MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

DATE: March 9, 2020
FROM: Thomas Figarelle, Executive Director

RE: Response to COVID-19 Spread: Postponing the Auction

The Western Art community is a family, as is the City of Great Falls. Similarly, the C.M. Russell Museum is a family of staff, members, volunteers and patrons alike. Given the uncertain risk regarding COVID-19, we bear an obligation to mitigate risks in order to protect these larger families of people against potential and likely infectious spread at Museum events.

Therefore, we are announcing an unprecedented shift to the 52-year event that has become The Russell: An Exhibition & Sale to Benefit the C.M. Russell Museum, by rescheduling it to a yet-to-be-determined date within the next six months. We anticipate announcing a rescheduled date by the end of March. This decision will mitigate infectious risk to Museum patrons and the larger Great Falls community, while hosting a celebration of Western Art at a later, more appropriate date.

We do not make this announcement lightly, fully acknowledging the hardship this will place on the Museum’s fiscal-year revenue and the impact it will have on the local Great Falls economy. That said, we are resolved that this course of action will best protect our key assets – loyal Museum patrons and the Great Falls community we love.

In a final analysis, there is no greater priority for the C.M. Russell Museum than the people who constitute our community of members, donors, volunteers, event patrons, and staff. Effectively safeguarding the well-being of anyone from this treasured group of friends is of the utmost importance and is at the heart of this decision.

Thank you.

Thomas Figarelle
Executive Director

Ticketing: Jessica Nebel, 406-727-1939; jnebel@cmrussell.org
Artists: Kelcy Wedekind, 406-604-4761; kwedekind@cmrussell.org
Media: Christina Horton, 406-604-4746; chorton@cmrussell.org
Sponsors: Brianne Laurin, 406-604-4744; blaurin@cmrussell.org
Volunteers: Kailey Judisch, 406-604-4758; kjudisch@cmrussell.org
General Inquiries: 406-727-8787