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West Prize winner rides for cows

By [libby and roberta](#)

April 21, 2011 · 3 Comments



When the West Collection decided to change up the West Prize and give the \$25,000 purse to a project and not just to an artist, they truly changed the nature of the prize. The winner of the grand prize, Billie Grace Lynn, was announced at the West Collection earlier this evening (Thursday, April 21). She will be using her prize money to fund a project to educate people about cruelty to farm animals. Her piece, "Mad Cow Motorcycle", 2008, a motorcycle made of a cow skeleton that the artist rides as part of her educational performances, is already being used for education — at SEI, where some Indian workers on contract with the company, who pass by the cow-bone-enhanced bike complained about the desecration of the animal. The reaction took Lee Stoetzel, West's director, and collector Paige West herself by surprise. Without skipping a beat, they set up a meeting between the artist and the workers to talk through the work, the proposed animal-friendly project. The motorcycle may end up in the SEI "Hot Hall," home of controversial art. But right now it's on display, along with works by the other nine finalists, in the collection's hallway gallery.



Billie Grace Lynn, Miami, FL "Mad Cow Motorcycle", 2008, metal, cow bones, (kinetic sculpture), 36" x 96" x 24"



Billie Grace Lynn on her mad cow motorcycle.
Photo courtesy of West Collection.

We loved the low rider's fierceness and were sorry we didn't get to see the artist ride in on the thing, which we were told she was going to do in a cow-suit costume at the Thursday night announcement. As part of her project, she will be modifying the bike so she can ride it farther, touring the beef industry states.



Billie Grace Lynn, Miami, FL "Mad Cow Motorcycle", 2008, detail

Stoetzel, who ushered us through the exhibit while several of the artists were still installing, shared with us their reasons for choosing the winner: They wanted to support projects that brought the art beyond the studio into the real world—that were activist. And that's exactly what Lynn will be doing. With the help of engineers at the University of Miami (where Lynn teaches sculpture), she is transforming the motorcycle engine into a hybrid that could travel farther on a tank of gas, and then she will be making a movie of her ride, touring the South and the Midwest. The movie is not funded by the prize, only the performance itself.

Also big news: The collection purchased Tristin Lowe's Mocha Dick, which will be an anchor in their new space in Philadelphia, wherever that will be.

Tags: [billie grace lynn](#), [mocha dick](#), [tristin lowe](#), [west collection](#), [west prize 2011](#)

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3 Responses to “West Prize winner rides for cows”

1.  [phil jackson](#) says:
[April 22, 2011 at 8:17 am](#)

congrats to all the winners, the work last night really was next-level

2.  [Sara Teixido](#) says:
[April 22, 2011 at 11:22 am](#)

Billie Grace Lynn’s “Mad Cow Motorcycle” was an included entry in DCCA’s SHIFT: Kinetic exhibition at the Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts in 2009. Definitely a must see!

3.  [roberta](#) says:
[April 22, 2011 at 11:31 am](#)

Hey Sara, did she ride in on it? I’d love to see that.

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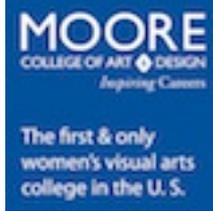
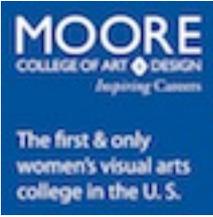


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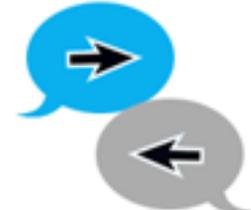
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