

Gateaux
Bakery

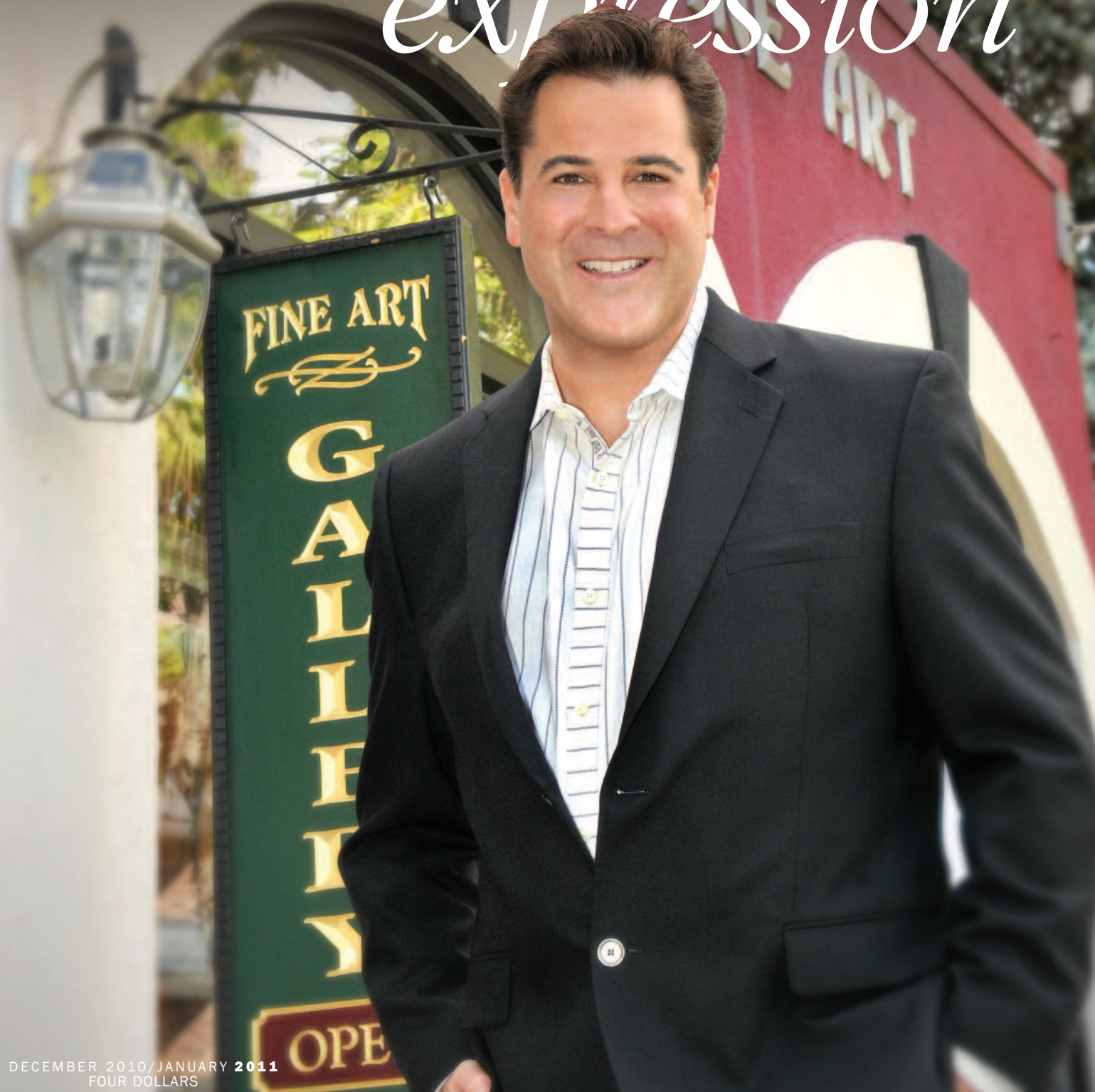
Aaron
LaPedis
Renaissance Man

Vienna
Ball

As seen in

COLORADO

expression



The cowboy way to set the table

Corinne Brown loves cowboys. She swoons over the tall, lean, Gary Cooper-esque Hollywood cowboy. There's a soft spot in her heart for the lonesome hero on horseback as a blizzard rages on the prairie. And she appreciates the ironic image of a cowboy firmly gripping the reins of a bucking bronco on a china egg cup.

Her new book, "Come and Get It—The Saga of Western Dinnerware" is a love letter to that icon of the American Plains. This lavishly illustrated feast of elegantly styled table settings shows how Americans have woven the cowboy into the most elemental aspect of life—food—through the Western and ranch dinnerware that has graced our kitchen tables for nearly a century.

"The cowboy is a mythic folk hero who really existed in America, and still does today," Corinne says. Whether quintessential or cliché, the cowboy reflects our society. "In the 1940s and 1950s, he was the hero, the sheriff, the keeper of the peace. Today, he is the sexy, self-reliant image of independence, while rodeo cowboys are the rock stars." However he is depicted, we know him instantly.

"Cowboy culture is a true, indigenous culture in America, with a value system rooted in the land," she says. "Roy Rogers's code of the West is really the Arthurian code of chivalry, honesty and integrity." Our ongoing fascination with the



PHOTO: ELLEN JASKOL



Collecting with Corinne

Favorite Find: A set of china featuring an illustration of Monument Valley in Arizona. Corinne snapped it up because its beauty struck an emotional chord.

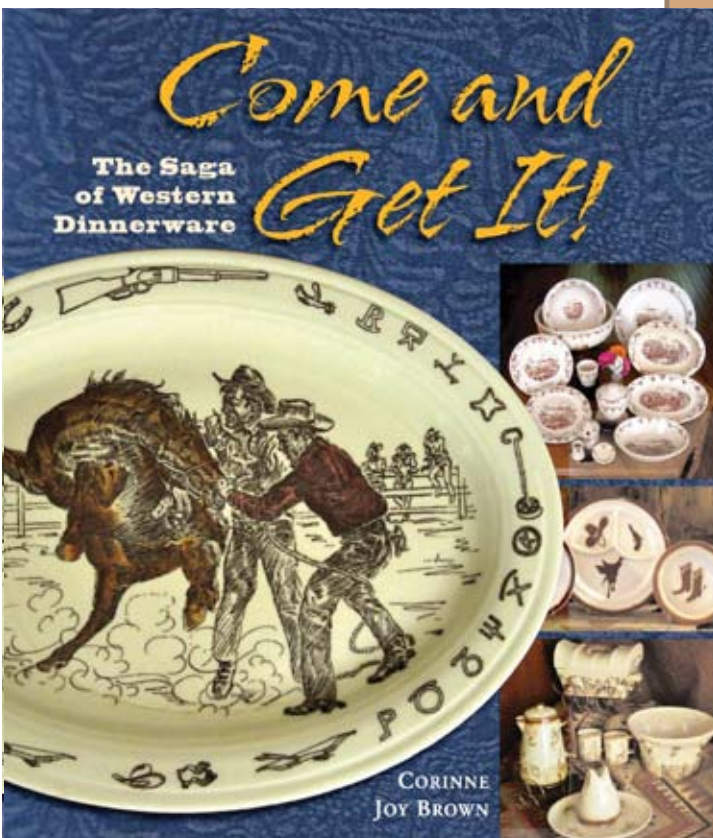
Collecting Coup: A blue and white transferware plate featuring a Currier and Ives print of an Albert Bierstadt painting purchased for \$17 in a local antiques store.

The One that Got Away: A 1926 Syracuse China plate for \$200.

While Corinne believes she made the right decision, she still combs the Internet hoping to find another.

Next Project: Corinne plans to document ranch life, photographing authentic cowboys and activities on working ranches.

“Come and Get It—The Saga of Western Dinnerware” by Corinne Joy Brown, is published by Johnson Books/Big Earth Publishing. Find it at bookstores, or contact www.johnsonbooks.com.





cowboy way finds a unique expression in dinnerware with such fanciful monikers as Westward Ho, Giddy Up and El Rancho.

“Come and Get It” captures the lifestyle and social history of a romantic segment of 20th century America. Part design book, part reference book, it shows the evolution of Western and ranch china and spotlights the once-vibrant china potteries of Ohio and Pennsylvania that produced millions of cups, bowls, plate and platters for homes and restaurants from World War I until the 1980s.

THE CHINA STAYS IN THE CORRAL

Corinne started collecting Western and ranch china only three years ago when she received several pieces of Wallace china while writing an article on ranch dinnerware. Another gift soon followed,



and she was hooked. She scoured antique shops, garage sales and eBay for highly collectible pieces from Wallace China, Syracuse China and McCoy and amassed a museum-worthy collection of over 400 pieces representative of nearly 80 patterns.

The china resides—along with Corinne and husband Avi Brown, with whom she owns Roche-Bobois/International Design—in a streamlined modernist home in Englewood, Colorado, where European furniture, French pottery, Western and equine art share space. She often serves her guests from whimsical Western place settings that feel at home in her dining room and on her patio. How does she make it work? “I see this as a folk art medium,” she explains. “It is a blend of new and old. Things can have a home anywhere if you know how to put them together. It is the essence of good design.”

URBAN COWGIRL

Researching, writing and photographing “Come and Get It” delighted Corinne’s “closet cowgirl,” as she puts it. Indeed, her cowgirl credentials run deep. She has written several Western novels, including “MacGregor’s Lantern” which has been optioned for film. In addition to being a frequent contributor to *Colorado Expression*, Corinne writes for Western magazines and organizations ranging from *Western and English Today*, *Working Ranch Magazine*, *True West Magazine* and the National Cowboy Museum. She even worked as a wrangler on the T Lazy 7 dude ranch near Aspen when she was barely out of her teens. “I never got over wanting to be a cowgirl.”

The Denver native remembers competing in the National Western Stock Show as a teenager with her horse Danny. She recently lost her horse Shamir, a Polish-Arabian she rode for 23 years. “I’m between horses right now, but horses always will be a part of my life.” As will cowboys. **CE**

Kimberly Field is a frequent contributor to *Colorado Expression*. Thanks to Corinne’s book, Kimberly found a few well-loved pieces of cowboy china from her childhood and is happily using them. Her third book, “Westminster: The First 100 Years,” is in stores throughout Colorado.