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Photographs of the American West by Barbara Van Cleve opens at Wade Wilson Art for ARTHouston 2011

(Houston, TX, June 2011) – Wade Wilson ART is pleased to announce a special exhibit in conjunction with ARTHouston 2011 of Photographs of the American West by master photographer Barbara Van Cleve. The exhibit opens with a reception for the artist from 6 - 8 p.m., Friday, July 8, 2011 and for ARTHouston, 10 a.m. – 9 p.m. Saturday July 9, 2011 and will remain on view through August 30, 2011.

Montana-based artist, Barbara Van Cleve, began her love of photography as a child. Descended from Montana pioneers, she was born and raised on her family's historic ranch near Big Timber, Montana, and through her work, she personifies the real West. Her silver gelatin prints and digital photographs capture her vision of the American West - the spirit of the landscape and people who inspire her. Van Cleve's exhibit at Wade Wilson ART focuses on images of the women and men she has met in her daily life as owner of a Montana dude ranch and follower of "Cowboy Culture."

Van Cleve states, "Photography has been a life-long passion for me. I wanted to share with other people how wonderful ranch life was but I could not draw, or paint or make things in clay, so I begged my parents for a camera. Thankfully they gave me a Brownie Box camera when I was 11, and that was the beginning of my ability to share with others my visions of ranch life. I carried that camera everywhere and photographed everything. I still do today."

"I have extended my vision beyond ranch life," she says, "although I continue to make black and white photographs of ranch life in addition to my other photographic interests. As a self-taught photographer I have always experimented in different techniques ranging from dye transfer, salted paper prints, albumen prints, Van Dyke brown prints, cyanotype prints and even tintypes. I developed all my film and made all my gelatin silver prints for many, many years, even the very large 30" x 40" prints. Today, I have switched to digital

cameras and do all my 'processing' (converting the color images to black and white images) in my studio on my computers. So instead of the old darkroom I now work in a light-room at the computers. It is a new world in photography - a challenging one, but a very exciting one."

Today she is nationally famous for her photographs of the western range, ranchers, rodeos, cowboys, and cattle women. A lifetime of ranching and a superb technical command of photography account for the power and beauty of her photographs, which range from crisp documents of ranch life, to stimulating images of movement, myth and imagination. In 1995, Van Cleve was inducted into the National Cow girl Hall of Fame in recognition for her great achievements in photography.

Barbara Van Cleve's photographs are the subject of the book *Roughstock Sonnets* (1989), and a documentary video of her life and work called *Capturing Grace* (1993). A book of her photographs of ranch women, entitled *Hard Twist* (a western term describing a tightly twisted lariat rope, as well as a resilient person), was published in January 1995 by the Indianapolis Eiteljorg Museum of American Indian and Western Art and has enjoyed enormous success. The publication included a special leather bound limited edition of *Hard Twist*.

Van Cleve and Wade Wilson met and became friends sharing experiences on numerous trail rides in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo mountains above Santa Fe during the late 1980s. She later exhibited with him at Wade Wilson Gallery, Chicago, in 1990-91. Van Cleve's work can be viewed in the collections of the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame and the Eiteljorg Museum of the American Indian and Western Art.

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For additional information regarding the exhibit, please contact Wade Wilson at 713 521 2977 or visit www.wadewilsonart.com. For media inquiries or to interview the artist, please contact Heather Wagner Reed of Juice Consulting at 713 208 3891.