

Indian Artists in Portland Show Inspired By Tradition



(Top Left)

CERAMICS AND SERIGRAPHS
Two clay figures crafted by Glen LaFontaine (Chippewa-Cree) and entitled "Talking Eyes" and "Seated Figure with Pipe," are displayed at the Oregon Historical Center's Contemporary Indian Arts show. Serigraph in the background is by Tony Hunt (Kwakwaka'wakw) and entitled "Sisiute."

CDS Photo

(Top Right)

BACK TO BASKETS - Miniature baskets by Richard Cultee (Skokomish) are joined by the Interior Salish baskets of Lena Dunstan (Haida-Colville). Of particular historical interest is Dunstan's whaling hat shown at the left.

CDS Photo

(Center)

POISED FOR FLIGHT - A cedar rattle in the shape of a grebe perched on a stand bearing a human face in John Hoover's contemporary interpretation of a ceremonial item. Hoover, an Aleut, has several carvings in the exhibit, including masks and "spirit boards."

The showing of Contemporary Northwest Indian Arts is housed at the Oregon Historical Center at 1230 S.W. Park Avenue in Portland, not far from downtown and one block from the Portland Art Museum.

by Cynthia Stowell

The rich artistic traditions of coastal and interior tribes of the northwest have been brought to life in a small but varied exhibit at the Oregon Historical Society in Portland.

The exhibit eloquently tells the cultural history of the region in contemporary terms. If the beauty and craftsmanship of the works in this show are the measure of cultural evolution, then the transition from traditional to modern has been a proud and graceful one.

Nineteen artists representing more than nine northwest tribes have lent their recent works for display. The show was assembled by the Indian Festival of Arts in La Grande, Oregon and guest curator Del Mc Bride (Cowlitz-Quinalt) of the State Capitol Museum in Olympia, Washington.

From baskets to abstract oils and masks to serigraphs, every medium is being explored by these modern Indian artists.

At the show's opening artists explained that though many work within established stylistic conventions they are free to express individuality in their work.

The impressive collection of masks perhaps best typifies the bridge between old and new. Distorted faces carved in cedar and decorated with human hair and abalone stare from the glass cases, disembodied from the ceremonies for which they were once used and existing purely for their own design beauty.

The mask motif is carried a step further by John Hoover, an Aleut who carved "Blue Jay Woman." A woman's face in primitive style forms the central portion of the three-panel work, with slender blue jays arching over her head. The outer panels which swivel on hinges are blue jays in profile.

Northwest coastal designs once painted on wood or hide are presented in serigraphs, a type of silkscreen, by Kwakiutl Tony

Hunt, among others. About a dozen such prints in black and red ink depict prized animals or totems of the coastal culture.

Baskets of natural fibers reflect coastal and interior designs and retain their functional aspect. Woven into the design of a whaler's hat crafted by Lena Dunstan (Haida-Colville) is a boat filled with fishermen in pursuit of a whale.

Sculpture goes beyond the traditional in the ceramic works of Glen La Fontaine (Chippewa-Cree). His rotund, blank-

eted figures are humorous but reverent interpretations of the Plains Indian of the last century.

The greatest departure from traditional Indian art form is the abstract oil painting of Earl Biss (Blackfoot). One dark canvas entitled "Round Dance" is flecked with colors to depict the color and motion of the dance.

Silver and ivory jewelry, wooden "spirit boards," a button blanket and other functional or purely decorative objects are on view for the public until November 26.

Extension Notes

Steam Pressure Canner - Safest Method

Hunting season is in full swing and this is a great time to use canning talents to insure a good supply of venison, elk, game birds and fish throughout the year. This can also be a dangerous time if the correct canning method is not used for these foods, says Warm Springs Extension Agent, Pennie Albrant.

If you are slaughtering your own animals, chill the meat immediately to stop spoilage and to make the meat easier to handle. Guard against botulism poisoning which occurs when food is eaten containing toxins produced

by the bacterium, Clostridium Botulinum. This bacterium can grow inside a jar without air if the food is not processed at a temperature of 240 degrees fahrenheit for certain lengths of time and amounts of pressure during canning.

This temperature can only be reached under pressure in a steam pressure canner. A water bath canner can only reach 212 degrees fahrenheit and processing meat in an oven, dishwasher, a regular pressure cooker, open canning kettle, or a steam kettle without pressure will not kill deadly bacteria.

If you see any of the following signs of spoilage in your canned vegetables, meats, or seafood discard the food and do not taste it! Deadly bacteria could be present!

- + Bulging or corroded lid on jar
- + Food oozing out of jar
- + Mushy or moldy food
- + Bad odor
- + Gas pressure or bubbles

For canning recipes and correct processing pressures and times, contact the Warm Springs Extension Office at 553-1161 ext. 238. A pressure canner is also available for your use at the office.

Spooky Clean-up

If some goblins decorate your windows this Halloween, you can make the clean-up job easier if you begin with a razor blade rather than water. Most of us get out the hose and a brush as a first reaction to the witchy art work, but this may make the job more difficult.

If you know the spook used soap, hot water is the best cleaner. Hot water and soap just make suds and the clean-up may actually get some fall cleaning done.

If you use the same treatment with wax, you have a real mess; and sometimes it is difficult to tell the difference.

Hot water causes the wax to melt and spreads a thin coating down over the glass. This thin covering is more difficult to remove because it, streaks the

glass unevenly and runs into the window ledges or sills. On car windows, it can actually cause the window mechanism to stick.

Though it is never a treat to clean up this mess, a single edged razor blade, preferably one in a blade holder, will peel the art work from your glass.

Then, wash the window with hot sudsy water, rinse and dry. HAVE A HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

