

## 93 counties represented in 'Legacy of Nebraska - Omaha World-Herald: Web Edition Articles (NE) - August 31, 2017

August 31, 2017 | Omaha World-Herald: Web Edition Articles (NE) | Staff Writer

ONE HUNDRED twenty-four paintings representing each of Nebraska's 93 counties. When painter Todd A. Williams undertook the ambitious project to capture the entirety of the state in 2012, he was prompted by his fond memories of growing up in Merrick County, where he and his siblings explored the woods, rode go-carts and swam in a cattle trough on his grandparent's farm. It wasn't until he spoke with Michael Smith at the Nebraska State Historical Society that he realized his timing was perfect.

"He asked when I thought I'd be done, and I said, 'March 2017.' He got all excited because I'd be finishing just in time for the sesquicentennial. He encouraged me to contact the Nebraska 150 committee."

Williams did, and the result was "Legacy of Nebraska," a travelling exhibition that's been part of the state's ongoing 150th anniversary celebration. Tomorrow it arrives in Omaha at **Gallery 1516**, and director Patrick Drickey says the public will be impressed. "Todd is an excellent plein-air painter, and this show is going to have such a broad appeal. It's really exciting for us."

What's been exciting for Williams is the variety of themes he's been able to capture and the people he's met along the way. "So much thought went into the process, and it really has been a journey," he said. "That's actually what it's been about for me — and it's been a joy."

**Gallery 1516**, 1516 Leavenworth St. "Todd A. Williams: Legacy of Nebraska." Opening reception and artist talk: 6 to 9 p.m. Friday. Through Oct. 15. **Gallery Hours:** Friday, Saturday, Sunday: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. First Friday: 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Williams will also work in a public plein-air session at Fontenelle Forest on Oct. 1 from 2 to 5 p.m. [gallery1516.org](http://gallery1516.org) or 402-305-1510.

For more information about the project, visit [ne150.org](http://ne150.org).