

Native American Art: Traditional, Modern, and Appropriated

While recognizing what one critic has called "the fallacy of unifying labels", this Friday we will look at some of the visual arts created by the indigenous peoples of North America. Those who first occupied this continent have and continue to generate all types of art that is both traditional and stunningly current. With the world-wide popularity of American West iconography, non-Natives and corporations have appropriated symbols, images, and sacred items, sometimes knowingly and sometimes from a misplaced sense of admiration. When does inspiration become misappropriation?

Goal

To learn gain a deeper appreciation of the art of Native Americans and to attempt to understand misappropriation.

Class Assignments

- **How Native Americans in the arts are preserving tradition in a changing world.** Indigenous artists, photographers and fashion designers face perennial questions: Who is it that Native people create art for? And why?
<https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/museums/la-et-cm-native-american-artists-20181129-htmlstory.html>
- **Indigenous Arts of North America.** Browse pieces in the Denver Art Museum, one of the first art museums in the nation to collect Indigenous arts from North America. Today, it has over 18,000 objects by artists from over 250 Indigenous nations.
<https://www.denverartmuseum.org/en/collection/indigenous-arts-north-america>
- **Native Americans know that cultural misappropriation is a land of darkness.** Cultural appropriation and cultural misappropriation are very different but sometimes the two get mixed up. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/may/18/native-americans-cultural-misappropriation?CMP=share_btn_link