

## Russian artist captures images of Montana in mural

The mythic American West has always cast a wide net, capturing the world's imagination with its images of mountains and plains, cowboys and Indians, six-guns and barbed wire.

To Russian artist Anatoly Kalashnikov, nothing symbolizes the western experience as precisely as a Montana cattle drive. A listed and well-represented artist in his homeland, he has created a 1,000-meter mural that places America's heritage within the context of this prevailing cultural symbol. The title of the painting is "Montana, Cattle Drive."

"Mr. Kalashnikov wanted it to be the kind of mural where images from the 1960s can blend with images from the 1890s," says Mark Kelner, Kalashnikov's American translator.

The painting is currently in six panels, with each panel standing seven feet tall and ten feet wide. Images of a traditional cattle drive are juxtaposed with other American icons and events: the Statue of Liberty, the Civil War, a pantheon of presidents and Warhol's pop-shock Marilyn Monroe.

Kalashnikov hopes to find a permanent home in Montana for the mural, and has enlisted senators Conrad Burns and Max Baucus to assist in finding a suitable location. Kelner is in the process of seeking an airport or other large building that might accommodate the piece.



Courtesy Anatoly Kalashnikov

