

Welcome

Kia Ora and welcome to the Residence of the United States in Wellington, New Zealand. Gail and I hope you enjoy this unique exhibition of Native American artifacts, entitled *Lands of the People*.

While visiting this magnificent country in 2004, one of the highlights of our trip was a visit to the Te Papa Museum in Wellington. We collect Native American art in our home in Portland, Oregon, and we were fascinated by the similarities in the artistic styles of some of our Native cultures. We saw strong parallels in the wood carvings in form and pattern as well as similar color palettes. We also noted the dominant representations of nature as spiritual symbols in many of the objects in the Maori as well as Native American cultures.

In 2005 we arrived in New Zealand as diplomatic emissaries. We saw an opportunity to nurture the ancestral and artistic ties between our native cultures. Through this exhibition, we celebrate the link between our Native tribes, the Maori, and neighboring indigenous Pacific Islanders.

Our desire is to introduce Native American artifacts from all across the United States to New Zealand. This exhibition displays twenty-four objects representing eighteen tribes from coast to coast. We are proud to celebrate the artistry and beauty of these Native American treasures.



We extend a very special thank-you to the Portland Art Museum for their generosity and to Bill Mercer, Curator of Native American Art at the Portland Art Museum, for his invaluable assistance in the selecting and assembling the exhibition and providing the explanatory text – in collaboration with Sarah Tanguy, an

ART in Embassies Program curator, for helping to organize and document the exhibition.

A special thanks to Nirmala Balm, Conservator, Ethnographic Objects and Contemporary Sculpture at the Te Papa Museum, Wellington, for her assistance in installing the exhibition. Thanks to Jason Kalbfleisch, General Services Officer, for coordinating and assisting in the installation of the exhibition. Thanks also to Darcy Nicholas, General Manager of Cultural Services for Porirua City and General Manager of the Pataka Museum of Arts and Culture, for his advice and expertise in the development of the exhibition. And finally, we give our sincerest thanks to the nameless “unknown artists” who created these beautiful works over the past 150 years.

Ambassador William and Gail McCormick

*Wellington, New Zealand
November 2006*

The ART in Embassies Program

Founded in 1964, the U.S. Department of State ART in Embassies Program is a unique blend of art and diplomacy. Through exhibitions with diverse themes and content, ART presents more than 3,500 original works of art by U.S. citizens in a variety of media and styles. They are obtained through loan from sources that include museums, galleries, corporations, artists, and private collectors, and displayed in the public rooms of some 180 U.S. Embassy residences and diplomatic missions worldwide.

The ART exhibitions are a source of great pride to U.S. ambassadors, assisting them to reach the host country’s educational, cultural, business, and diplomatic communities. In viewing the exhibitions, the thousands of guests who visit U.S. Embassy residences each year have the opportunity to learn about our nation – its history, customs, values, and aspirations – by experiencing American art firsthand. Detailed information about the Program may be obtained by accessing the ART web site, <http://aiep.state.gov>. It functions as an interactive global museum featuring on-line versions of all current exhibitions.

Lands of the People

There are more than eight-hundred American Indian and First Nations cultural groups throughout the United States and Canada. Each one of these cultural groups has its own unique history and traditional practices. Likewise, the objects that were created by the talented individuals within each cultural group were decorated and adorned with a sense of aesthetics resulting in works of art that dynamically combine the creative impulse of the individual with traditional ideals. Native American and First Nations art is also oftentimes greatly influenced by the environment that the members knew so intimately, and artists traditionally used materials that were readily at their disposal. For example, artists of the Northwest Coast created masks, bowls, rattles, and a variety of other beautiful and useful items carved and painted with crest images belonging to their clan from the abundant forests filled with cedar, maple, and yew. By contrast, in the desert Southwest, pottery vessels were meticulously crafted from clay dug from the earth, and then painted with designs symbolizing water and prayers for rain. This should not, however, leave one with the impression that traditional Native American and First Nations art was restrictive in any way. Indeed, each generation of artists from a particular cultural group or community added to the accomplishments of the preceding generations, and when Europeans arrived with trade goods such as metal tools, commercially made cloth, and glass beads, these materials were quickly assimilated by artists who used them to create bold, new forms that frequently served as an expression of cultural identity and survival in the face of Euro-American domination. In other instances the objects were used primarily for commercial purposes, as artists continued to create the traditional forms, not for use within the community, but to be sold to collectors, museums, and anthropologists. In fact, many of the baskets now in museum collections were originally created during the period between 1880 and 1930, at the height of the Arts and Crafts Movement when collecting Ameri-

can Indian baskets, pottery, beadwork, and textiles was of particular interest. Today, American Indian and First Nations art is undergoing a remarkable renaissance. Traditional forms and techniques are being handed down from one generation to the next in many tribal communities while others are going to painstaking lengths to revive lost arts. There are also many, many artists who work in what is considered “modern” media such as easel painting, printmaking, and sculpture. In some instances these artists’ works incorporate traditional imagery or deal with a particular concept, while in other instances their work bears very little trace of their cultural heritage. In either respect, contemporary Native American and First Nations artists are adding greatly to the post-modern art world at large.

The Portland Art Museum is pleased to participate in this exhibition for the ART in Embassies Program. The Native American collection at the Portland Art Museum is quite significant and includes objects from throughout North America. The representative sampling that is part of this exhibition consists of historic objects from the Northwest Coast, Arctic, Plateau, California, Southwest, Plains, and Woodlands regions. The objects range from masks and baskets to beadwork and pottery, illustrating the variety of materials, forms, techniques, and styles from each of these regions. In some instances there will be certain parallels that can be made to traditional and contemporary Maori art, and it is hoped that the objects in this exhibition and publication will provide some insight into the artistic expressions created by the indigenous peoples of both North America and New Zealand.

Bill Mercer

Curator of Native American Art
Portland Art Museum

*Portland, Oregon
September 2006*



Maidu Tribe, Unknown Artist

Basket, 1920

Willow and redbud, 3 x 9 ¼ in. (7,6 x 24, 8 cm)

Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;

Gift of Myrtle Dietsche Fisher



Acoma Tribe, Unknown Artist

Jar, c. 1930

Clay and paint, 11 x 7 in. (27,9 x 17,8 cm)

Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;

Elizabeth Sickler Smith Collection,

donated by her grandson, Edward Conyngham



Hopi Tribe, Unknown Artist

Bowl, 1940-1950

Clay and paint, 4 ½ x 10 in. (11,4 x 25,4 cm)

Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;

Gift of the Estate of Delphine Lass Kreielsheimer



Yokutz Tribe, Unknown Artist

Basket, c. 1900

Grass and bark, 6 x 10 ½ in. (15,2 x 26,7 cm)

Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;

Gift of Mrs. Ferdinand C. Smith and Mr. L. Hawley Hoffman



Pima Tribe, Unknown Artist

Basket, c. 1910

Willow, 3 ½ x 14 ¾ in. (8,9 x 37,5 cm)

Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;

Anonymous gift



Sioux Tribe, Unknown Artist

Knife Case, 1880

Leather and beads, 2 ¼ x 10 ¾ in. (5,7 x 27,3 cm)

Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;

Gift of Elizabeth Cole Butler



Sioux Tribe, Unknown Artist

Moccasins, c. 1900

Leather, rawhide, glass beads, and cloth,

4 ¾ x 11 ½ in. (12,1 x 29,2 cm)

Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;

Elizabeth Sickler Smith Collection,

donated by her grandson, Edward Conyngham



Sioux Tribe, Unknown Artist

Purse, 1910

Leather, beads, metal, and cloth,

8 ¾ x 10 ½ x 5 ½ in. (22,2 x 26,7 x 14 cm)

Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;

Gift of Elizabeth Cole Butler



Tlingit Tribe, Unknown Artist

Bowl, c. 1880

Wood and operculum, 6 ½ x 16 ¼ x 19 ½ in. (16,5 x 41,3 x 49,5 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Elizabeth Cole Butler



Hupa Tribe, Unknown Artist

Basket, c. 1920

Conifer root and hazel, 6 ½ x 9 ¼ in. (16,5 x 23,5 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Grace F. & Bruce E. White



Tlingit Tribe, Unknown Artist

Basket, c. 1920

Cedar bark, 6 x 8 x 8 in. (15,2 x 20,3 x 20,3 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Priscilla Hagan



Tlingit Tribe, Unknown Artist

Basket, c. 1900

Spruce root and grass, 4 ½ x 5 in. (11,4 x 12,7 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Elizabeth Sickler Smith Collection,
donated by her grandson, Edward Conyngham



Tlingit Tribe, Unknown Artist

Rattle-Top Basket, c. 1920

Spruce root and grass, 4 ¼ x 3 ¾ in. (10,8 x 9,5 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Elizabeth Cole Butler



Wasco Tribe, Unknown Artist

Basket, c. 1890

Hemp, cloth, and leather, 7 ¾ x 8 ¾ in. (19,7 x 22,2 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Sibil Stonach, Charlene Bradley, Dorothea White, Sarah White,
and Frances White in memory of Charlotte A. and Herbert White, Jr.



Hopi Tribe, Unknown Artist

Basket, 1920

Grass and yucca leaves, 6 ½ x 9 ¼ in. (16,5 x 23,5 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Elizabeth Cole Butler



Iroquois Tribe, Unknown Artist

Knife, c. 1820

Wood and metal, 1 ½ x 10 ½ in. (3,8 x 26,7 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Elizabeth Cole Butler



Plateau region, Unknown Artist

Bag, c. 1880

Leather, beads, and cloth, 7 ¾ x 8 ½ in. (19,7 x 21,6 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Elizabeth Cole Butler



Klickitat Tribe, Unknown Artist

Basket, 1920

Cedar root and beargrass, 12 ¼ x 10 ¼ in. (31,1 x 26 cm) diameter
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Raelyn Dolton



Heiltsuk Tribe, Unknown Artist

Mask, date unknown

Painted wood, 7 ½ x 10 in. (19,1 x 25,4 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Elizabeth Cole Butler



Ojibwa Tribe, Unknown Artist

Ornament, c. 1910

Cloth, glass beads, and yarn, 17 ½ x 5 in. (44,5 x 12,7 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Elizabeth Sickler Smith Collection,
donated by her grandson, Edward Conyngham



Western Apache Tribe, Unknown Artist

Basket, 1910

Willow and devil's claw, 3 x 11 ¾ in. (7,6 x 29,8 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Elizabeth Cole Butler



Modoc Tribe, Unknown Artist

Basket, 1900

Grass and porcupine quills, 4 ½ x 8 in. (11,4 x 20,3 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Elizabeth Cole Butler



Nez Perce Tribe, Unknown Artist

Bag, c. 1880

Beads and leather, 11 ¼ x 13 ¼ in. (28,6 x 33,7 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Elizabeth Cole Butler



Pueblo/Tewa Tribes, Unknown Artist

Bowl, 1926-1960

Ceramic, 3 ¾ x 5 ¾ in. (9,5 x 14,6 cm)
Courtesy of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon;
Gift of Mr. Richard S. Oglesby



Published by the ART in Embassies Program • U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. • October 2006

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS Washington Anne Johnson, Director, ART in Embassies Program • Sarah Tanguy, Curator • Rebecca Clark, Registrar • Marcia Mayo, Publications Editor • Sally Mansfield, Publications Project Coordinator • Amanda Brooks, Imaging Manager • Ambassador and Mrs. McCormick extend their sincere thanks to Bill Mercer, Curator of Native American Art at the Portland Art Museum, for his guidance in assembling this exhibition and providing explanatory text • Vienna Nathalie Mayer, Graphic Designer • Designed and printed by the Regional Program Office, Vienna



United States Embassy Wellington

ART in Embassies Program