

## Book Reviews for *Sagebrush and Paintbrush*

“Nancy Plain brings the story of one of the West’s greatest artists, Charles M. Russell, to a new audience in *Sagebrush and Paintbrush: The Story of Charlie Russell, the Cowboy Artist*, her Spur Award winning book for young readers, which is now available in paperback. In a spare, but lyrical style, Plain shows that her writing and grasp of this rich subject is anything but plain. She opens with a piece about Russell working as a nighthawk on a cattle drive where he watched the “way light and color moved across the prairie” as the sun rose each morning.

In the cow camp, Russell spun stories and shaped figures out of beeswax. He sketched images of the cowboys themselves on pieces of paper, even inside their hats. At age sixteen Charlie had come west to Montana with sheep rancher Pike Miller. He first saw the Judith Basin on that trip, and it would become the place where he made his reputation as an artist. Charlie Russell drew and painted Lewis and Clark, the Blackfeet, cowboys, dying cattle, coyotes, and cowboy camps.

Although targeted toward middle-grade readers, the superb writing in this book will also appeal to adults. And the addition of dozens of images from Charles M. Russell’s art portfolio only adds to the value.

*Sagebrush and Paintbrush* is not only well written and illustrated, but also beautifully presented with varying text type and size, and interesting layouts that meld the text with the art. We can heartily recommend this book for teens or anyone who wants a quick overview of Russell’s artwork and the opportunity to savor the art he created.”

-- *ROUNDUP MAGAZINE* ★

“Although born into a well-to-do Missouri mining family, Charles Russell (1864-1926) wanted to live the Western dream. At 16, he dropped out of school and headed to Montana. He simultaneously worked on the range and illustrated dynamic details of the last days of the American frontier, especially its cattle ranching, wildlife and Indians. Russell’s story is illustrated with noteworthy paintings from each stage of his life. This well-written biography demonstrates Mondo’s commitment to quality writing, readability and beautiful design, enticing to parents as well as children.”

--*TRUE WEST* ★