from sketches made during the same Bierstadt western expedition.

Albert Bierstadt, one of the most celebrated painters of the American West, created "Wind River Country, Wyoming" around 1860, with oil on canvas measuring 28 ¼ x 39 ½ inches. The painting is part of a trio of works that depict the grandeur of Wyoming's Wind River Mountain Range. It is similar in size and subject matter to Bierstadt's "Island Lake, Wind River Range, Wyoming," and "Wind River Country" (on display at the Denver Art Museum). These works are characterized by Bierstadt's traditional use of depth, guiding the viewer's eye



Albert Bierstadt's "Wind River Country, Wyoming" painting as it is displayed in the Whitney Western Art Museum



The Buffalo Bill Center of the West located in Cody, Wyoming



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Susan Barnett, Margaret & Dick Scarlett Curator of Western American Art

from the foreground’s elevated position to the sun-dappled ridges and hazy mountain peaks beyond.

“This new addition truly elevates our collection,” says Susan Barnett, the Margaret and Dick Scarlett Curator of Western American Art at the Whitney Western Art Museum. “Bierstadt’s works are a cornerstone of western art, and to have this particular painting reunited with another from the same expedition is extraordinary. Together, they allow visitors to immerse themselves in his vision of the American West.”

In “Wind River Country, Wyoming,” Bierstadt’s masterful composition leads the viewer through successive planes of

dark and light, from a sinuous river—likely the Sweetwater or Green River—through expansive middle ground, and finally to the atmospheric peaks in the background. Unlike his more vivid works, this piece features a more muted color palette, offering a serene but powerful depiction of the landscape.

While the painting’s colors may appear more subdued than other Bierstadt works from this period, its soft tones and quiet beauty evoke the timeless majesty of the Wyoming landscape. This painting also differs from others in its simplicity, lacking the dramatic cloud formations or fiery sunset tones often seen in Bierstadt’s larger, later works.

In reflecting on the painting, donor Tom Grainger shared, “The instant I first viewed Albert Bierstadt’s ‘Wind River Country, Wyoming,’ I said to myself, this belongs in a museum! It was our honor and privilege to be its steward for a time, and then to help its long journey of ownership end in the Whitney Western Art Museum within the Buffalo Bill Center of the West.”

A video detailing this remarkable gift, as well as the restoration process used on other significant works, can be viewed here <https://youtu.be/olqd6QMbzvo>. The conservation of Bierstadt’s “Last of the Buffalo” is featured in the video, highlighting the care and precision that go into preserving these treasures for future generations.

We invite art lovers, historians, and adventurers alike to visit the Buffalo Bill Center of the West to experience this incredible masterpiece firsthand.

About the Buffalo Bill Center of the West:

The Buffalo Bill Center of the West, located in Cody, Wyoming, is a world-renowned Smithsonian Affiliate dedicated to connecting people to the American West. The Center houses five unique museums under one roof —the Buffalo Bill Museum, Whitney Western Art Museum, Plains

Indian Museum, Draper Natural History Museum, and Cody Firearms Museum— celebrating history, culture, art, natural science, and more, and offers a range of immersive experiences including chuckwagon dinners, live raptors, special events, and customized exclusive tours. With its diverse collections, the Center serves as a focal point for exploration, discovery, and hands-on education.

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