

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

FALL 2019

HEART OF THE HOPI



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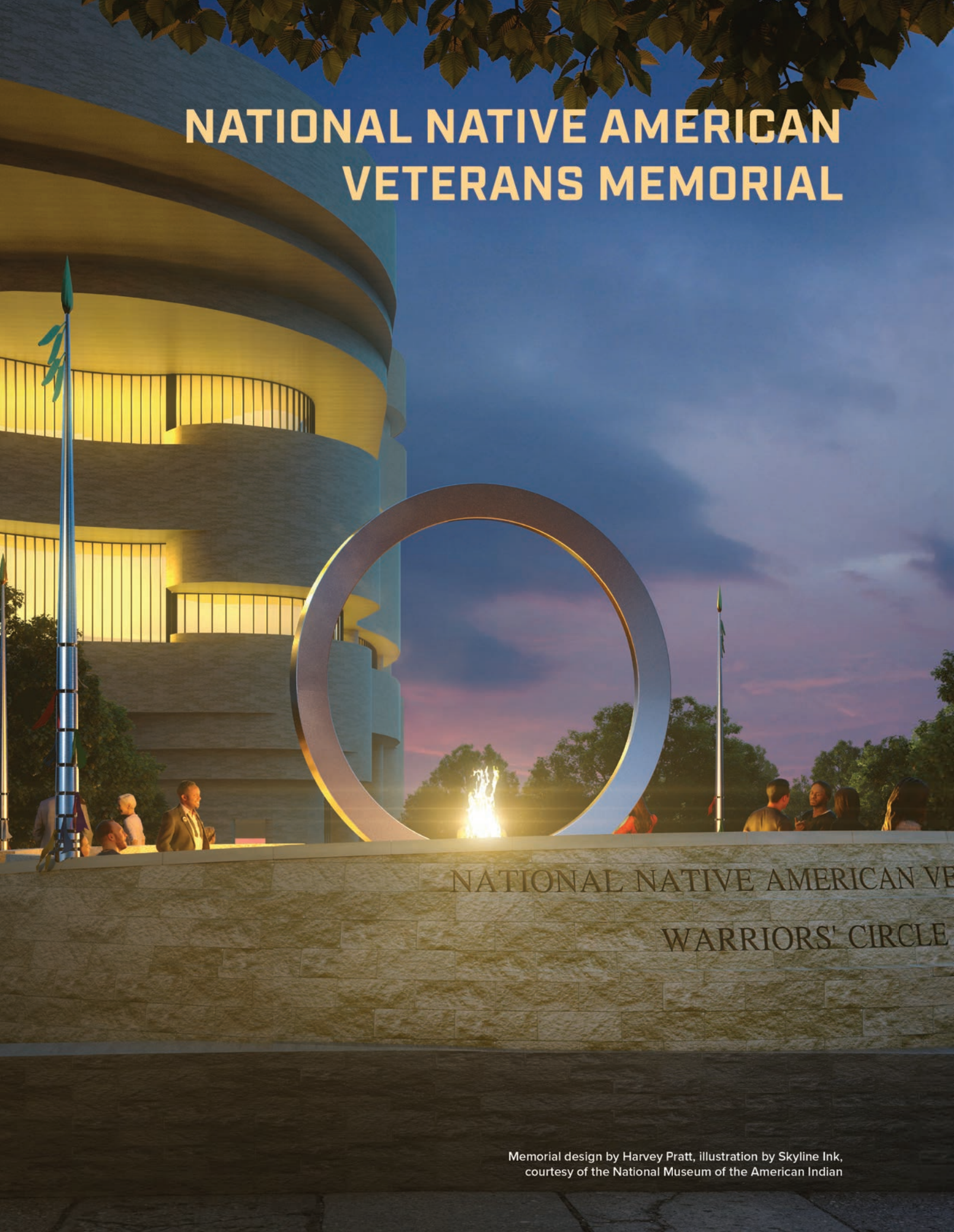
SUZAN
SHOWN
HARJO
TRIBUTE

UNCONFINED
CANVASES



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NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS MEMORIAL



NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS MEMORIAL
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PHOTO BY NMAI STAFF (06/0201)

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PHOTO BY SUSANNE PAGE

ON THE COVER

A 9-year-old Susan (Secakuku) Sekaquaptewa poses for a family portrait at her home on the Hopi Reservation in 1978. She wears cornmeal lovingly dusted on her face—a Hopi symbol of beauty—as well as a white cape that was given to her when her mother was married in a traditional Hopi wedding ceremony a couple of years prior. Sekaquaptewa, a former NMAI staff member, now serves as an assistant agent at the federally recognized Tribal Extension Program at the University of Arizona. She and her husband's grandmother, Helen Sekaquaptewa, appear in the article on Hopi dry-land corn farming on page 16.

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Through a unique partnership, a collection of pots at the National Museum of the American Indian is on its long journey home to the Poeh Cultural Center in New Mexico, where the ceramics were created in six Tewa communities more than a century ago.

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STRETCHING THE CANVAS

Native artists struggled during the past eight decades to break through stereotypes of so-called American Indian art. Their triumphs, paintings now part of NMAI's collection, appear in a new exhibition "Stretching the Canvas," running from November 2019 to the fall of 2021 at the NMAI in New York.

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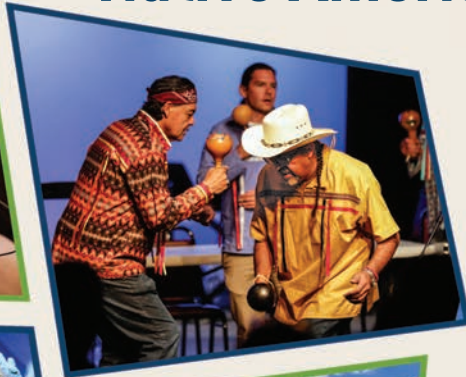
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The museum presents works for purchase by some of the most talented Indigenous artists of the Americas. From fine jewelry to textiles, clothing, paintings, sculpture, photography and more, the Native Art Market offers patrons a wide assortment of exceptional pieces to collect or gift just in time for the holidays.



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Zuni necklace, ca. 1990. Silver, turquoise, jet/lignite, shells. Donated to the NMAI Collection by Chaya Saity in 2004 (26/5340).

BREAKING GROUND

In addition to the diverse lineup of exhibitions and programs the National Museum of the American Indian offers this fall, September's events will mark a unique moment: On September 21, we will commemorate the 15th anniversary of the opening of the museum in Washington, D.C., and a private ceremonial groundbreaking for our National Native American Veterans Memorial. We acknowledge the memorial's dedicated circle of supporters in this issue of American Indian magazine and invite you to join us for the celebration by participating in a series of public programs being offered that day.

On September 20, we will offer a symposium to honor NMAI Founding Trustee Suzan Shown Harjo (Cheyenne and Hodulgee Muscogee), whose life and works on behalf of Indian policy, education, arts and cultures are deeply intertwined with all aspects of the museum. A Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient, Harjo has dedicated her time and talents to support so many, yet her dedication to establishing the NMAI is truly outstanding. She served as the principal author of the first Trustees' policies on repatriation, identity and exhibitions and helped to draft its bylaws and collections policy. She chaired the first public programs committee and served on the search and selection committees for the museum's founding director and architect.

After serving as trustee, she later hosted the first three years of NMAI's Native Writers Series; directed the museum's Language Repository Project for NMAI and its partners, the U.S. Administration for Native Americans and the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA); and organized the museum's 2013 symposium on Racist Stereotypes and Cultural Appropriations in American Sports. She was guest curator and editor of the award-winning exhibition and book, "Nation to Nation: Treaties Between the United States and American Indian Nations." And these are just some of the highlights of her inspirational life and career.

In this issue, I am pleased to share personal reflections on Harjo's influence from my colleagues at the IAIA and its Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, who are



Suzan Shown Harjo and NMAI Director Kevin Gover at the opening of the exhibition "Nation to Nation: Treaties Between the United States and American Indian Nations" on September 16, 2014.

partnering with us to co-sponsor the symposium honoring Harjo.

IAIA President and symposium presenter Robert Martin says, "The symposium provides a unique opportunity to pay tribute to this iconic Native American woman's amazing legacy, which has had a huge, positive impact on all of us."

Patsy Phillips (Cherokee Nation), director of the IAIA Museum, will emcee the symposium and is my co-editor for our forthcoming book based on the papers of the presenting scholars. She has written an intimate portrait of Harjo (pp. 24–25) reflecting on her longtime friend and colleague in this issue. Phillips says:

"I first met Suzan Shown Harjo in the late 1990s at a Native art gathering at the Evergreen State College Longhouse in Olympia, Washington. Although I didn't know her personally, I knew about her and was intimidated by her many successes. In addition to helping recover a million acres of Native land and win the National Museum of the American Indian, she has developed key laws in the past five decades to promote and protect Native nations, sovereignty, ancestors, children, lands, arts, cultures, languages and sacred places. I kept a respectful distance then, but we became friends over the years, and my respect for her only deepened.

"In 2017, I began interviewing Harjo about her life to complement her donation to the Institute of American Indian Arts of 100 boxes of papers and tapes as well as The Harjo Family Collection, an extensive and significant collection of artworks by personal friends and other distinguished contemporary Native artists. Some of our interviews are the basis of my writings on her family history for the upcoming symposium and tribute volume, both titled 'A Promise Kept: The Inspiring Life and Works of Suzan Shown Harjo.'

"I asked Harjo what led her to a lifetime of advocacy and what inspired her to make history, 'write history right,' and 'bust stereotypes.' She says, 'A great number of people lost all they had to lose in order for their descendants to live. We, their children, live because not all of them were killed and their spirits were not broken, and any good we do honors them. It starts with the ancestors and continues to the generations we know personally—the ones who taught me to learn from our Cheyenne and Muscogee histories and traditions to listen, to remember and to be provident and brave.'" ✱

Kevin Gover (Pawnee) is director of the National Museum of the American Indian.



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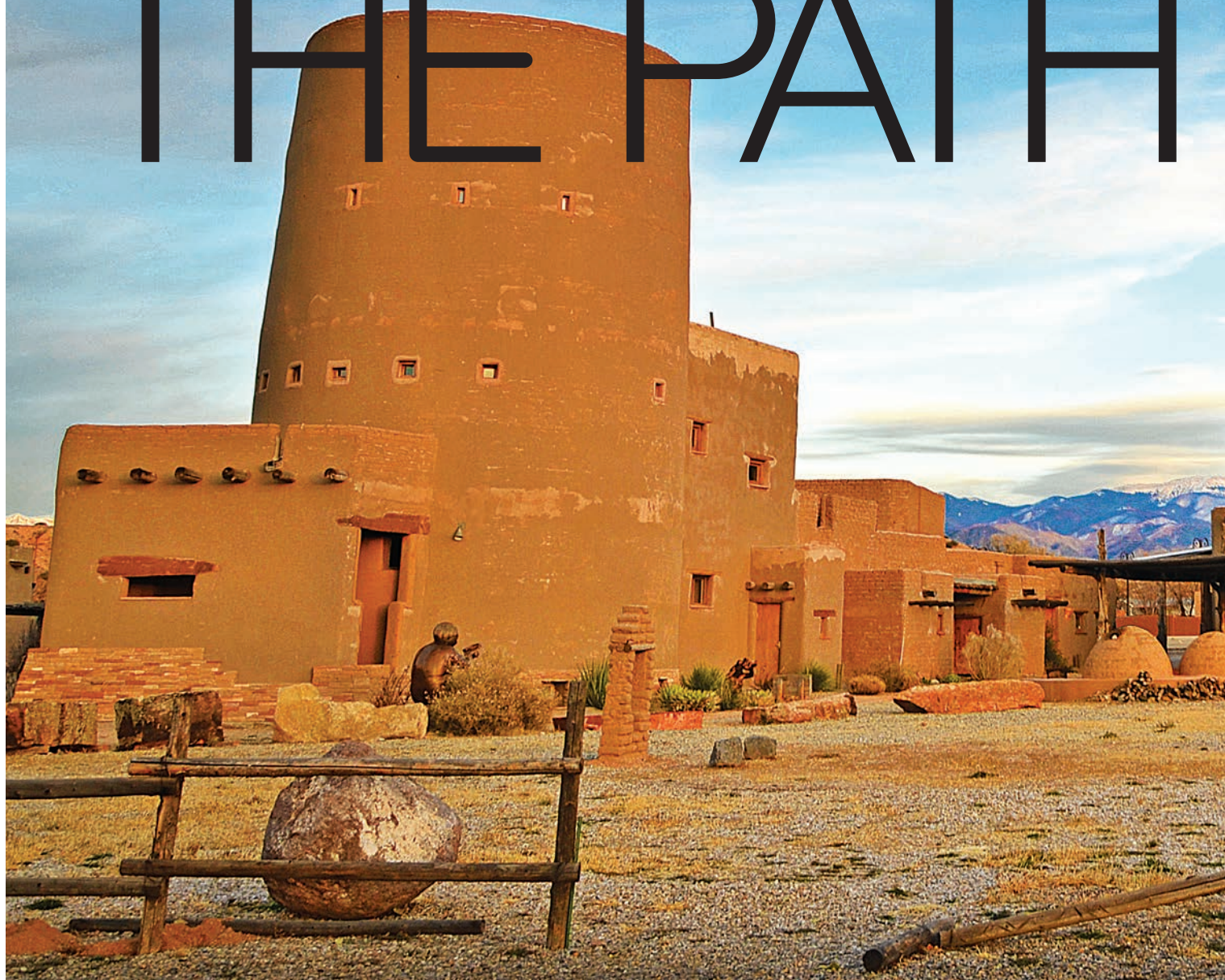
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As of August 1, 2019.

THE PATH

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AFTER MORE THAN A CENTURY, 100 TEWA PUEBLO VESSELS ARE FINALLY AWAKE—AND PILGRIMAGING HOME

Beginning October 12, 100 Tewa pots will be exhibited at the Poeh Cultural Center in Pojoaque, New Mexico.

A Tewa pot is never empty—and while used or cared for, always alive. Whether a large storage jar tucked away in a pantry or a flat bowl brimming with beans at a family feast, it is heavy, laden with hundreds of years of stories. And even if a jar or bowl is not in use, it is only dormant, anticipating the moment that it will once again be awakened by the touch of Tewa hands.

Anticipating is what a National Museum of the American Indian collection of 100 Tewa pots from six pueblos in New Mexico have been doing for more than a century. Tessie Naranjo says, “We believe they are anxiously waiting to get home.”

Naranjo's family is among the generations of skilled Tewa potters from those six pueblos—Nambé, Ohkay Owingeh (formerly San Juan), Pojoaque, San Ildefonso, Tesuque as well as her own home of Santa Clara—straddling the Rio Grande River in north-central New Mexico. From the mid-19th century to the early 20th century, various collectors acquired the Tewa pots and then curators donated them to the museum. Ranging in size from a few inches in

OF A POT

BY ANNE
BOLEN



diameter to more than 2 feet tall, they survived—and slept—for a century. For the past 20 years, they have been carefully curated at the museum's Cultural Resources Center in Suitland, Maryland.

In 2012, the Pueblo of Pojoaque's then-Governor George Rivera and the village's Historic Preservation Officer Bruce Bernstein approached NMAI and suggested it was time for these pots to be back among the Tewa people through a long-term loan. NMAI readily agreed. "Our philosophy is that we are stewards of these collections. We are taking care of them for future generations," says NMAI's Assistant Director for Collections Cynthia Chavez Lamar (San Felipe Pueblo/Hopi/Tewa/Navajo). "Yet these are things that may never otherwise be seen if they don't travel."

And travel they have, and will again. After several years of collaboration between the Tewa communities and NMAI, nine of these pots have traversed nearly 1,900 miles to the Poeh Cultural Center in Pojoaque, and soon the remaining 91 will join them. All will be displayed in an exhibition called "Di Wae Powa" (They Come Back) beginning October 12. Yet even after the exhibition opens, their life's



Some vessels, such as this 8.5-inch-high black ware cooking jar from the turn of the 19th century, were well-loved, evident by the attempts to extend their life even after they were broken by bandaging them with cloth and twine (17/6153).

PHOTO BY NMAI STAFF



journey will not have ended. Each vessel represents a long history—not only of pottery making but of the Tewa people—and these pots' stories are far from over.

THE TEWA P'O-EH

That these Tewa pots have been on a journey is appropriate, for as their people say, every life takes a continuous path, or “nambi p'o-eh,” and only through movement can growth occur. Along the way, one must gain knowledge and then return home to share that with one's community. In this way, a Tewa person finds his or her “middle place,” a place of balance and purpose that is above our beginnings in the underworld and yet not yet above, where the journey ends. “You find your p'o-eh, your path, how to be a Pueblo person in part through stories,” says Poeh Cultural Center Executive Director Karl Duncan (Arikara/Hidatsa/Mandan/San Carlos Apache). “These pots are going to be providing an enormous wealth of knowledge through their stories.”

The Tewa people take their name from their language, one of seven in the Tanoan language group of Pueblo people of New Mexico and Arizona. As told in the 2019 book “The Continuous Path,” movement is important to the Tewa culture, so they were a highly mobile people. They had migrated to their present-day villages during the 13th century. Even so, intermarriages and trade between villages continued so pottery styles were exchanged.

After the Spanish arrived during the 1600s, the Tewa invented new pottery styles to reinforce their culture. When the Tewa began to grow

wheat, they began making larger jars to store the grain and large, flat bowls in which to mix bread dough. They also began making black pottery and ones with black cloud designs. Black pots are formed when cow or horse dung is used to fuel and then to smother the fire so that the black smoke produced deoxidizes the clay, turning it black. They also began to make a lot of polished black, or Kapo pottery, a style that may have been introduced by Mexican Indigenous populations who came to New Mexico with the Spanish. After the 1680 Pueblo Revolt during which villagers drove out some of the Spanish, the Tewa potters again invented new styles, creating more plant-based designs and replacing tall-neck and indented-bottom jars with bulbous jars. Black on white pottery continued until the mid-1700s. Then very large bowls and jars known as ogapage polychrome, designed with black and red paint on a white slip coating, became prevalent in Tewa culture.

FIERY BIRTHS AND DEATHS

No matter for which purpose or in which style the Tewa people make their vessels, the process is a ritual and a prayer. It combines two fertile substances, water and earth, to create life. “We live in an organic world. All things have life. Clay has life,” says Naranjo. “I remember my mother would pray to the pit from where she would take the clay. She would say, “I am going to bring you home, but it is okay, because I need you and I will make good use of you.”

Until the mid-20th century, the molding of clay into a pot was primarily a Tewa women's skill, yet some powerful motifs such as



PHOTOS BY NMAI STAFF



Far Left: San Ildefonso Pueblo potter Erik Fender was one of the Tewa community representatives who informed NMAI conservators, including Kelly McHugh (left) and Michelle Austin-Dennehy, which vessels they desired for the Poeh exhibition.

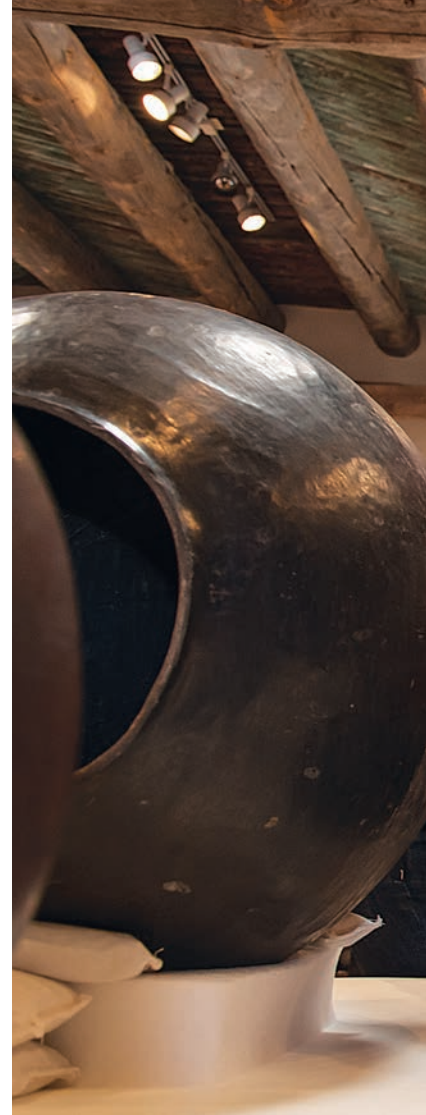
Middle: Tessie Naranjo (Santa Clara Pueblo), with NMAI Assistant Director for Collections Cynthia Chavez Lamar (San Felipe Pueblo/Hopi/Tewa/Navajo, left), provided insight about not only how to care for the pots but what stories they can tell. Naranjo says, "It is an easy matter to quickly form a relationship with a pot."

Above: Poeh Executive Director Karl Duncan (Arikara/Hidatsa/Mandan/San Carlos Apache) helped select the right color paint so the mount would match the pot.

Left: Naranjo says her mother was "always playful" when creating her pots, often forming vessels with animal heads or figurines such as this 6-inch-tall ceramic trio created between 1900 to 1920, potentially for market (22/8912).



Poeh Collections Manager Lynda Romero (Pojoaque Pueblo) picked up a soldering torch for the first time to help create the brass mounts.



Poeh intern Dmitri Brown from Santa Clara Pueblo helped fit the mounts.

mountains, lightning bolts and water serpents were the responsibility of the men. Today, women and men craft pots, although some decorations still belong to men. Erik Fender from San Ildefonso Pueblo chose pot making for a living to continue his family's legacy and because, he says, so few do in his village: "There's too much hard work and risk involved to rely on the clay."

Although each potter may have his or her own techniques, the general steps to making a pot are similar. After gathering the clay, rocks and other impurities are removed and the clay is then soaked for days. A bonding agent, or temper, such as a volcanic ash or sand is mixed in and then the moist clay is left "to age" in bags for a couple of weeks, says Fender. When it is the right plasticity, not too wet or dry, the clay can be molded, either from a lump into a small pot or figurine or from stacked coils that are then smoothed together into a larger vessel. Then the pot is left to dry until it is its "leather hard," after which it can finally be carved. Once completely dry, it can be smoothed with sandpaper or a wet cloth and dried again prior to burnishing it smooth with a stone. Then it can be covered with red or white slip and decorated with paint. Only then is it ready to be baked in a fire.

Because so much can go wrong in making a pot—too much temper, too wet, the fire too hot—Fender thinks "good thoughts and prayers" at every step. Yet it can still crack or explode in the fire. "We potters call firing 'final judgement' because months of work can be lost in a matter of minutes," says Fender. If a pot dies in the fire, Fender will break it up and give the clay "back to the spirits." He says that is "part of the beauty of the process. Not everything is going to survive." Yet making pots is



NMAI's Tazbah Gaussoin (Picuris Pueblo/Navajo, left) and Shelly Uhlir carefully positioned the pots on the mounts to keep them stable.

PHOTOS BY NMAI STAFF

worth the potential heartbreak, he says, as “pots are part of all stages of our life. We are born with pottery, and we die with pottery.”

THE LONG JOURNEY HOME

In 2016, Fender was one of the representatives from each of the six Tewa pueblos who came to NMAI's Cultural Resources Center to select which of the more than 200 Tewa pots there should go to the Poeh. The 100 chosen represent a variety of styles and designs as well as all the Tewa villages. None of those selected had been excavated or used in ceremonies, nor were any signed by a person or family.

Naranjo and others from the Tewa communities came in 2017 to advise how the pots should be handled for greatest preservation, how they should be displayed and what stories they could tell. For example, a cooking pot and a canteen had evidently been well-loved, as despite being broken, they were held together with pieces of twine and cloth to extend their life.

The next step was to have NMAI staff visit the Poeh Cultural Center and help its staff determine what kind of mount would best cradle each pot to keep it stable while being displayed. Nine of the pots had been sent to the Poeh previously to serve as prototypes. During August 2018, NMAI's master mountmaker Shelly Uhlir and one of NMAI's emerging Native museum professionals, Tazbah Gaussoin (Picuris Pueblo/Navajo), helped teach the Poeh staff, Native museum professionals as well as local jewelry artists and potters how to forge brass mounts. Working in the Poeh's jewelry studio for a week, the group created mounts for the first nine pots.



Polychrome, with black and red designs on cream ware, is an iconic Tewa pottery style. This nearly 12-inch-wide polychrome jar was created between 1880 and 1900 (24/4433).



1.



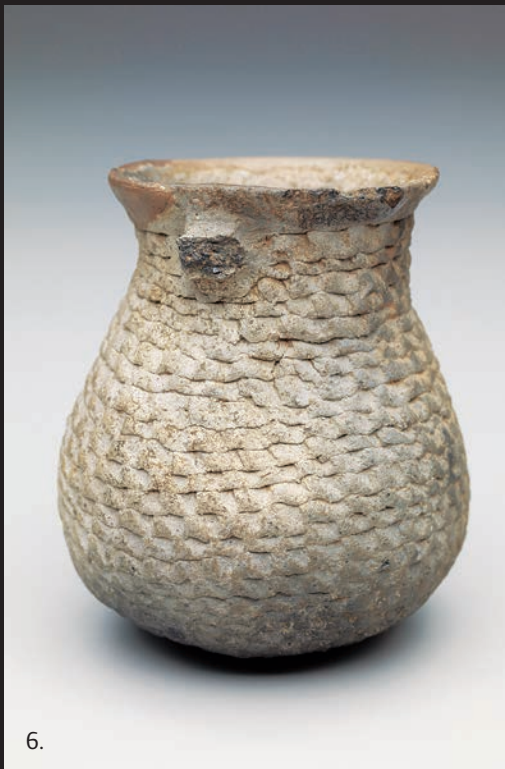
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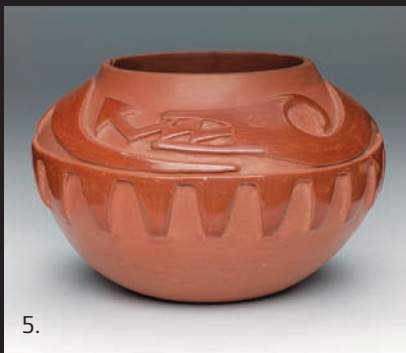
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8.



When all 100 vessels are exhibited in October, they will be perched on earth-toned steps, as if in or outside of a Pueblo home.

Now the rest of the pots are being prepared for their final leg of their long pilgrimage home. NMAI staff will keep in touch with those at the Poeh to make sure the pots are comfortably housed under the right temperature and moisture conditions so they can potentially remain at the Poeh for years to come.

LIVING LEGACIES

When all 100 pots are finally together at the Poeh, they will be placed on earth-toned, tiered steps, as if they were perched on kitchen shelves or stairs outside a Pueblo house. “We want the pots to feel that they are coming home to Tewa country,” says Stephen Fadden, the Poeh’s director of programming. “People are being with the pots rather than looking at the pots. The pots are watching you as you are walking in.”

Yet the arrival of the pots at the Poeh Cultural Center is really “just the beginning of the project,” says Bernstein. Visitors will be able to learn and perhaps tell their children about traditional pottery making and what pots mean to the Tewa people. Some pots become part of a “teaching collection” that local potters will be able to examine closely, seeing the techniques and designs of their ancestors, if not their families. Fender has already started to incorporate this knowledge into his own art. “It has been a huge source of inspiration to recreate the old

styles and shapes,” he says. “Finding out which families made the pots may in fact reveal hidden histories of these pueblos,” says Fadden. Next year, the Poeh plans to begin recording those stories.

This long-term loan with the Poeh Cultural Center is just one of similar partnerships the NMAI is striving to build with other Native communities, including the Makah Tribe in Washington State and White Mountain Apache Tribe in Arizona. Having grown up in San Felipe Pueblo, Chavez Lamar says the pots’ return home is “emotional for me, too. I know what it means when you see things your ancestors touched and made, to have this sense of awe and appreciation that they exist. Whatever we can do as a museum to connect Native peoples with collections is very important.”

“This is a co-stewardship,” says the Poeh’s Duncan. “This will serve as a model and process that can be replicated by other tribes and groups that want to bring collections back to their communities. Connecting elders to younger generations and tribes to other institutions—that’s really positive. This is a prototype that is going to evolve.”

Through such renewed purpose, perhaps the Tewa vessels will finally find their “middle place.” Naranjo says, “We cannot wait for these 100 pots to get home to us so they can more easily breathe again.” ✱

Anne Bolen is assistant managing editor of *American Indian* magazine.

Facing page: 1. Cream ware kiva model with a hearth inside and a family painted on its walls, about 7.5 inches tall. Possibly acquired between 1916 and 1923 (18/8607). 2. Black ware bowl (circa 1900–1920) with projected nodes, almost 6 inches in diameter (20/8463). 3. Polychrome bird pitcher with black decorations on cream ware, about 10 inches tall, circa 1890–1895 (00/7517). 4. Black on cream ware flat bowl (circa 1880–1890), almost 9 inches in diameter (00/7548). 5. The water serpent Awanyu (or Avanyu) was carved into pots such as this red ware bowl (almost 9.5 inches, circa 1925) as an emblem of luck or good health (24/6859). 6. Collected between 1869 and 1887, this jar resembling a basket, not quite 4 inches tall, is the only corrugated gray ware in the collection of 100 pots (16/1537). 7. Canteen, red and black on cream ware, circa 1880–1900, almost 9 inches tall (12/3122). 8. Buff ware bowl with red rim and black designs caused by clouds of smoke, about 11.5 inches in diameter, circa 1900–1910 (24/7559).



THE HEART OF THE HOPI

BY AARON
LEVIN

FOR 2,000 YEARS, THIS SOUTHWEST INDIAN NATION HAS BEEN ABLE TO NURTURE CORN IN DRY LAND



Many Hopi families teach their children how to raise corn by hand.

As a boy, Stewart B. Koyiyumptewa awoke early on spring days to plant corn, following his grandfather out to Dinnebito Wash, the dry riverbed below their village on the Hopi Reservation in northeast Arizona. Like their ancestors, they tramped up the wash, stopping every few paces to clear off a patch of sandy topsoil with a hoe. Koyiyumptewa walked behind, digging into the moist earth below with a greasewood stick flattened at one end. He dropped a few kernels into each hole and covered them over with earth and sand.

At noon, they paused for a lunch of sandwiches, watermelon and paper-thin “piiki” bread made from blue Hopi corn. Then they

returned to the slow, repetitive work of planting and cultivating corn in the dry land. Today, the same scene is repeated each year, for many Hopi families still plant crops the same way their ancestors did 2,000 years ago.

THE CENTER OF HOPI LIFE

Producing an ample corn crop is critical for the Hopi, for the plant provides far more than mere subsistence. All of Hopi life revolves around the corn planted each spring.

The Hopi people’s origin stories say that long ago, the Guardian Spirit, M̄asaw, offered the clans several gifts: wood that would become the Hopi planting stick, a bag of corn kernels, a gourd of water and a small ear of blue corn. At M̄asaw’s direction, the

clans began an extended migration. They learned on the way to cultivate corn and a better life, one that embraced unity, selflessness, cooperation, harmony with nature and stewardship of the land.

Perhaps reflecting those early wanderings, the many colors bred into Hopi corn are still associated with directions across the landscape; yellow suggests northward; white, eastward; red, southward; and blue, westward; whereas purple signifies above and sweet corn, below.



PHOTO BY MARIA ELENA PETERSON, COURTESY OF MICHAEL KOTUWA JOHNSON



NMAI 04/501

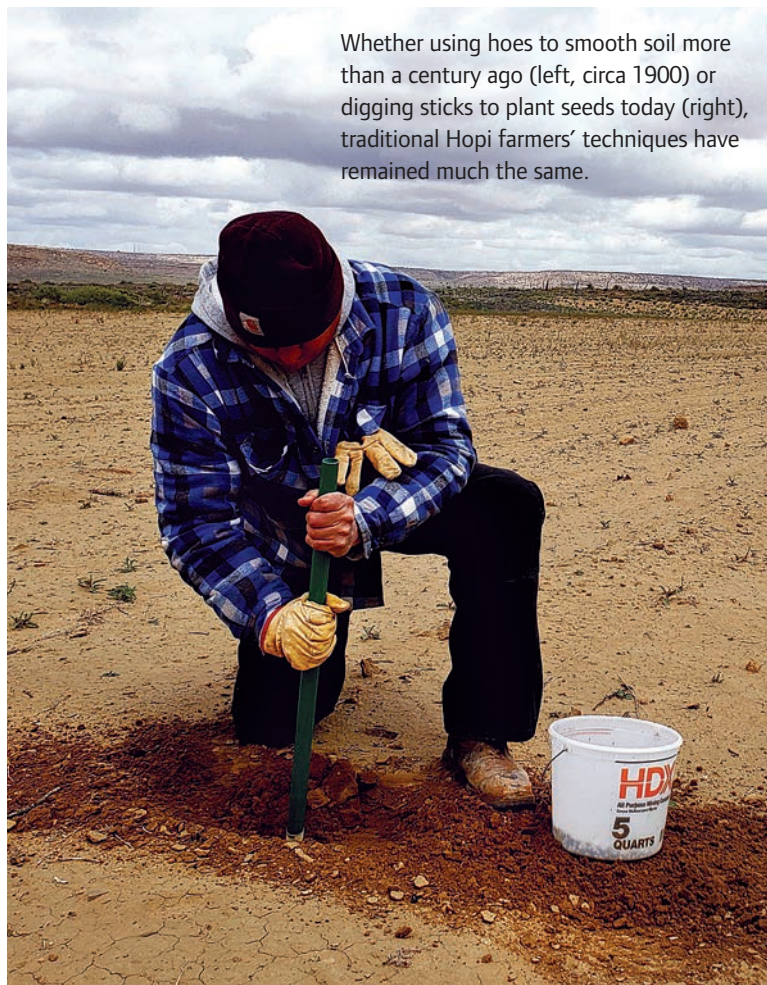


PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL KOTUTWA JOHNSON

Whether using hoes to smooth soil more than a century ago (left, circa 1900) or digging sticks to plant seeds today (right), traditional Hopi farmers' techniques have remained much the same.

Corn is present at every stage of life, every ceremony, every key moment in the cycle of the seasons, says Koyiyumtewa, now the program manager at the Hopi Culture Preservation Office in Kykotsmovi Village, Arizona. "Corn is the first thing they feed you when you're born, and cornmeal sends you off to the spiritual world when you pass on."

Hopi women have the authority to make many of the decisions about their community's agriculture because Hopi clans are matrilineal. Husbands and unmarried sons grow corn for the clan of their wives and mothers. When a man marries, he moves to live with his wife's clan and grows corn for its members.

In late winter, Hopi women look over their stocks of corn and consider what colors and quantities must be planted for the coming year. How much is needed for food? How much for festivities, ceremonies and prayers? Through their calculations, they direct the men what to plant. Before planting, the women prepare and bless the seeds to encourage a good harvest.

Armed with the women's knowledge and the seeds to plant that year, the men venture into the fields. Depending on their assess-

ment of soil moisture and the chances of frost, planting may start as early as April, but most corn goes into the ground in late May and early June. Yet uncertainty remains: A late spring frost can kill a whole crop, and an early fall frost reduces yield.

FARMING WITH DRY LAND

Corn was first domesticated about 9,000 years ago in the lowland tropics of Mexico. It was introduced to the region that is now the southwestern United States about 4,000 years ago, but it took another 2,000 years of close observation and careful selection by farmers for the corn to adapt to the area's higher, drier elevations and shorter growing season. In the process, the Hopi people became masters of dry-land farming.

Hopi villages are located at the southwest ends of three highlands—called the First, Second and Third Mesas—that run down from the Colorado Plateau in northeastern Arizona. The mesas are separated by seasonal riverbeds called washes. The favored planting location is an "ak-chin" field, an area on the alluvial fan where the water spreads out at the mouth of the wash. Hopi can identify the soil's capacity

for moisture below by the kind and quantity of natural vegetation growing on the surface.

"The weeds will tell," says Michael Kotutwa Johnson (Hopi). For instance, land adjacent to fields dominated by rabbitbrush indicates abundant soil moisture. Johnson and University of Arizona educator Lisa Falk co-curated an exhibition about "The Resiliency of Hopi Agriculture" that is on display at the Arizona State Museum—a Smithsonian Affiliate—through January 2020.

The Hopi farmers also grow beans, squash, melons and some fruit trees. Some of those fields may be irrigated, but the Hopi never irrigate their corn. That crop depends solely on two sources of water: winter snowfall and summer rain. Only the moisture stored in the soil is available from planting time until mid-summer, when rains usually fall. The Hopi hedge their bets by planting corn in multiple fields in dissimilar locations up and down the wash or in side canyons. Planting at separate sites increases the chances that at least one will produce a good crop.

Once they decide where to plant, the Hopi men clear off any weeds and scrape away a small patch of the sandy surface layer of the



PHOTO BY SUSANNE PAGE

Families (such as the Quavehema family, circa 1980) will gather to pick the corn and then place it into a very deep fire pit, where the ears will smoke and steam overnight. The men will then remove the corn from the pit before the women take over and hang it to dry.

soil. The sand serves as kind of mulch, preventing moisture in the loam below from evaporating too rapidly. The planters plunge the flat-tipped digging stick into the ground, creating a hole a foot deep, then plant eight to 12 kernels in each hole so the corn grows in clumps. Each clump is five to seven paces away from its neighbor to ensure that enough water is available for optimum growth. Depth and spacing can depend on soil moisture at planting time, the field's location relative to rainwater runoff and whether it is composed of clay or loam, among other factors.

"Enormous amounts of traditional ecological knowledge are associated with dry farming," says Susan Sekaquaptewa, a Hopi tribal member who works for the University of Arizona's Cooperative Extension Program. "The environment dictates the technique, and you only learn that from experience."

Conventional corn is planted only 2 inches deep and 6 to 8 inches apart. The Hopi plant their corn deeper to catch the moisture from the winter's melted snow, which lies farther below the surface. That required careful selec-

tion of plants, preserving changes that became encoded in their genes. When Hopi corn germinates, the seed sends out a single strong root downward, searching for the water that lies even deeper in the ground. It also sends a shoot upward to the surface. These adaptations, which are lacking in conventional varieties, helped Hopi corn thrive in a hot, dry environment for 2,000 years.

"Hopi agriculture is the end result of a complicated process of culture, biology and environment," says Kelly Swarts, a geneticist and archaeologist at the Gregor Mendel Institute of Molecular Plant Biology at the University of Vienna. "The corn used by the Hopi today was mostly developed by the Hopi on the Hopi mesa in response to novel genetic variations. People took advantage of this variation in ways that made sense to them culturally and which were better adapted to the landscape they lived on."

Once the new corn pokes up above the surface of the ground, Hopi farmers thin the stalks out, leaving only the tallest five to eight plants in each clump. That favors the



PHOTO BY MARIA ELENA PETERSON

Rather than using pesticides, farmers pick beetles and other insects off the corn by hand.

Once dried, shucking the corn, a job that was done primarily by women (here Helen Sekaquaptewa, circa 1980), is now very much a community affair.

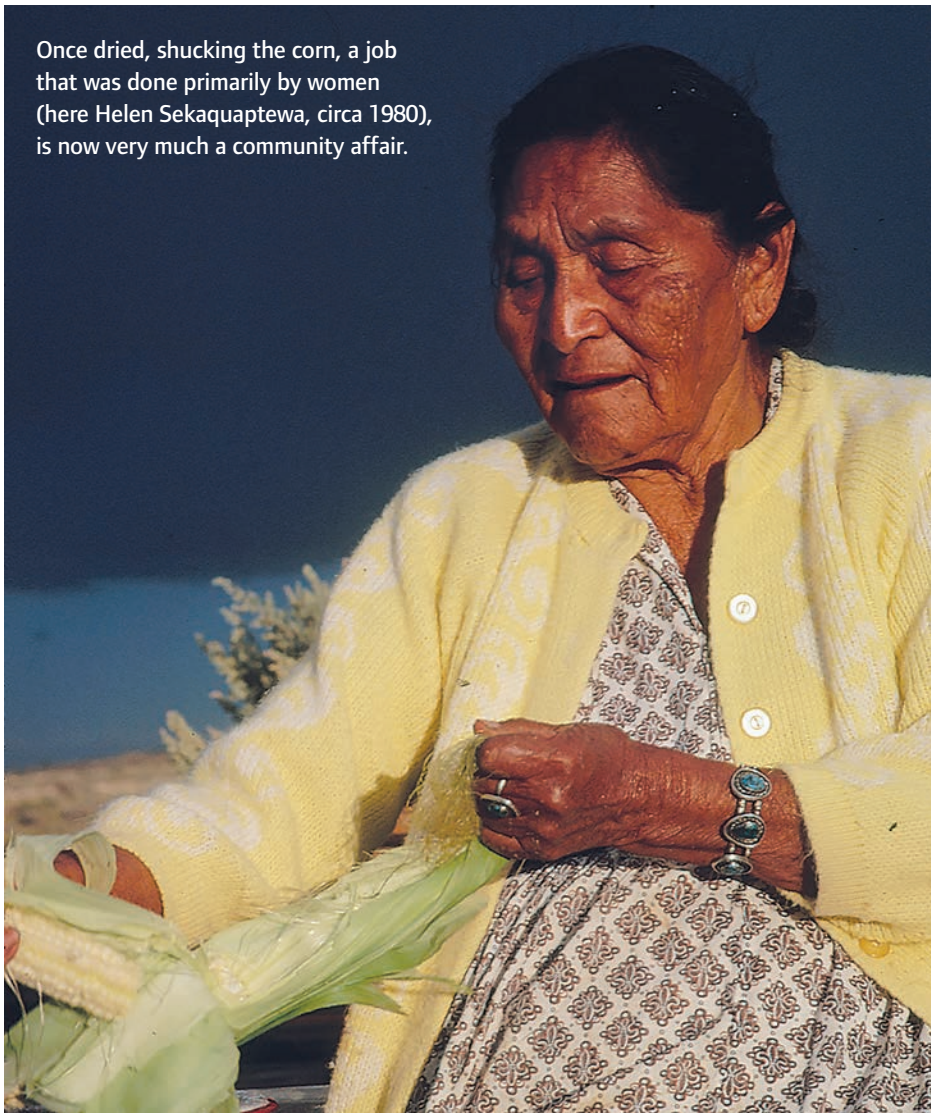


PHOTO BY SUSANNE PAGE



PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL KOTUTWA JOHNSON

genes that get plants established and growing quickly. The extra stalks are placed around the remaining plants to shield them from the wind and preserve soil moisture. The farmers do not use fertilizer or insecticides but rather patrol the fields during the summer to pick off cutworms that can damage the plants.

"Hopi is the only place I know where corn is planted to fit the environment," says Johnson. "The environment is not manipulated to fit the corn."

Most corn is ready at the young, milky stage by September, says Sekaquaptewa. Some is harvested then and eaten fresh, but it is only available for several weeks. Sweet corn gets special treatment, however. The Hopi men harvest most of it then and take it to a stone-lined, bell-shaped pit where a fire has burned all day. They place the corn, still in the husk, in the pit, which cooks it, steaming overnight. The next morning before sunrise, the men remove the corn from the pit. The Hopi women then step in and prepare it for drying. They first clean off the husks and string the ears through the stem and hang them up to dry. When the ears are dry, the women can use this preserved corn in many ways. They can cut off the kernels and grind them into a corn meal of surprising sweetness. Alternatively, kernels can be shelled and added to stews. Boiling the whole dried ears later brings back their freshness so they can be eaten like newly harvested sweet corn. Some of the rest of the corn is left to mature and added to the seed stock for future years.

Later in the autumn, the Hopi men harvest the rest of the corn. They bring it home to their wives or mothers, who will once again carefully dry and store them. A select, few perfect ears are saved for ceremonial use. As the corn is picked, the farmers press the empty stalks into the ground to "put them to sleep," says Sekaquaptewa. The roots stay in the ground to loosen and replenish the soil. The next year, clumps will be planted a few steps away so as not to exhaust the soil.

This planting cycle continues every year, as it has for a hundred generations. "Dry land farming is not about growing food; it is a religious practice," says Sekaquaptewa. "It teaches us modesty and humility, to live in harmony with and respect the land and all that it gives to us. Farming is an inspiration for song. Life in the fields is poetry."

BENDING NOT TO BREAK

The annual rhythm of the corn has lasted two millennia. The Hopi have always adapted to change, but they live in a new era, one that brings new challenges to their way of life.

“As more people get involved in the modern working system and a cash economy, there is often not enough time to attend to farming,” says Sekaquaptewa. “It’s hard to combine the old and new ways at the same time, and it’s affecting how the culture gets transmitted.”

Many Hopi work hard to carry on the traditional planting, though. Michael Kotutwa Johnson is among those who take Hopi children out to the fields and talk to them about seeds and water and sun and their people’s deep-rooted tradition of farming corn. “Growing corn is how we learn about patience, responsibility, working together and the spiritual aspects of our ceremonies,” he says.

Stewart Koyiyumtewa also still plants part of his field by hand just so his 17-year-old son will understand his people’s traditional techniques and pass them on. Koyiyumtewa clears the rest of his land with a tractor equipped with a mechanical device that drops the kernels into the ground.

Meanwhile, a changing climate has made the Hopi lands hotter and drier, with less snowfall, later spring snows that can kill early plantings, and earlier autumn frosts that shorten the growing season. “Less snowfall means less soil moisture, and so the time from May to June before rain falls becomes more critical,” says Koyiyumtewa. “The rain comes late and often too little of it. The corn is stunted and the yield lower. With less rainfall, plowing causes the dry top layer of soil to blow away.”

The changing climate brings another concern. Over centuries, Hopi people have grown corn varieties that thrive better in their hot, dry environment. Today, corn breeders are interested in those qualities.

Many Hopi are concerned about the future of their beloved crop. They don’t want to see its genetic heritage disrupted, deliberately or accidentally, by crossbreeding with modern varieties. “Our corn has been adapted to this area for a long time and we need help to protect our seeds,” says Koyiyumtewa.

He also worries that large agribusiness conglomerates will exploit the genes in Hopi corn and patent the results, earning profits that would not be shared with the tribe. Thus far, that has not happened, and it is not easy to breed specific traits into commercial varieties. The U.S. Department of Agriculture corn gene bank in Ames, Iowa, has 59 samples of Hopi corn contributed from the 1950s through the 1970s, but it is unknown whether anyone has accessed them.

Leigh Kuwanwisiwma, former head of the Hopi Culture Preservation Office, would like



PHOTO BY SUSANNE PAGE

A fungus found on the interior of corn leaves is often playfully smeared on children’s faces (such as Phyllis Coochyamptewa, circa 1980), another tradition that binds the corn to the past and future of Hopi farming.

to see the Hopi establish a seed bank on the reservation to safeguard their heritage. The seeds would be grown out every few years, but in traditional ways so the corn doesn’t lose the extraordinary genetic traits accumulated over more than 2,000 years. Such a plan would preserve not just the corn but also the Indigenous knowledge that surrounds it.

“We see corn as the gift of the spirit being that rules this world as the caretaker of corn,” says Kuwanwisiwma. “He gave us corn to be our soul. Hopi corn survives because our religion is still strong and our values are important to us.” ✱

Journalist Aaron Levin is based in Baltimore, Maryland, and writes about science, medicine and agriculture.

“WE SEE CORN AS THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT BEING THAT RULES THIS WORLD AS THE CARETAKER OF CORN. HE GAVE US CORN TO BE OUR SOUL.”

— LEIGH KUWANWISIWMA

HONORING WOMEN AS STRONG AS BISON HORN

BY ANNE BOLEN



PHOTOS BY NMAI STAFF; NMAI 27/0215

Lakota artists Kevin and Valerie Pourier's concha belt, "Winyan Wánakikšín" (Women Defenders of Others), portrays Native leaders, but it is a tribute to the strength of all women, represented by the hands of many colors cradling the Earth. The tipis' frames are "like backbones," says Kevin Pourier, "because women are the backbones of the people."

The coil of faces carved into bison horn is arresting. Prominently displayed in the rotunda of the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., the concha belt portrays eight American Indian women who have taken on tough issues affecting their communities as well as all of Indian Country. Etched with bold black lines on a silvery background, they seem to stare back defiantly, as if challenging anyone to take them on.

Oglala Lakota jewelry artists Kevin and Valerie Pourier were inspired for the idea of the belt—named "Winyan Wánakikšín" (Women Defenders of Others)—in 2018 by the recent

resurgence of women power. Valerie suggested they create a piece that would acknowledge all women but in particular American Indian women they knew who were "creative," and "involved in their Native communities." The women they chose all had "a passion for trying to change things," says Kevin.

The women portrayed have spoken on behalf of a wide range of causes, from protecting the environment and reservation land to preserving of Native languages and culture to advocating for individual Indian rights and tribal sovereignty. Together, they represent all the women whose voices are rising. "They are determined," says Kevin. "They are not afraid of anything."

That collective power of these women and the unique beauty of the piece struck NMAI Director Kevin Gover when he saw the belt displayed at the Sante Fe Indian Market in August 2018. It won Best in Show, and from the moment he saw it, Gover knew that the museum's collection needed this artwork. "I couldn't think of a better piece to—in a very different way—honor the role of women in our country."

The belt's placement in the museum, visible soon after visitors walk in, is no accident. To support Smithsonian's American Women's History Initiative (womenshistory.si.edu), Gover is bringing women's stories to the forefront: "We need to help add to the narrative about contemporary Native women."

In addition, Gover hopes that visitors will note that the portraits are carved into bull bison horn, a remarkable feat. “I can’t imagine a more difficult material to work with,” he says. Even so, working with this medium is important to the Pouriers. Their studio and home are on the Oglala Lakota’s Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in southwest South Dakota. Bison are central to the lives of the Lakota people, from subsistence to ceremonies.

In 2005, when Kevin Pourier participated in NMAI’s Native Arts Program, he was inspired by items he saw that were made by his ancestors as well as some carved from bison horn. Now bison provide the Pouriers with their livelihood as artists. “The buffalo gave everything for our ancestors,” says Pourier. “I believe the buffalo is helping us live today, too.”

Together, Valerie and Kevin Pourier craft dozens of pieces a year, ranging from delicate earrings and pendants to grand concha belts such as “Winyan Wánakikśin.” Kevin first saws bull bison horns into flat pieces that can be scraped to produce a matte grey background that can be etched. Valerie advises on composition of designs and inlay materials used to color the pieces. To create the “Winyan Wánakikśin” belt, the conchae were inlaid with a variety of natural materials—pieces of sandstone from South Dakota’s Badlands, turquoise, green malachite, deep blue lapis lazuli, pink coral and the shimmering mother-of-pearl interiors and gold lips of shells—all crushed and mixed with resin to hold the small pieces in place. Kevin Pourier then took more than two weeks to polish the belt. To finish it, he used carving burrs to dot the surface of some of the inlaid sections to add texture. He used years of accumulated bull bison horns to craft the belt, which from concept to completion took more than six months.

Now the Pouriers say they are thrilled to see their finished piece displayed at the museum that inspired Kevin to continue to work in bison horn. “Our work has really empowered me and Valerie to have a voice and to speak out about issues in Indian Country,” he says. “To have it on the main floor of the museum is just a dream.”

“There is a philosophic struggle in the Native art world about what is traditional and what is Native art. The best has always pushed those boundaries,” says Gover. “This is a great example. It is coming full circle.” ❁

Anne Bolen is assistant managing editor of *American Indian* magazine.



Left: Susie Silook (Yupik/Inupiaq) spotlights issues such as the growing problem of violence against women in her writings and sculpture, which is often crafted from whale bone. Right: Tipiziwin Tolman (Wichiyena Dakota/Hunkpapa Lakota) is striving to bolster her community’s health and well-being by revitalizing its Native language.



Left: Playwright and lawyer Mary Kathryn Nagle poses in front of the shell of a turtle, an important animal in her Cherokee culture. She speaks out for the sovereign rights of individuals and Indian Nations. Right: Wanda Batchelor has served as the leader of her Washoe Tribe. Behind her is a design her grandmother wove into baskets.



Left: Jodi Archambault (Hunkpapa/Oglala Lakota), a strategic policy advisor, is featured with a bead design from one of her dance dresses. Right: This Pueblo pottery design behind Roxanne Swentzell (Santa Clara Pueblo) signifies her Tewa clay sculptures that reflect her passion for conserving Indigenous knowledge and the environment.



Left: Suzan Shown Harjo (Cheyenne and Hodulgee Muscogee) is an American Indian rights advocate, poet, writer and former NMAI trustee and curator. She founded The Morning Star Institute (a morning star quilt pattern behind her) to protect Indian sacred sites and cultural rights (see pp. 24–25). Right: Bobbi Jean Three Legs (Hunkpapa Lakota) embodies the many protestors of the Dakota Access Pipeline running alongside the Standing Rock Indian Reservation.

A PROMISE KEPT

THE INSPIRING LIFE OF SUZAN SHOWN HARJO

BY PATSY PHILLIPS

"I wasn't socialized to be oppressed."

- SUZAN SHOWN HARJO

Suzan Shown Harjo was born June 2, 1945, in El Reno, Oklahoma, within the exterior boundaries of Cheyenne and Arapaho Nations' reserved lands. Her mother's great-grandfather was Chief Bull Bear, a ceremonial leader who "healed with colors" and a leader of the Dog Men Society, whose families comprised half of the Cheyenne Nation. He was the first to sign the 1867 Medicine Lodge Creek Treaty with the United States that established these tribal lands.

Harjo's Muscogee ancestors were ceremonial people who "sang and danced to be well" and cultivated traditional foods and medicines. She says, "They were wrenched from their original homelands," in what is now Alabama and forcibly moved to Indian Territory in present-day Oklahoma.

Harjo and her mother, Susie Eades Douglas, both Cheyenne, lived in her grandparents' home while her father, Freeland Douglas—a Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizen and World War II combat veteran—traveled to his postwar Army base. Harjo and her younger twin brothers also lived with their parents in their "garden-spot assignments" on Oahu, Hawaii, and in Naples, Italy, where her father was stationed with NATO's Allied Forces Southern Europe.

Harjo calls her upbringing "the best of so many worlds, filled with myriad and stunningly wise, dignified, talented, hilarious, powerful, humble and kind people to love and admire." She also says, "My early life had just the right number of bad teachers and rotten apples in the family tree to prepare me for the worst of what life might bring." She says her "childhood experiences with anti-Indian racism, sexism, violence, abuse and dysfunction" connect in a "direct line" to laws she has championed as well as "unjust laws we have tried to end or change."



PHOTO COURTESY OF SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION ARCHIVES (89-8343-11)

Secretary Robert McCormick Adams signs Memorandum of Understanding with the Museum of American Indian (MAI) on May 8, 1989. Left to right: Suzan Shown Harjo, MAI Trustee; Roland Force, MAI Director; Senator Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii); Dick Baker, Lakota Sioux Red Feather Society member; and Congressman Ben Nighthorse Campbell (D-Colo.).

Harjo says that the "best of my relatives, spiritual leaders and teachers" taught this: "Always be prepared to speak, to lead, to follow, to find something that needs to be done and to do it. And always, always to be optimistic about achieving what others call the impossible." She traces the origin of those teachings to an instruction given to the Tsistsistas [Cheyenne]: "The Nation shall be strong so long as the hearts of the women are not on the ground." Harjo says it "provides direction for a profound way to be in the world" and she hopes "all who need it may be heartened and strengthened by it."

Because she was instructed that the world's balance depends on confident, strong, goal-oriented women, she says, "It's my job to be optimistic that collective wisdom and work will result in good for the people. Cross-generational thinking makes it possible and necessary to keep moving in a positive direc-

tion, even if the goal you envisioned isn't realized in your lifetime."

However, Harjo says, "It is most sweet, when you get to be a part of a mighty movement and see it to a clear demarcation point." In particular, she refers to helping achieve the passage of the federal acts that affirmed American Indians' religious freedom, established the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., and required federally funded institutions and agencies to return cultural items and human remains to descendants or appropriate tribal representatives. These laws passed in 1978, 1989 and 1990, respectively.

"That's several lifetimes from when my mother and I first visited the [Museum of the American Indian] in New York," says Harjo. Her journey of many years of "labors and magic" to achieve these goals began on her mother's birthday in 1965, a month after Harjo

Mateo Romero (Cochiti), "child of time," 2011 (responding to the 1965 poem by Suzan Shown Harjo). Acrylic on canvas, 30" x 24." The Harjo Family Collection, Courtesy of Mateo Romero and the MoCNA Collection.

turned 20 and four days after her first child was born. They were horrified to see that the museum was "a place of profanity and sacrilege." On view were human remains and sacred objects, such as a mummy, shrunken heads, beaded baby cord pouches, Haudenosaunee False Face masks and medicine bags. They saw a Cheyenne girl's buckskin dress, with "dead rust patterns surrounding a bullet hole where her belly had been," as Harjo wrote over the next few days in her poem, "child of time."

Upon leaving the museum, her mother said, "Those things do not belong there! You have to do something," Harjo admitted that she "had no idea where to start." She dreamt about a young, healthy Cheyenne girl wearing a new buckskin dress. She and her parents talked to Cheyenne ceremonial men about her dream, and her promise to return the girl's spirit and claim her name. The spiritual leaders said that many people had been having "dreams and visions and unexplained occurrences" that might be related. "Everyone prayed about it and, after ceremonies in 1966, they decided to have four days of talks after ceremonies at Bear Butte [South Dakota] in June 1967."

Harjo was inspired to lead campaigns that helped achieve the passage and implementation of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. She was also part of the group that first envisioned the National Museum of the American Indian in 1967, and one of the young people sent out to build a coalition to see that it came to fruition.

In 1984, in her capacity as executive director of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and as president of The Morning Star Institute, she initiated talks with the Smithsonian Institution's new secretary, Robert McCormick Adams. As a Trustee of the Museum of the American Indian (MAI), NMAI's predecessor museum collection, she was authorized to conduct certain negotiations for MAI, as well as for NCAI and Morning Star. She says Adams was the "first Smithsonian secretary to meet with our people since the initial one, Joseph Henry."

Adams, Harjo and others examined ways to improve the Smithsonian's care, treatment and display of Native objects, to respect and return Native human remains and sensitive materials and to develop relationships with

Native peoples and cultural institutions. Their agreements formed the basis of the 1989 law that established the NMAI and contained the historic repatriation provision covering all Smithsonian collections.

"Some in the Institution did not like that Adams was meeting, negotiating and reaching agreement with us," says Harjo. "What we did—thousands of us collectively, in Indian Country, in the media, in museum world and academe, on the Hill, and in the courts and agencies—was to revolutionize museology, gain space on the National Mall, and do something people said cannot be done: legislate respect by changing the lexicon of disrespect and by removing impediments to Native peoples being in the room."

Even after implementation of the acts she worked so hard to see pass, "the work began for everyone else, and started anew for some of us," says Harjo. "We set in motion the amazing possibilities in [these] dynamic laws. The ceremonial, artistic, everyday impact of the return of our relatives, living beings and cultural objects from holding repositories is magnified exponentially throughout most Native Nations." Harjo says these "legal blueprints" mandated "consultation with elders on everything" and "three NMAI facilities in three cities to build, open and fill with life, in order to honor our ancestors and the present generations, and to provide for our grandchildren's children and beyond."

The Cheyenne girl appeared in Harjo's dreams for nearly a quarter century. "She would show up every so often, an uplifting, friendly presence," says Harjo, "never saying anything else, and just doing ordinary things, like standing in the tall buffalo grass or sitting on a tree limb." The girl's appearances became a gentle motivating force while Harjo worked to reform museum policies. "I guess she stopped dropping in on my dreams because she was satisfied that I hadn't forgotten her," says Harjo. "I miss her and cherish her memory."

The title of the symposium to be held September 20 at NMAI in Washington, D.C., and the volume to follow, "A Promise Kept: The Inspiring Life and Works of Suzan Shown Harjo," is inspired by Harjo's dream and poem. ❀

Patsy Phillips (Cherokee Nation) is director of the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. To learn more about the symposium, visit AmericanIndian.si.edu.



PHOTO BY ERIC WIMMER

child of time

*a child of time, naked and weeping
walked one night in my dreamless sleep
she came to claim my word of honor
the promise she heard me make to keep
her voice when she spoke
was the sound of the wind
first howling, then moaning and sighing
the sound of a storm without end*

*she knew of my early mourning visit
to the museum of indian dead
where i had stared at her small torn gown
of leather and beads, all stained with red
blood should mean something more than this
blood flows and lives and gives again
but here, only dead rust patterns surrounding
a bullet hole where her belly had been*

*to most it was merely a dress on display
placed next to the ancient Navajo loom
lighted and indexed for all the curious
patrons of this bone-chilling public tomb
this dress of dried blood does not belong here
it should be saged and secretly burned
and now, with the dawn, her voice on the wind
"I'll walk this way 'til my spirit's returned."*

*hush, now, my pretty, there's work to be done
sleep on the earth, i'll give your heart ease
your name will be claimed, now quiet the storm
and come to me next as a soft, gentle breeze*

—SUZAN SHOWN HARJO, 1965



STRETCHING

**A NEW NMAI EXHIBITION
CHRONICLES HOW
EIGHT DECADES OF
NATIVE ARTISTS BROKE
BOUNDARIES IMPOSED
ON INDIAN ART**

BY JOHN F. ROSS

Even amidst New York City's constant parade of superb fine-art shows, the National Museum of the American Indian's exhibition, "Stretching the Canvas," stands out, not just for the beauty of the paintings on display but for the story they tell. Upon entering the first gallery, one will encounter a series of mammoth paintings that pulse and mesmerize, offering up a rich buffet of color, shape and texture. Here's Jaune Quick-to-See Smith's 10-foot-long painting

of a crowded canoe, then James Lavadour's 15 separate landscapes arranged like a huge quilt, and yet another, George Morrison's grainy white abstraction with a faint horizon line that gives the piece gravity—each painting clamoring for attention.

These and the other 29 artists whose art—all from NMAI's collection—will be featured in this exhibition are among the most accomplished Indian painters of the 20th and 21st centuries. "For American Indian artists in the 20th century, the act of painting and



THE CANVAS

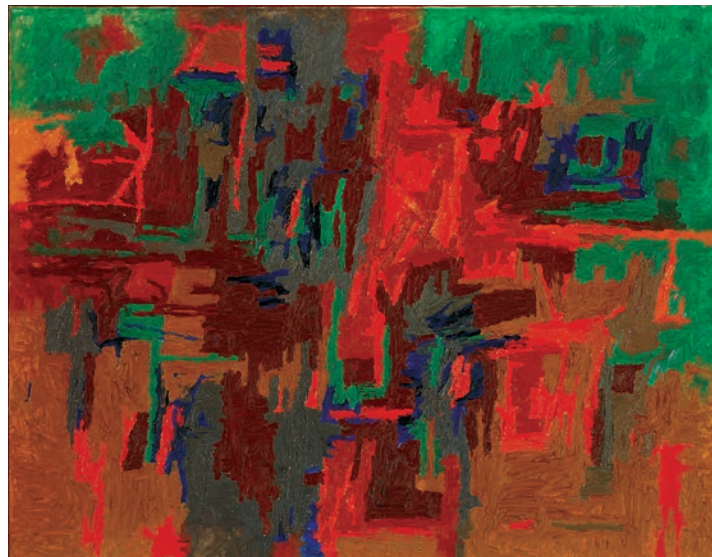
stretching a canvas was a revolutionary act,” says lead curator David Penney. For much of the 20th century, most art historians, philanthropists, museum curators, art patrons and gallery owners dismissed Indian art as folk art or merely decorative and did not consider it to be among the pantheon of fine arts. Opening in November 2019 and running through fall 2021, “Stretching the Canvas” reveals how American Indian artists have challenged these expectations during the past eight decades, bursting through artificial boundaries and

actively challenging long-entrenched ideas about what Indian art should look like. In doing so, they opened up exciting new worlds of creative expression.

“Each of the artists in this exhibition has had to contend with and overcome numerous unspoken restrictions and expectations,” says curator Rebecca Trautmann, one of the five NMAI curators who worked on the exhibit. The artists’ often difficult journeys toward defining their own styles have lent their work urgency and freshness.

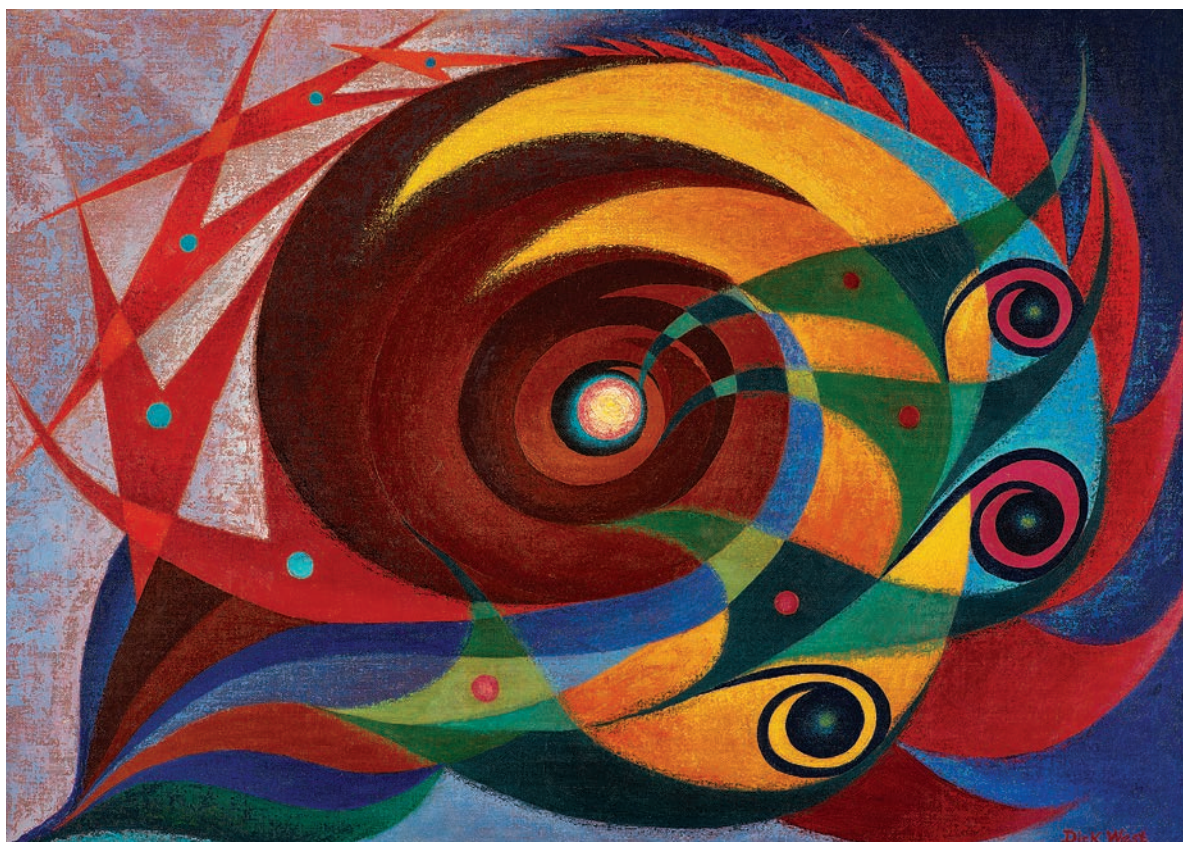
Above: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith’s 3-by-10-foot “Trade Canoe: Adrift” (2015) depicts Syrian refugees crammed into a boat while suns beat down upon them, a potent commentary on the displacement of Indigenous peoples worldwide. The masks, fish and water allude to the struggle of Washington State’s Duwamish people for federal recognition, which would assure their fishing rights.

Acrylic on canvas, 40" x 120" (26/9791).



Above: Potawatomi artist and dancer Woody Crumbo painted "Three Eagle Dancers" (circa 1935) after touring U.S. reservations to study ceremonial dancing. Crumbo's illustrator style reflected the then-contemporary notions of Indian art that emerged from government-run art schools.

Gouache on paper, 19.8" x 25.9", gift of Charles De Young Elkus and Ruth Elkus (23/1261).



Top right: Ojibwe artist George Morrison embraced expressionism while studying art in New York in the 1940s, going on to create such seminal paintings as "Abstract Painting No. 2" (1950).

Acrylic and oil on canvas, 39.9" x 50.1", gift of Darlene Guillaume Asmus and Jacquelyn Guillaume Wesolosky (26/5467).

Above: Although Dick West was initially known for his flat-style paintings depicting traditional Cheyenne ceremonies, he began experimenting with other art trends, including abstract painting as shown in his "Spatial Whorl" (circa 1950).

Oil on canvas, 20" x 28", gift of Dwight D. Saunders (26/5102).



Above: America Meredith's (Swedish-Cherokee) 2005 painting "Benediction: John Fire Lame Deer" playfully employs pop-culture figures to poke fun at the solemnity with which Indians have often been portrayed in popular culture.

Acrylic on Masonite, 31.5" x 45.2", (26/8631).

Left: In her 1993 painting "Fortune," Maidu artist Judith Lowry takes a humorous but sharp slap at colonialism by portraying the Virgin Mary and a Mayan goddess reading their futures from fortune cookies.

Acrylic on canvas, 71.6" x 59.2", gift of R.E. Mansfield (26/4322).



The earliest pieces in the exhibition date from the 1930s through the 1950s. Most of the artists who created them trained at the Santa Fe Indian School and Bacone College in Oklahoma—the first formal educational opportunities for many Native painters. Teachers and federal officials determined that a "traditional," recognizable Indian art style could turn into an economic strategy that could help struggling Indian communities. Deriving a style from the kiva paintings and Plains battle scenes painted on buffalo hides, the government school curricula pushed their Indian students to paint in flat, narrative styles. Teachers such as Dorothy Dunn at the Santa Fe school emphasized the portrayal of ceremony and Native dress, all

"EACH OF THE ARTISTS IN THIS EXHIBITION HAS HAD TO CONTEND WITH AND OVERCOME NUMEROUS UNSPOKEN RESTRICTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS."

—Curator Rebecca Trautmann

intended to present the Indian artist's culture to the dominant white culture. Potawatomi artist Woody Crumbo's painting, "Three Eagle Dancers," is one of the works in the exhibition that epitomizes this early style, eschewing such techniques as perspective, color shading and background.

American Indian art and the avant-garde did not begin to come together until after World War II. The Philbrook Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma, began sponsoring an annual Indian art show during the 1940s. The show's jurors famously rejected a painting by Yanktonai Dakota Oscar Howe in the late 1950s for not being Indian enough. For Howe, it begged the question: What was Indian art? "I only hope the Art World will not be one more contributor to holding us in chains," he wrote in a letter to the jurors.

Ojibwe artist George Morrison also had no interest in being pigeonholed as an Indian painter. In the 1940s, he left Minnesota to study at the Art Students League in New York City, where he became deeply influenced by Abstract Expressionism and exhibited with such well-known avant-garde artists as Franz Kline and Willem de Kooning. Morrison's abstract canvases contained no visible elements of traditional Indian art. The beauty of his work—as well as how boldly he charted his own path as an artist while still maintaining his connection to his culture and geography—would inspire a new generation of Indian painters.

The authors of NMAI's "Native Universe: Voices of Indian America" tell how in the 1970s Luiseño artist Fritz Scholder would also challenge convention by embracing pop art and abstract expressionism to paint the Indian "real, not red." He would become an influential member of the New American Indian Art movement. The "Stretching the Canvas" exhibition features three of Scholder's works, including "Indian and Rhinoceros." The animal represents the lumbering U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs that cannot help but destroy everything in its path.

Such ironic statements began to creep more and more onto Indian canvases in the latter part of the 20th century, becoming a powerful tool for artists to challenge the dominant culture's stereotypes about Indians. For example, in "Fortune," the Maidu painter Judith Lowry depicts a Mayan goddess seated with the Madonna. Deeply influenced by early Renaissance painters and artists from California, Lowry uses allegory to challenge stereotypical representations of Native peoples and issues of consumerism and religion in contemporary life.

Abstract compositions also served as effective tools for Indian artists to escape the binding strictures of "traditional" Indian art. Dick West (Southern Cheyenne) became famous for his illustrator-style images of Cheyenne ceremony and mythic stories. Yet for his 1950 Masters of Fine Art degree at the University of Oklahoma, West submitted his colorful, dynamic "Spatial Whorl" along with five other paintings inspired by non-Indian art trends, including modernist abstraction.

Late modernism and postmodernism styles of the 1960s and 1970s influenced Cherokee painter Kay WalkingStick. Her "New Mexico Desert" features a soft desert landscape overlaid with Navajo textile patterns, which calls out for a new way of looking at the landscape—and a reassertion of the claim of Native peoples to the land. In 1995, WalkingStick became the first American Indian to be included in H.R. Janson's seminal art history survey, "History of Art."

The newest canvas in the show is "Trade Canoe: Adrift," which Jaune Quick-to-See Smith painted in 2015. The 3-by-10-foot canvas depicts an overloaded canoe, filled with Syrian refugees floating under the blistering heat of several suns. The Salish/Cree/Shoshone artist addresses the issues of displaced peoples worldwide through the lens of the Indian canoe, which brought important trade goods and cultural innovations but also disease and weaponry. The masks, fish and water allude to the struggles by the Duwamish people of Wash-



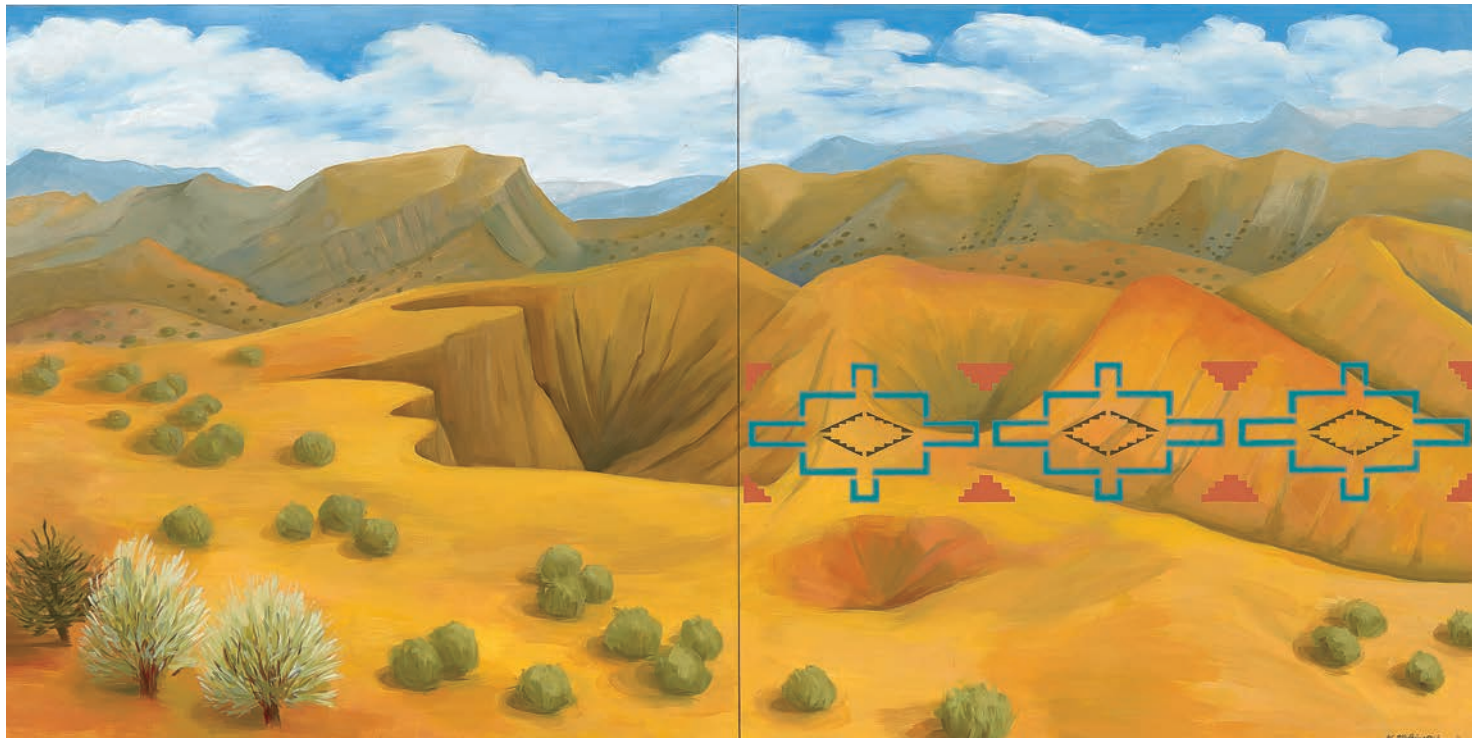
Above: Walla Walla artist James Lavadour assembled 15 separate paintings into his 6-by-13-foot "Blanket" (2005), echoing geological processes that create landscape by scraping, pouring and dripping paint across the panels.

Oil on board, 75" x 155.9" (26/6079).

ington State to gain federal recognition, which would assure their community's fishing rights.

Smith and these later painters have certainly shed previous notions of what an Indian painting must look like. No uniform visual cues or styles define their work today. If any one theme runs through these works, says Penney, it is that they all are influenced by their life experiences as Indians. "That makes them accountable to their communities," he says. However, the unique and often vibrant approach that each artist decided to take to do so is what makes this exhibition such a delightful and provocative journey through time. ✱

Author and journalist John F. Ross's most recent book is "The Promise of the Grand Canyon: John Wesley Powell's Perilous Journey and His Vision of the American West."



Above: Cherokee painter Kay WalkingStick’s “New Mexico Desert” (2011) symbolically reclaims the land taken away from Indigenous people by overlaying Navajo textile patterns over a desertscape. Oil on wood panel, 39.9" x 79.9" (26/9250).



EXHIBITIONS + EVENTS CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2019

SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN IN NEW YORK CITY

NYC EXHIBITIONS



Harry Fonseca's "Dance Break" from "Stretching the Canvas."

STRETCHING THE CANVAS:
EIGHT DECADES OF
NATIVE PAINTING
OPENING NOVEMBER 16, 2019

TAÍNO: NATIVE HERITAGE AND
IDENTITY IN THE CARIBBEAN
CLOSING NOVEMBER 12, 2019

JEFFREY VEREGGE:
OF GODS AND HEROES
CLOSING JANUARY 5, 2020

ANCESTRAL CONNECTIONS
ONGOING

INFINITY OF NATIONS:
ART AND HISTORY IN THE
COLLECTIONS OF THE
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE
AMERICAN INDIAN
ONGOING



Irka Mateo

TAÍNO DANCE PARTY Saturday, September 14 6 p.m.–8 p.m.

Kick off National Hispanic Heritage Month and celebrate Taíno culture at a performance by award-winning singer-songwriter Irka Mateo. New York City's own DJ Max "Drlaxos" Cueto will open and close the evening dance party.

Taíno: Native Heritage and Identity in the Caribbean is a collaboration of the National Museum of the American Indian and the Smithsonian Latino Center. This exhibition and related programming are made possible through the support of the Ralph Lauren Corp.

and INICIA of the Dominican Republic. Federal support is provided by the Latino Initiatives Pool and administered by the Smithsonian Latino Center.

Taíno: herencia e identidad indígena en el Caribe es una colaboración entre el Museo Nacional del Indígena Americano y el Centro Latino Smithsonian. La exposición y su programación han sido patrocinados con la generosidad de la Corporación Ralph Lauren e INICIA de la República Dominicana. Apoyo federal ha sido provisto por el Fondo de Iniciativas Latino, administrado por el Centro Latino Smithsonian.



Day of the Dead/Día de Los Muertos

**SPECIAL SCREENING IN HONOR OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY:
"DAK'TOKÁ TAÍNO"/"I AM TAÍNO"**
(13 minutes)

Directed by Alba Enid Garcia
(Taíno descent)

Monday, October 14

11 a.m.–3 p.m. (Hourly screenings)

In this 2018 live-action puppet film, a grandmother talks with her granddaughter about their Taíno heritage in post-Hurricane Maria Puerto Rico. A discussion with director Alba Enid Garcia follows each screening.

ART DEMONSTRATIONS BY IAN KUALI'I

Thursday, October 17

1 p.m.–4 p.m. and 5 p.m.–7 p.m.

Friday, October 18 and

Saturday, October 19

10 a.m.–noon and 1 p.m.–4 p.m.

Ian Kuali'i (Native Hawaiian/Apache ancestry) combines large-scale cut paper, land art and murals with traditional Hawaiian arts to create a hybrid of traditional and contemporary works.

**DAY OF THE DEAD ALTAR TALKS/
CHARLAS SOBRE LA OFRENDA DEL DÍA
DE LOS MUERTOS**

**Wednesday, October 30–Friday,
November 1**

1 p.m.

Join NMAI Cultural Interpreter Carrie Gonzalez as she discusses the significance of the Día de los Muertos altar.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Ian Kuali'i (Native Hawaiian/Apache ancestry)

**DAY OF THE DEAD/
DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS**

Saturday, November 2

11 a.m.–5 p.m.

Join in the Museum's annual celebration with performances by the Aztec group Cetiliztli Nauhcampa, a community "ofrenda" (altar) and hands-on activities for all ages.



PHOTO BY KERRY TASKER

NATIVE SOUNDS DOWNTOWN

Featuring Pamyua

Saturday, November 9

2 p.m.

Brothers Stephen and Phillip Blanchett (Yup'ik and African American descent) formed Pamyua in 1995 with traditional Yup'ik dancer and culture bearer Ossie Kairaiuak joining a year later. The group has shared its culture and unique blend of traditional songs with contemporary style across North America and Europe.



EXHIBITIONS + EVENTS CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2019

SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN ON THE NATIONAL MALL IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. EXHIBITIONS

OUR UNIVERSES:
TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE
SHAPING OUR WORLD
ONGOING

AS WE GROW: TRADITIONS,
TOYS AND GAMES

WINDOW ON COLLECTIONS:
MANY HANDS, MANY VOICES

RETURN TO A NATIVE PLACE:
ALCONQUIAN PEOPLES OF
THE CHESAPEAKE

AMERICANS
ONGOING

SECTION 14: THE OTHER PALM
SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
THROUGH DECEMBER 2019

THE GREAT INKA ROAD:
ENGINEERING AN EMPIRE
THROUGH JUNE 2020

NATION TO NATION: TREATIES
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES
AND AMERICAN INDIAN NATIONS
THROUGH DECEMBER 2021

CREATING TRADITION:
INNOVATION AND CHANGE
IN AMERICAN INDIAN ART
ONGOING

This exhibition at the Epcot American Heritage Gallery at Walt Disney World Resort in Florida is made possible through the collaboration of the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture (MIAC) in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and the National Museum of the American Indian.



HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH CONCERT
Featuring New Inca Son
Saturday, September 14
2 p.m.

Andean folklore comes alive through the award-winning music of New Inca Son, who will perform with scissor dancers Danzante Maldicion and Supay Wayra.



Dakota cedar
flute artist
Bryan Akipa

LAKOTA MUSIC PROJECT
With the South Dakota Symphony
Chamber Group
Saturday, October 19
2 p.m.

A flagship project of the Orchestra's community engagement with the Lakota people of Pine Ridge Reservation. Featuring performances by Lakota artists Emmanuel Black Bear and Chris Eagle Hawk, with Dakota cedar flute artist Bryan Akipa.

This program is supported by the Smithsonian's Year of Music Project.



FILM SCREENING: "The Warrior Tradition" (60 minutes) Lawrence Hott
Tuesday, October 29
6:30 p.m.

"The Warrior Tradition" tells the inspiring and largely untold story of American Indians in the U.S. military. This 2019 film is a production of WNED-TV, Buffalo/Toronto and Florentine Films/Hott Productions, Inc.

**DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS /
DAY OF THE DEAD AFTER HOURS**
Friday, November 1
6:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m.

Dance to the music of mariachis featuring the all-female Latin Grammy Award-winning group Flor de Toloache. Adorn an "ofrenda" (altar) with paper marigolds and create crafts for families and adults. Enjoy food and drinks from the Mitsitam Cafe and local restaurants while visiting the Museum's galleries. Visit AmericanIndian.si.edu for ticket information.



PHOTO BY KERRY TASKER

Pamyua



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS

Right to left: Ofelia Esparza (Purépecha) and her daughter Rosanna Esparza Ahrens.

DAY OF THE DEAD/DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

Saturday, November 2 and

Sunday, November 3

10 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Celebrate Día de Los Muertos with an ofrenda created by National Heritage Fellow Ofelia Esparza (Purépecha) and her daughter Rosanna Esparza Ahrens. Participate in an interactive mural featuring the iconic Day of the Dead skeleton La Calavera Catrina with artist Lilia Ramirez (Nahua) and create paper marigolds in honor of your loved ones.

Federal support for this program is provided by the Latino Initiatives Pool and administered by the Smithsonian Latino Center.

RASMUSON THEATER CELEBRATION

Featuring Pamyua

Thursday, November 7

6:30 p.m.

Brothers Stephen and Phillip Blanchett (Yup'ik and African American descent) formed the group Pamyua in 1995 with traditional Yup'ik dancer and culture bearer Ossie Kairaiuak joining a year later. The group has shared its culture and unique blend of traditional songs with contemporary style across North America and Europe.

BLACKFEET NATION TRIBAL FESTIVAL

Saturday, November 16 and

Sunday, November 17

10 a.m.–5 p.m.

The Blackfeet Nation of Montana will present a tribal festival featuring artists, performers, historians and culture bearers.

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE DAY

Friday, November 29

10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Observed the day after Thanksgiving, this civil holiday celebration at the Museum will feature performances by the Diné Tah Navajo Dancers and hands-on activities for all ages.

NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS MEMORIAL PROGRAMMING

Saturday, September 21

11 a.m.: Drum Group

The Cheyenne and Arapaho Singers present a song and hand-drum performance.

12 p.m.: "Patriot Nations: American Indians in the United States Armed Forces" Exhibition Talk with NMAI Curator Herman Viola

1 p.m.: "Americans" Exhibition Tour with Curators Cécile R. Ganteaume and Paul Chaat Smith

2 p.m.: Drum Group



Harvey Pratt

PHOTO BY NEIL CHAPMAN, COURTESY OF HARVEY PRATT

2:30 p.m.: In Conversation with Harvey Pratt

Museum Director Kevin Gover will lead a conversation with National Native American Veterans Memorial designer Harvey Pratt (Cheyenne/Arapaho) about the significance of the memorial and his vision for the design.

10 a.m.–5 p.m.: Veterans Hospitality Suite, Patrons Lounge, Level 4

Veterans and their families are welcome to visit the Patrons Lounge for a light snack and beverage.

10 a.m.–5 p.m.: imagiNATIONS Activity Center

Hands-on art for children.

10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.;

1:30 p.m.–4:00 p.m.: Potomac Atrium Honoring American Heroes: View the Memorial Design.



Native Americans have a long tradition of service in the U.S. Armed Forces. In recent history, they have served in higher numbers per capita than any other population group. Until now, no national landmark in Washington, D.C., has honored the exceptional contributions of American Indian, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian veterans.

The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian will honor Native American patriotism by dedicating the National Native American Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., on Veterans Day 2020. The museum extends its gratitude and thanks to the following donors who have significantly supported this project.



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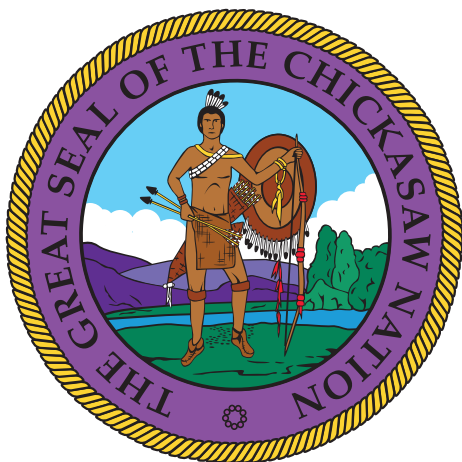
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Daily **STOMP DANCE** demonstrations captivate visitors with traditional song and camaraderie.

SUMMER STOMP DANCE

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It's for following butterflies, dining outdoors
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Do more than learn our history this
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