

Morning Star Designs by Leona Antoine

cultural affiliation Sičanġu Laġoġa (Rosebud Sioux Tribe)
born 1979, Rosebud, South Dakota, United States
Šunġa Wakaġ Oyaġe Wiġayuoinihaġpi (Honoring the Horse Nation), 2021
wool trade cloth from Teton Tradecloth, cloth designed by Lauren Good Day, buckskin, metal
Courtesy of Marlies White Hat

Uġġi Nġteheġi Haġska (Long Skirt - Grandma), 2024

kokum fabric, satin ribbon, elastic
Courtesy of Marlies White Hat

This outfit demonstrates how a single work of art connects with each theme in *Native Fashion*. Leona Antoine made the jacket as a gift for her mother (Relations). It features fabric designed by Native artist Lauren Good Day and wool produced by Teton Trade Cloth, which is owned and operated by the Delaware Tribe of Indians (Representation). The skirt is made of kokum-printed fabric. Kokum means “grandmother” in the Cree language, but the floral patterns can be traced back to trade between First Nations peoples and Ukrainian settlers in Canada in the late 1800s (Resilience). Kokum scarves have been incorporated into regalia and recently have symbolized solidarity with Ukraine (Resistance).

Cara Romero

cultural affiliation enrolled citizen of the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe
born 1977, Inglewood, California, United States
Naomi, 2018
inkjet print
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, Gift of Steven and Keely Rosenberg, 2018.27

This photograph is part of Cara Romero’s *First American Girl* series, referencing American Girl dolls. In contrast to generic and sometimes stereotypical Native American dolls, the model stands with items that accurately represent her tribe’s culture.

“If you were to look at the entire series you would see how regalia differs from bioregion, to bioregion, using the cultural precious items from their local areas to create an adornment for dance and ceremony.”—Cara Romero

Mattel, Inc

founded 1945, Los Angeles, California, United States
Principal Chief Wilma Mankiller Barbie, 2023
plastic, polyester
Private collection

In 2018, Mattel created the Barbie Inspiring Women Series. They add notable women to the collection each year. For Native American Heritage month in November 2023, Mattel released the Wilma Mankiller Barbie. Mankiller was the first woman to serve as Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation. The doll received mixed reviews: Mattel was praised for honoring an influential Indian woman but criticized for not consulting Mankiller’s family or accurately portraying her skin tone or Cherokee culture.

Comparing Mattel’s mass-produced Native American Barbies with the hand-crafted dolls by Rhonda Holy Bear, it is clear which version accurately depicts Native American culture and traditions. However, Holy Bear’s dolls are not meant to be children’s toys. Affordable dolls that represent various cultures can be exciting when created in collaboration with people from those cultures. But American Indians, like any group, are not monolithic, and have varying opinions about their representation in popular culture.

1.

Mattel, Inc

founded 1945, Los Angeles, California, United States
First Edition Native American Barbie, 1992
plastic, polyester
Private collection

2.

Rhonda Holy Bear

cultural affiliation Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe (enrolled citizen)
born 1959, Cheyenne River Reservation, South Dakota, United States
Little Big Horn War Honor Dress, 1987
pine wood, buckskin, cotton, wool, leather, shell, paint, metal, beads, hair, chicken feathers, fur, wire, beading, quillwork, braiding, carving, dyeing
Gift of the Frank C. Sabatini Family, 2022.0005

3.

Mattel, Inc

founded 1945, Los Angeles, California, United States
Second Edition Native American Barbie, 1993
plastic, polyester, feathers
Private collection

4.

Rhonda Holy Bear

cultural affiliation Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe (enrolled citizen)
born 1959, Cheyenne River Reservation, South Dakota, United States
Messengers, 1985
buckskin, cotton, leather, nickel silver, paint, hair, chicken feathers, beading, braiding, dyeing
Gift of the Frank C. Sabatini Family, 2022.0007

5.

Mattel, Inc

founded 1945, Los Angeles, California, United States
Third Edition Native American Barbie, 1994
plastic, polyester
Private collection

6.

Rhonda Holy Bear

cultural affiliation Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe (enrolled citizen)
born 1959, Cheyenne River Reservation, South Dakota, United States
Soaring Plains Figure, 1994
buckskin, pine wood, paint, hair, leather, beads, cotton, nickel silver, beading, carving, dyeing
Gift of the Frank C. Sabatini Family, 2022.0006

+ + +

Hulleah J. L. Tsinhnahjinnie

cultural affiliations Taskigi, Diné (Navajo)
born 1954, Phoenix, Arizona, United States
Wilma Mankiller (Cherokee) author, activist, former Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, 1996
from *The Native American and Hawaiian Women of Hope Series*
gelatin silver print, hand coloring, printed 1997
Museum purchase: Peter T. Bohan Art Acquisition Fund, 2002.0103.07

In this portrait, former Cherokee Principal Chief Wilma Mankiller wears turtle shell rattles. These rattles are worn by women during the Cherokee Stomp Dance, a ceremonial dance symbolizing community, healing, and connection to the earth. Cherokee people still practice this communal tradition today as a sign of spirituality and unity.

+ + +

Ryan RedCorn

cultural affiliation ᏍᏏᏍᏏ (Osage)
born 1979, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, United States
Portrait of Portlyn Harjo, Creek/Seminole, 2019
dye diffusion thermal transfer printing, polyester cloth, silicone
Museum purchase: R. Charles and Mary Margaret Clevenger Art Acquisition Fund, 2019.0064.01

Ryan RedCorn allows the people he photographs to choose the location, outfit, pose, and general vibe of their portrait, giving them agency over their image and representation. In this graduation portrait, Portlyn Harjo playfully balances past and future as she steps out of her father's backyard wearing a traditional patchwork skirt and gorget while holding her favorite coffee mug. Her father, Sterlin Harjo, co-founded the comedy troupe the 1491s with RedCorn, and is also co-creator of the television show *Reservation Dogs*.

+ + +

Blue Feather

Creek patchwork dress, late 1970s
cotton, lace, polyester, elastic, quilting, appliqué
Collection of Haskell Cultural Center and Museum, Haskell Indian Nations University, Gift of Martha Houle (Creek)

Creek and Seminole patchwork features fabric pieced together to form intricate geometric patterns. It was developed in the late 19th century after tribes incorporated European materials and sewing techniques. Patchwork is a symbol of cultural identity for Creek and Seminole people and can also be found on jackets, aprons, and towels.

Sometimes, non-Native people avoid purchasing and wearing fashion sold by Native designers for fear of cultural appropriation. In general, supporting Indigenous designers is encouraged. Natives and non-Natives can buy and wear jewelry, accessories, and clothing made by Native people. The jingle chain accessories are an exception and should only be worn by Natives due to their sacred and spiritual nature. If you are unsure whether a non-Native person should buy or wear something created by an Indigenous person, ask them.

1.

Jodi Webster

cultural affiliations Ho-Chunk Nation and Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
born 1977, Wisconsin, United States
Skoden, 2023
sterling silver, engraving
Museum purchase: Barbara Benton Wescoe Fund, 2023.0107

2.

Lambert Homer (1917–1972)

cultural affiliation Zuñi
Dan Simplicio (1917–1969)
cultural affiliation Zuñi
tri-partite belt buckle, 1960
sterling silver, jet, coral, shell, turquoise
Gift from the Menninger Foundation, 2007.1482.a,b,c

3.

Eddie Tsalabutie (1925–1965)

cultural affiliation Zuñi
concho belt, mid 1900s–1965
sterling silver, jet, coral, shell, turquoise
Gift from the Menninger Foundation, 2007.1484

4.

Moth To The Flvme by Celina Julie Careaga

cultural affiliation Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community
born 1989, Phoenix, Arizona, United States
Layered Jingle Chain with Barbed Wire Charms and Sterling Silver Spikes, 2024
metal, sterling silver
Private collection

+ + +

1.
Rhonda Holy Bear

cultural affiliation Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
(enrolled citizen)

born 1959, Cheyenne River Reservation, South Dakota,
United States

Grass Dancer, 1988

cotton, wire, wool, metal, ribbon, buckskin, leather, rabbit
fur, badger fur, hair, string, porcupine quills, beads, paint,
nickel silver, wood, chicken feathers, pheasant feathers,
beading, braiding, dyeing, appliqué

Gift of the Frank C. Sabatini Family, 2022.0003

Rhonda Holy Bear's dolls replicate clothing and regalia worn
by Plains Indian tribes in exquisite detail. This grass dancer
crouches low to the ground, mimicking the movement of
waving grasses as they stomp it down, preparing the powwow
arena for dancing. Next to Holy Bear's Grass Dancer are full-
size armbands and a roach headdress.



Scan the code to watch Holy Bear speak about
her dolls' connection to culture, storytelling,
and powwow.

2.
Ada Bosin (1903–1980)

cultural affiliation Comanche

pair of beaded cuffs, late 1800s–1980

cloth, buckskin, beading

Gift of Ann and Britt Brown, Blackbear Bosin Collection,
2007.0486.a,b

3.
unrecorded Chaticks si Chaticks (Pawnee) artist

roach headdress, late 1800s–1928

porcupine hair, deer fur, cord, dyeing

William Bridges Thayer Memorial, 2007.0420

On view with permission from the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma

1.
Mrs. Lame Bull

cultural affiliation Cheyenne

pair of beaded moccasins, early 1900s–1919

buckskin, rawhide, beading

Gift of Forrest E. Jones, 2007.3751.a,b

2.
Rhonda Holy Bear

cultural affiliation Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
(enrolled citizen)

born 1959, Cheyenne River Reservation, South Dakota,
United States

Pretty Shield and Raven, 1990

pine wood, buckskin, leather, rawhide, paint, wool, cotton,
ribbon, clay, metal, horse hair, yarn, shell, string, wig hair,
beading, carving, dyeing, braiding

Gift of the Frank C. Sabatini Family, 2022.0002

“I often hear my grandmother’s words echoing through my
memories as I work. In a very real way, her stories live in
my figures. It is my purpose to make art that goes beyond
being aesthetically pleasing. It is of paramount importance
that my work act as a teaching tool, awakening the viewers’
curiosity by providing a connection to the past... It is my
sincere hope that, through my work, I may play a part in
helping to restore, revitalize, and ensure the continuum
of our Lakota, Plains culture.”—Rhonda Holy Bear

3.
unrecorded Chaticks si Chaticks (Pawnee) artist

pair of girl's leggings, late 1800s–1980

leather, beading

Gift of Ann and Britt Brown, Blackbear Bosin Collection,
2007.0435.a,b

On view with permission from the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma

1.
Rhonda Holy Bear

cultural affiliation Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
(enrolled citizen)

born 1959, Cheyenne River Reservation, South Dakota,
United States

Joe Kelly, 1990

pine wood, buckskin, wool, ribbon, paint, porcupine quills,
hair, metal, pheasant feathers, chicken feathers, angora
rabbit fur, pipestone, yarn, sequins, dentalium shells,
abalone shell, beading, quillwork, carving, dyeing

Gift of the Frank C. Sabatini Family, 2022.0004

2.
Kenneth Long Crow

cultural affiliation Sioux

pair of earrings, 1900s

buckskin, glass beads, metal

Gift of Forrest E. Jones, 2007.1728.a,b

3.
unrecorded Ka'igwu (Kiowa) artist

pair of beaded moccasins, late 1800s–1996

buckskin, rawhide, pigment, beading

Source unknown, 2007.3799.a,b

On view with permission from the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma

Tribes develop their own styles and inspiration, drawing
from their surroundings. These three bags depict animals
and plants that are significant to their tribal communities or
the maker. Visit the adjacent gallery to see a beaded bag
made by Jamie Okuma inspired by her love of horror films.

4.
unrecorded Ka'igwu (Kiowa) artist

bag with beaded flap, late 1800s–1950

buckskin, paper, cotton, beading

Gift from the estate of Gertrude W. Green, 2007.1970

On view with permission from the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma

5.
unrecorded Flathead artist

beaded bag with elk design, circa 1912

buckskin, cloth, beading, dyeing

Gift of Margaret E. Sharp, 2007.2032

On view with permission from the Confederated Salish &
Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation

6.
Mary Annette Clause

cultural affiliation Cayuga/Tuscarora

born 1958, Niagara Falls, New York, United States

velvet shoulder bag, 1993

velvet, cord, cloth, metal, beading, dyeing

Museum purchase: Gift of the Friends of the KUMA,
2007.2034

Emerging in the 1940s as a response to formal business wear, bolo ties are a marker of creativity and adaptability. The modern bolo tie was preceded by pendant necklaces and scarf slides and was popularized in old western films and advertisements. Bolos have developed into a tradition of their own as Native artists craft unique styles by drawing on culturally specific traditions, popular culture, and personal experiences.

1.
Marcus Amerman
cultural affiliation Choctaw
born 1959

Barack Obama bolo tie with beaded tips, 2009
leather, beading
Collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas

2.
Bernard Homer
cultural affiliation Zuñi
bolo tie, late 1800s–1964
sterling silver, turquoise, leather, dyeing, braiding, incising
Gift from the Menninger Foundation, 2007.1466

3.
Brian Yatsattie
cultural affiliation Zuni Pueblo
born 1971
Bat Bolo, 2018
Pennsylvania Jet, sterling silver, turquoise, leather, braiding
Collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas, Acquired with funds provided by the Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Art Acquisition Endowment at the JCCC Foundation

4.
Wolf Robe Hunt (1905–1977)
cultural affiliation Acoma
born Acoma Pueblo, New Mexico, United States;
died Tulsa, Oklahoma, United States
bolo tie, 1900s
silver, turquoise, leather, braiding, stamping
Gift of Forrest E. Jones, 2007.1469


A TiPi Makers Daughter by Claudia Tyner Little Axe
cultural affiliations Seneca-Cayuga, Absentee Shawnee, Mvskoke
born 1972, Tulsa, Oklahoma, United States
ᏍᏚᏚᏚ ᏊᏊᏗ ᏍᏚᏚ ᏍᏚᏚ (Osage Lady Singer), 2023
brocade
Courtesy of the artist

Nyi K'omi, 2019
buckskin, beading
Courtesy of the artist

necklace
dentalium shell, rhinestone, metal, buckskin, beading
Courtesy of the artist

belt with conchos, 2023
leather, brass, metal
Courtesy of the artist

This dress was made for an Osage singer who wore it to perform “Wahzhazhe (A Song For My People)” from Martin Scorsese’s *Killers of the Flower Moon* (2023) at the 2024 Academy Awards. *Killers of the Flower Moon* received 10 Oscar nominations including Best Picture, Best Original Score, and Best Original Song. The movie, based on the book by David Grann, describes how wealthy Osage citizens were murdered for their headrights to oil-rich land during the 1910s–1930s.

 Scan the code to watch Osage singers perform “Wahzhazhe” at the Oscars.

Ryan RedCorn
cultural affiliation ᏍᏚᏚᏚ (Osage)
born 1979, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, United States
Uncle Mog (Herman Mongrain Lookout), 2019
dye diffusion thermal transfer printing, polyester cloth, silicone
Collection of Alex RedCorn

Herman Mongrain Lookout is an Osage language master teacher and founder of the Osage Language Department. He is the primary developer of the Osage writing system and a major contributor to the encoding project that made the ᏍᏚᏚᏚ (Osage) language accessible across digital platforms. He received an honorary degree from Kansas State University in 2021 for his achievements and advocacy for language preservation and revitalization. Lookout is being honored with a blanket in this portrait taken by Ryan RedCorn, who also directed a short documentary about Lookout.



Scan the code to watch RedCorn’s 8-minute documentary about Herman Mongrain Lookout.

Diego Romero, artist
cultural affiliation Kotyit (Cochiti)
born 1964, Berkeley, California, United States
Landfall Press, printer and publisher
(active 2004–present)
Cara, 2018
color lithograph, gold leaf
Museum purchase: Peter T. Bohan Art Acquisition Fund, 2018.0059

Diego Romero portrays his wife, Cara Romero, as Wonder Woman in this print, fusing pop culture with traditional Cochiti artistic motifs. Drawing inspiration from classical Mimbres pottery and comic books, he merges the historic and contemporary to tell personal and cultural stories. This work celebrates his wife’s strength and resilience, and aims to ensure that the narratives of his people resonate with contemporary audiences and future generations.



Scan the code to see another example of Diego Romero’s work from our collection.

Molly Murphy Adams
cultural affiliation Oglala Lakota descendant
born 1977, Great Falls, Montana, United States
Market Imperialism, 2004
from *Native Perspectives on the Trail: A Contemporary American Indian Art Portfolio*
linocut, hand coloring
Museum purchase: Peter T. Bohan Art Acquisition Fund, 2005.0082.10

Fashion brands and large corporations use Native American names, imagery, and designs on their products without consulting Indigenous tribes or people. When designs are stolen or used inappropriately, it is called cultural appropriation. Here, Molly Murphy Adams reverses the power dynamic and appropriates corporate logos including Pepsi, Coca-Cola, Nike, and Tommy Hilfiger, integrating them into her artwork that references tribal patterns like those painted on parfleche envelopes made of rawhide.

Diego Romero, artist

cultural affiliation Kotyit (Cochiti)

born 1964, Berkeley, California, United States

Black Rock Editions, LLC, printer and publisher,
founded 2019

Pueb Fiction, 2020

color lithograph

Museum purchase: Peter T. Bohan Art Acquisition Fund,
2020.0047

Artist Diego Romero uses “pop-pueb-appropriation” and “pueblofication” to describe his practice of Indigenizing pop culture references. Here he modifies the iconic image of Uma Thurman’s character Mia Wallace from the film *Pulp Fiction* (1994) to depict her wearing traditional Cochiti July 14 Feast Day regalia and reading a book titled Cochiti. Although displaying actual ceremonial headpieces in museums can be controversial, Native advisors on this exhibition deemed this contemporary representation appropriate. *Pueb Fiction* exemplifies how Native imagery can be used respectfully when created by a Native artist from that community.

Covid-19 disproportionately affected Natives due to structural inequalities like access to healthcare. According to one CDC study, American Indians and Alaska Natives experienced Covid-19 at a rate 3.5 times higher than the white population. In the face of this increased risk, many Native artists explored ways to communicate physical and cultural resilience. These protective masks reflect the artists’ communities through style, materials, and symbolism while conveying community care as a collective value.

1.

Isabella Falashoka

cultural affiliation Chickasaw

born 1964

Yunush Slays the Virus, 2020

wool felt, Czech seed beads, tin cones, silver bird pendant, glass drops, French silver sequins, electrical tape, Nymo thread, upholstery thread, ribbon, horse hair, fur, brass wire
Collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art,
Johnson County Community College, Overland Park,
Kansas

2.

Roberta Iyua

cultural affiliation Diné (Navajo)

born 1977, Shiprock, New Mexico, United States

Protecting Unity with Hope, 2020

seed beads, Pellon, polyester, cotton, buckskin
Collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art,
Johnson County Community College, Overland Park,
Kansas

3.

Angela Swedberg

cultural affiliation American, tribally certified Indian Artisan

born 1962, Oregon, United States

Stealthy Defense, 2020

smoked brain-tanned deer hide, India ink, 13/0 Czech Charlotte cut beads, twenty-four-carat gold plated Charlotte cut beads, antique Czech glass nailhead spots, silk ribbon
Collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art,
Johnson County Community College, Overland Park,
Kansas

4.

Lily Hope

cultural affiliation Tlingit

born 1983, Juneau, Alaska, United States

Chilkat Protector, 2020

merino wool, ermine tails, tin cones, cedar bark
Collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art,
Johnson County Community College, Overland Park,
Kansas

Tokeya Waci U Richardson

cultural affiliations Oglala Lakota and Haliwa-Saponi

born Manhattan, New York, United States

The Lance and Shield Buffalo Robe, 2022

brain-tanned buffalo hide, acrylic

Courtesy of the artist

This buffalo robe depicts the “Lance and Shield” dance, which historically honored a warrior by reenacting feats in battle. Today, a contemporary version of this dance is performed at powwow competitions as a tie breaker. On the robe, each dancer holds a weapon and a shield. The buffalo tracks show the movement of the dancers and the triangular designs around the perimeter represent tipis, which are used by the artist as a stand in for spectators.

Jeffrey Gibson

cultural affiliations Citizen of the Mississippi Band of

Choctaw Indians and of Cherokee heritage

born 1972, Colorado Springs, Colorado, United States

himmak pilla, 2022

Arches 88 paper, mat board, screen print, beading

Museum purchase: Peter T. Bohan Art Acquisition Fund,
2023.0103

Jeffrey Gibson made history in 2024 as the first Native artist to have a solo show at the U.S. Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, an annual international exhibition. His work explores identity and performance through beading, painting, regalia, and sculpture.

When describing his installation at the Venice Biennale, Gibson said: “I want them to see empowered people because so often, at least in my lifetime, we’ve been represented through our trauma. I want to present us as being very present, and aware, and really powerful.”



Scan the code to watch an interview with
Gibson about his installation at the Venice
Biennale.

1.
Chris Pappan
cultural affiliations Osage, Kaw, Cheyenne River Lakota Sioux
born 1971, Colorado Springs, Colorado, United States
Bless All Those Who Walk Here, 2010
Vans shoes, acrylic
Museum purchase: Peter T. Bohan Art Acquisition Fund, 2012.0011.a,b

Through his artwork, Chris Pappan comments on mainstream culture's distorted view of American Indians and depicts Natives living authentically in the present and future. This pair of Vans shoes reflects his love of skateboarding while honoring his ancestors and culture with portraits of prominent chiefs from the Kaw and Osage Nations. On the heels is a prayer written in the Kaw language.

Rebekah Jarvey, artist
cultural affiliations Chippewa, Cree, Blackfeet (enrolled Chippewa Cree Tribe in North Central Montana)
born 1964, Havre, Montana, United States
Nike, Inc., manufacturer
founded 1964, Oregon, United States

2.
N7 x Nike SB Dunk Low Decon "Black and Sail", 2023
leather, canvas, rubber, embroidery
Private collection

3.
N7 x Nike SB Dunk Low Decon "Opti Yellow and University Red", 2023
leather, canvas, rubber, embroidery
Private collection

Nike's N7 collection was created specifically for Natives in 2007 with the goal of encouraging exercise within Indian communities. The shoes had Native-inspired designs and wider soles to accommodate the width and foot shape of American Indians. However, Nike was criticized for not using Indigenous designers. Today, the N7 collection features Native designers including Rebekah Jarvey and Lauren Thomas. Additionally, Nike has started to invest in non-profits that increase access to sports for Native American youth.



Scan the code to hear Rebekah Jarvey talk about collaborating with Nike.

4.
Lauren Thomas, artist
cultural affiliation Mi'kmaq First Nation
born Lennox Island, Prince Edward Island, Canada
Nike, Inc., manufacturer
founded 1964, Oregon, United States
Nike Air Max '87 N7, 2024
leather, canvas, rubber, embroidery
Private collection



Scan the code to hear Lauren Thomas talk about the significance of her N7 design.

These shoes demonstrate how styles are influenced by cross-cultural exchange. The glass seed beads and satin ribbon brought by European traders were added to natural materials like shells, stones, bones, and porcupine quills that Indigenous communities used. While natural materials come in a variety of colors and could be dyed with natural dyes, the range of colors in these new materials allowed Natives to further develop beaded designs and appliqué patterns. The two pairs of moccasins are indicative of many woodlands cultures. One pair has a heel and shows how Natives began to adapt to Euro-centric fashion while maintaining their identity.

1.
pair of beaded moccasins with heels, late 1800s–early 1900s
United States
buckskin, wood, leather, metal, beading
Source unknown, 2007.3738.a,b

2.
Nora Thompson Dean (1907–1984)
cultural affiliation Delaware
died Bartlesville, Oklahoma, United States
pair of moccasins, mid 1900s–1981
buckskin, cloth, beading
Gift of Forrest E. Jones, 2007.3744.a,b

3.
Teri Greeves
cultural affiliation Kiowa
born 1970, Wind River Reservation, Wyoming, United States
Spider Woman/Emerging Woman, 2015
Czech cut beads, stamped sterling silver, seed pearls, faceted jade, faceted garnet, rose quartz, heeled shoes, Swarovski crystals
Collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas, Gift of the H Tony and Marti Oppenheimer Foundation

Teri Greeves is one of the first Native artists to incorporate beadwork on contemporary shoe brands. For thousands of years, Native people have told stories through the imagery and embellishments on their garments. Greeves continues this tradition by incorporating Kiowa stories and honoring her mother, who passed away in 2015. The pregnant woman represents the guidance and protection that her mother provided. The caterpillar and butterflies demonstrate change and resilience, transforming the pain of her mother's passing into beauty.



Scan the code to learn more about the imagery on these shoes.

Forever Flowering Designs by Aiyana Jack

cultural affiliations Ihanktonwan/Yankton Sioux, Hunkpapa/
Standing Rock Sioux (enrolled Yankton Sioux Tribe)
born 1995, Yankton, South Dakota, United States

1.
Wetú wanáhča (Spring Tulips) earrings, 2024
porcupine quills, cotton, metal, mother of pearl, freshwater
pearl, dyeing
Museum Purchase: Helen Foresman Spencer Art
Acquisition Fund, 2024.0109.a,b

2.
Wimahed iyaya (When the sun went in) earrings, 2024
porcupine quills, cotton, metal, abalone shell, dyeing
Museum Purchase: Helen Foresman Spencer Art
Acquisition Fund, 2024.0110.a,b

3.
Wimahed iyaya (When the sun went in) cuff, 2024
porcupine quills, cotton, dyeing
Museum Purchase: Helen Foresman Spencer Art
Acquisition Fund, 2024.0111

Self-taught quillwork artist Aiyana Jack uses traditional
and non-traditional motifs. She grew up on the Yankton
Sioux reservation in South Dakota, attended Haskell Indian
Nations University, and currently resides in Chicago, where
she creates quillwork for her business Forever Flowering
Designs.

Watch a video of the artist talking about her work on the
touchscreen nearby.

Tim Lammers

cultural affiliation Oglala Lakota

4.
pouch for storing quills, 1991
animal bladder, buckskin, quills, dyeing
Museum purchase: Gift of the Friends of the KUMA,
2007.1998.01

dyed quills, 1991
quills, dyeing
Museum purchase: Gift of the Friends of the KUMA,
2007.1998.02

5.
Lani Porter
cultural affiliation Omaha
quill wrapped bracelet, 1992
rawhide, buckskin, quills, dyeing
Gift of Sandra Hazlett, 2007.1747

6.
Madeline Cartine
cultural affiliation Flathead
pair of moccasins, 1974–1975
buckskin, possibly plastic, weaving
Gift of Forrest E. Jones, 2007.3743.a,b

Prior to contact with Europeans, Natives used materials like
porcupine quills to embellish their garments. They dyed
quills with natural pigments made from sunflowers, choke
cherry, sumac, poke berry, bloodroot, walnut, pine, moss,
and various berries. Today, Natives also use products like
Rit dye and Kool-Aid to color their quills. These moccasins
made by Madeline Cartine appear to be made with a
plastic substitute, demonstrating the innovation and
adaptability of Native people to utilize whatever materials
are available to them.

These accessories all demonstrate various inspiration
and influence in their design motifs, from plant life to
pop culture.

1.
Lorene Pokorea
cultural affiliation Shoshone
belt ornament, late 1800s–1981
buckskin, beading
Gift of Forrest E. Jones, 2007.2056

2.
unrecorded Kainai (Blood) artist
beaded necktie and collar, late 1800s–1950
cotton, metal, beading, dyeing
Gift from the estate of Gertrude W. Green, 2007.2057.a,b

3.
The Beads Knees by Mel Beaulieu
cultural affiliation Metepenagiag Mi'kmaq Nation
born 1995, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada
Mister Hands, 2023
buckskin, glass seed beads, cotton, beading
Private collection

Mel Beaulieu's beaded medallion features Israel "Izzy"
Hands, played by Con O'Neill, a character on the pirate-
themed television show *Our Flag Means Death*. Created by
and starring Māori filmmaker and actor Taika Waititi, the
show received praise for its LGBTQ2S+ representation. 2S
refers to "two-spirit" and describes Native people who are
gender-nonconforming.

4.

Elias Jade Not Afraid

cultural affiliation Apsaalooké/Crow Tribe

born 1990, Crow Agency, Montana, United States

Fry Bread earrings, 2024

smoked brain-tanned deer hide, buffalo fur, bullet casings, cotton pellow, brass, glass beads, ermine

Museum purchase: Helen Foresman Spencer Art Acquisition Fund,, 2024.0108.a,b

Elias Jade Not Afraid's earrings feature frybread, a food that came about because of the removal and relocation policies of the U.S. government. Natives were given commodity foods as part of their treaty negotiations and they used flour, baking soda, salt, and lard to make a delicious—albeit unhealthy—innovation. While many Natives argue that frybread is not traditional because it did not exist before colonization, others view frybread as a symbol of Native resilience. Not Afraid's playful elevation of frybread into jewelry showcases Indigenous humor.

5.

Mamie Mitchell (1929–1993)

cultural affiliation Fox

born Mesquakie Settlement, Iowa, United States

pair of figural beaded earrings, 1900s

glass beads, metal, beading

Gift of Forrest E. Jones, 2007.1729.a,b

These earrings depicting an Indian person wearing a headdress look like many others that were made for the tourist market or sold at powwows and Native art fairs. As their lands were systematically taken, Natives were moved to reservations where living conditions were poor. Natives had to find ways to sustain themselves, and some did so by selling their jewelry, pottery, beadwork, and weaving to tourists traveling west on the newly built railways.

6.

Kevin Pourier

cultural affiliation Oglala Lakota

born 1958, Rapid City, South Dakota, United States

Warrior Shades, 2008

sandstone, buffalo horn, catlinite, mother of pearl

Collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas

As a play on words, Kevin Pourier made “horn-rimmed” glasses out of buffalo horn, which has spiritual significance to his Lakota community. Pourier believes that balance is important and that humor can balance out the seriousness of the sacred. These glasses are inscribed with “Rez Bans,” a comic take on the popular Ray-Ban brand. Humor is an important aspect of many Native communities because it helps form connections across generations, serves as a communal coping mechanism, and breaks stereotypes like the “stoic” Indian.

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith

cultural affiliations Enrolled Salish, member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Nation of Montana, Cree, Salish, Shoshone, Interior Salish, Flathead

born 1940, Saint Ignatius, Flathead Reservation, Montana, United States

Modern Times, 1994

color lithograph

Museum purchase, 1994.0047

This work explores assimilation, or the process of one ethnic group being absorbed by another. Jaune Quick-to-See Smith modifies an ad for apples depicting a headdressed Indian to be wearing a business suit and holding a briefcase. “Apple” is a derogatory slang term for people who are “red on the outside and white on the inside.” It is used primarily for “city Indians” who are disconnected from their culture, often because they did not grow up on reservations with their communities.

Orville John Green (1872–1938)

born Jefferson County, Wisconsin, United States; died McPherson, Kansas, United States

top left

Industrial education and reading class, Pine Ridge, 1902

gelatin silver print, printed 1980s

Transfer from Central College, Orville John and Evaline Dryer Green Collection, 2007.7535

top right

schoolgirls on dishwashing duty, Pine Ridge, 1899–1904

gelatin silver print, printed 1980s

Transfer from Central College, Orville John and Evaline Dryer Green Collection, 2007.7573

bottom left

schoolchildren, Mrs. Green, and her three children at School #9, Pine Ridge, 1904

gelatin silver print, printed 1980s

Transfer from Central College, Orville John and Evaline Dryer Green Collection, 2007.7531

bottom right

students with their garden produce, 1899–1904

gelatin silver print, printed 1980s

Transfer from Central College, Orville John and Evaline Dryer Green Collection, 2007.7559

The boarding school system erased Native culture by removing children from their communities. Children were forced to cut their hair, change their names to western ones, and practice Christianity. They were punished for speaking their Native languages and subjected to physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Many schools were run like military academies and children were forced to wear uniforms and march. Boys were trained as farmers, tailors, blacksmiths, and shoemakers, while girls studied cooking, sewing, washing, and homemaking.

Marguerite M. Nellis (1906–1998)

born Topeka, Kansas, United States;

died Seattle, Washington, United States

1.

Haskell Student, circa 1939

soft-ground etching

Gift of the WPA Arts Project, 0000.0421

2.

Haskell Student from Mayetta, circa 1939

soft-ground etching

Gift of the WPA Arts Project, 0000.0426

3.

Haskell Student, circa 1939

soft-ground etching

Gift of the WPA Arts Project, 0000.0424

Established in 1884 as the United States Indian Industrial Training School, Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, was one of the earliest and largest government-run boarding schools in the United States. When these student portraits were created in the late 1930s, Haskell had begun offering accredited high-school classes and some post-high school courses. These portraits feature students wearing everyday clothing of the time, demonstrating both the success of government policies during the boarding school era as well as Native resilience and adaptability to mainstream culture as a means of survival.

unrecorded Native American artists from Haskell Indian Nations University
pendants, belt buckles, hair accessories, pins, and scarf slide, 1970–1980
enamel, copper, brass, silver, turquoise
Collection of Haskell Cultural Center and Museum, Haskell Indian Nations University

In the 1960s, Haskell students pushed for changes that would better serve Indian country. In 1970 the school became Haskell Indian Junior College, offering associate degrees and skill-based certificates, including silversmithing. Students incorporated traditional, abstract, and contemporary motifs into their designs. By the late 1980s, Haskell had begun granting bachelor's degrees, and in 1993 it was renamed Haskell Indian Nations University. Today Haskell is the most prominent four-year intertribal college in the United States, serving students from over 140 tribal nations.

Katrina Miller
cultural affiliation Yakama
Miss Haskell Crown, 2007
leather, cotton, rhinestone, beading
Collection of Haskell Cultural Center and Museum, Haskell Indian Nations University

The annual Miss Haskell Pageant traditionally celebrated the achievements and academic excellence of female students at Haskell Indian Nations University. Recently, it added a competition for male students vying for the title of Haskell Brave. Haskell students, faculty, and staff vote on candidates competing for the coveted titles. The 2024 contest included the first gender-neutral Mx. Haskell candidate.

Cara Romero
cultural affiliation enrolled citizen of the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe
born 1977, Inglewood, California, United States
Oil & Gold, 2021
Epson Legacy Platine paper, inkjet print
Museum purchase: Peter T. Bohan Art Acquisition Fund, T2023.028.02

“This image features Naomi White Horse and Crickett Tiger wearing regalia of Central Coast people made by Leah Mata Fragua, one dipped in gold and the other dipped in oil standing in front of a Southbay Los Angeles refinery. The photo aims to transform historical narratives, educate, and increase dialogue... around issues of cultural representation, erasure, cultural activism, land stewardship practices, and the genocide and displacement of the first peoples in the name of gold and oil.”—Cara Romero

Josh MacPhee, artist and organizer
born 1973, Holliston, Massachusetts, United States
Stumptown Printers, printer, founded 1999
The Occupation of Alcatraz, 2006
from *Celebrate People's History Poster Series*
color offset lithograph
Museum purchase: Elmer F. Pierson Fund, 2016.0124.036

In 1969, a group of protestors landed on Alcatraz Island to begin a 19-month occupation, raising awareness for the continued mistreatment of Native people in the United States and the failure of the U.S. government to deal fairly with tribal governments. Some of the earliest prisoners held on Alcatraz were Native men, including 19 Hopi fathers detained in 1894 because they refused to send their children to boarding schools.

Vintage American Indian Movement t-shirt, circa 1970s
United States
cotton, screen print
Private collection

Lisa LaRue-Baker
cultural affiliation Cherokee Nation
born 1962, Topeka, Kansas, United States
Konrad Pumpkin Seed
cultural affiliation Oglala Lakota
born 2005, Rapid City, South Dakota, United States
Remarkable MMIW Women, 2024
vegan leather jacket, lace, mesh fabric, elastic, silk, acrylic, ribbon, cotton appliqué
Private collection

Indigenous activists use clothing to spread awareness about issues that matter to them. Lisa LaRue Baker wore this outfit to the 2024 Nexstar Media Remarkable Women awards to honor her Native American citizenship while bringing attention to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW). She stated that these women “...truly are the remarkable women, not me.” Konrad Pumpkin Seed, who painted the front and back of the jacket, said, “MMIW cases have always made me uneasy, so I’ve been trying my hardest to use my platform to speak out and educate others!”

unrecorded Native American artist
Twentieth Century American Indian Movement Shield, circa 1970
calf hide, metal
Collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas

According to artist Tony Abeyta (Diné), who previously owned this shield, it may have been made during the American Indian Movement (AIM) occupation of Alcatraz Island. It is also possible it was made during AIM's 71-day occupation of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in 1973.

American Indian Movement pins and patches, circa 1970–2020s
United States
pin-back celluloid buttons and machine embroidered patches
Private collection

The American Indian Movement was formed in Minneapolis in 1968 to resist police brutality, assimilation, and colonialism. It was one of the largest and most recognizable collective Indian organizations, partly due to the visible symbols, patches, pins, and t-shirts they wore to identify themselves and spread their messages.

Steven Paul Judd, artist
cultural affiliations Kiowa, Choctaw
born Lawton, Oklahoma, United States
The NTVS, manufacturer
founded 2014, Osseo, Minnesota, United States
Merciless Indian Savages tee, circa 2020
cotton, screen print
Private collection

The Declaration of Independence is widely known for the phrase “all men are created equal,” but most Americans are unaware of what it says about Indigenous people. The quote on this shirt is taken from the Declaration where the writers accused British King George III of unleashing “merciless Indian Savages” against innocent men, women, and children. Steven Paul Judd created this t-shirt to bring awareness to the racism present in America’s founding document. Some Natives wear this shirt around the Fourth of July as a reminder of their tumultuous history with the U.S. government.

Morning Star Designs by Leona Antoine
cultural affiliation Sicangu Lakota (Rosebud Sioux Tribe)
born 1979, Rosebud, South Dakota, United States
Šaic’iye Nīehepi Haṅska (Long Skirt for Dressing Up), 2024
cotton fabric, satin ribbon, appliqué designs
Private collection

Ribbon skirts date back to the late 1700s when Great Lakes Plains tribes formed relationships with French traders and added new materials like ribbons to their traditional clothing patterns. Ribbon skirts and ribbon appliqué can tell stories passed down through generations, are used for ceremonies, and serve as symbols of defiance and solidarity. Ribbon skirts like this one gained popularity following the Dakota Access Pipeline protests in Standing Rock, South Dakota, where women made ribbon skirts for one another to pray and participate in ceremony together.

Henry Payer
cultural affiliation Ho Chunk Nation of Nebraska
born 1986, Sioux City, Iowa, United States
Frontline Aunty, 2022
mixed media, collage, ledger paper
Museum purchase: Peter T. Bohan Art Acquisition Fund, 2024.0002

“Frontline Aunty represents our female relatives who continuously surprise us with their courage, strength, and determination as born leaders... Most Indigenous cultures were matriarchal, but this changed with colonization as non-Natives married into tribes. She stands fist raised, wearing both traditional and modern clothing, red paint on her forehead, and a multicolored ribbon skirt... She adorns both traditional moccasins and street shoes to express the act of walking in two worlds.”—Henry Payer

Wendy Red Star
cultural affiliation Apsáalooke (Crow)
born 1981, Billings, Montana, United States
Medicine Rock Child, 2011
pigment print
Collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas, Gift of Dr. Loren Lipson

Medicine Rock Child is part of a photographic series titled *Thunder Up Above*, where Wendy Red Star imagines future life on another planet. The traditional jingle dress and feather headdress are still present in this otherworldly reality, demonstrating Native American resilience and imagining how powwow regalia may evolve in the future.

Wendy Red Star
cultural affiliation Apsáalooke (Crow)
born 1981, Billings, Montana, United States
untitled (silver), 2011
cloth, tin jingles
Collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas

The jingle dress is a style of dress worn by dancers at a powwow. It is a healing dance started among the Ojibwe community in the early 19th century after canned tobacco was introduced. Since tobacco is considered by Natives to be medicine, hundreds of metal tobacco can lids are rolled into cones and attached to the outside of a dress in various patterns. The dancer’s movement creates a cacophony of sound. Today, dancers from all tribes, not just Ojibwe, dance in jingle dresses.

Rita Belgarde (1918–2005)
cultural affiliation Sioux
born Fort Kipp, Montana, United States;
died Brockton, Montana, United States
star quilt, 1999
cotton/polyester cloth, quilting
Museum purchase, 2007.2286

Quilting was taught to female students during the boarding school era. Resilient, innovative Native women took this new skill and turned it into a beautiful reflection of their traditions. The eight-pointed star has significance in Lakota and other Native American cultures. Today star quilts are used by Natives from many tribes as gifts for births, graduations, weddings, ceremonies, and funerals.

Jamie Okuma, artist
cultural affiliations Luiseño, Shoshone-Bannock, Wailaki, Okinawan, La Jolla band of Indians in Southern California
born 1977, Glendale, California, United States
Eighth Generation, manufacturer
founded 2008, Seattle, Washington, United States
Ribbons Wool Blanket, 2020
wool, polyester
Private collection

Eighth Generation is the first Native-owned company to produce wool blankets. According to their website, “Eighth Generation provides a strong, ethical alternative to ‘Native-inspired’ art and products through its artist-centric approach and 100% Native designed products.” The company’s Inspired Natives Project “builds business capacity among cultural artists while addressing the economic impact of cultural appropriation.” They work with Indigenous artists like Jamie Okuma to create authentic, culturally aware designs.

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AJ Holder

cultural affiliations Winnebago, Oglala Lakota, Wichita,

Sac and Fox, Northern Cheyenne

born 2000, Lawrence, Kansas, United States

untitled (T-dress, beaded hat, and dentalium hair ties, necklace, and earrings), 2015–2022

cotton, satin ribbon, felt, beads, dentalium shell, buckskin,

abalone shell, sinew, metal

Courtesy of the artist

Local artist AJ Holder creates powwow regalia, T-dresses, beaded hats, and ribbon skirts. She learned how to bead and sew from her female relatives.

Watch a video of the artist talking about her work on the touchscreen nearby.

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