

Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane

November is Native American Heritage Month, declared so by President George H.W. Bush in 1990. In recognition of this commemorative month, here are some of the best places in North America to view Native American/Indigenous art.

National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, DC. and New York City, New York

Part of the Smithsonian Institution, the National Museum of the American Indian has two locations: Washington, D.C., and New York City. The original museum (Heye Foundation) was in New York City, founded largely with the collection of George Gustav Heye. Heye's first purchase was a Navajo hide shirt in 1897. By 1907, he had amassed some 10,000 objects. The museum was transferred to the Smithsonian in 1989, followed by the opening of the Heye Center in New York in 1994 and the National Museum of the American Indian on the National Mall in 2004. The D.C. museum's North American ethnographic collection includes 88,000 objects, comprising items from the Northeast and Southeast Woodlands groups (one of the finest collections in the world), the Plains Indians (where every group is represented), the Plateau Indians (particularly Shoshone and Nez Perce), the Southwest (e.g., Navajo blankets, Hopi kachinas, Pueblo ceramics), Northwest Coast (e.g., wood and stone carvings and masks), and the Arctic (including masks, baskets, kayaks, ivory carvings, fur clothing). A few examples from the collection are presented below.



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane

Denver Art Museum, Denver, Colorado

The Denver Art Museum was one of the first in North America to collect the art of indigenous peoples. Since its first acquisition in 1925, it now holds over 18,000 objects from 250 indigenous nations, from prehistoric to contemporary. Its collections feature objects from virtually all regions of North America. They include jewelry, baskets, masks, carvings, beading, quillwork, blankets, and kachinas. Some examples are pictured below.



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane

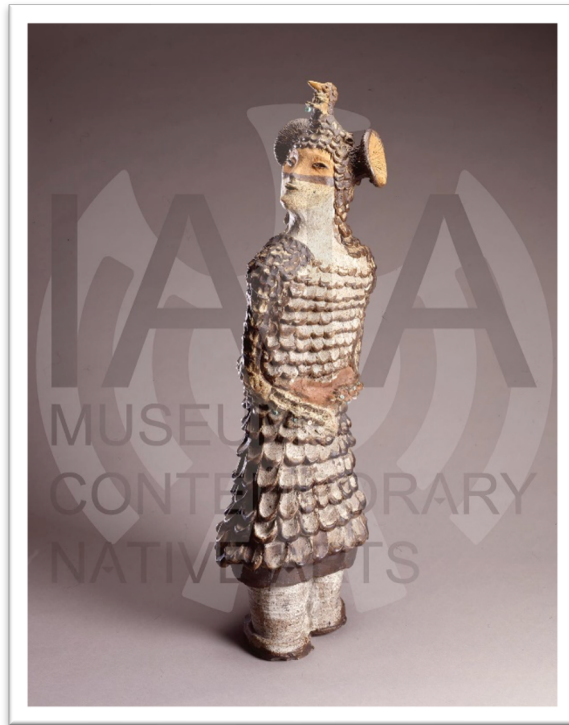


Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane

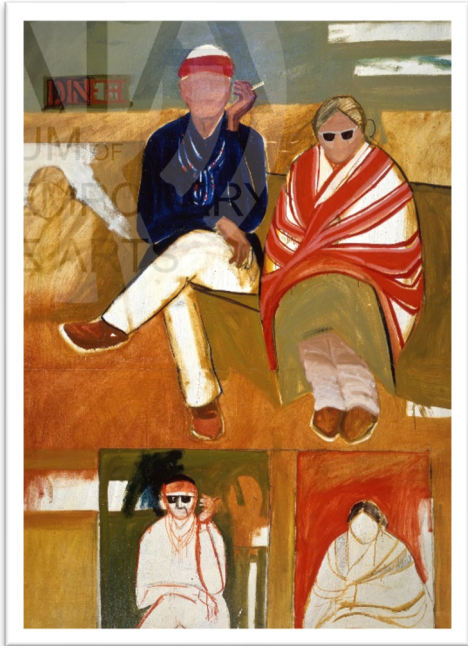
Institute of American Indian Arts Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico

The Institute of American Indian Arts is a public, tribal land grant college focusing on Native American arts. Its museum is the country's only museum for exhibiting, collecting, and interpreting the most progressive work of contemporary Native artists. It is home to over 10,000 contemporary Indigenous artworks created between 1962 and the present). The media include paintings, works on paper, sculpture, ceramics, jewelry, photography, contemporary apparel, textiles, and installations. The examples from their collection below are intended to provide a sense of the diversity of the artworks.



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane

Millicent Rogers Museum, Taos, New Mexico

The museum was established in 1956 by Paul Peralta-Ramos to honor his mother, Millicent Rogers, who was fascinated by the arts and cultures of the American Southwest. Rogers was a socialite, heiress, fashion icon, jewelry designer, and art collector. She was the granddaughter of Standard Oil tycoon Henry Hutton Rogers.

The museum houses Rogers' own collection of Native American turquoise jewelry, the largest publicly held collection of the work of Maria Martinez, a famed potter of San Ildefonso Pueblo, Apache baskets, Navajo textiles, and Pueblo kachinas. Below are some examples of the works on display at the museum.



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki, Clewiston, Florida

Located in the Everglades on the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation, the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum is home to more than 200,000 works of art and historic objects related to the history and culture of the Seminole people, with a particular focus on the 20th century. Its collection includes patchwork clothing, baskets, dolls, and other traditionally created pieces of cultural significance.



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane

Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona

The Heard Museum features a collection of art and objects that show the daily lives of Native peoples in North America with a focus on tribes and peoples from the Southwest. Their collection includes textiles, ceramics, weaving, jewelry, and clothing from the prehistoric to the contemporary.



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane



Native American Heritage Month

By Kathy McShane

