

## OBSERVATION / DEDUCTIONS / QUESTIONS

### Make Observations

1. Look at pictures of the work by one of the contemporary Native artists (Cher Thomas, Teri Greeves, James Fendenheim)

What do you see?

What item of clothing/adornment is this?

If someone is wearing this item, who are they? How do you know?

What is it made of? List all the materials.

What design motifs, colors, words, pictures are on the clothing?

2. Look at the related picture examples.

How are these pictures related?

What clues do these images give you about the clothing/adornment in the first picture?

### Make Deductions

What might the object help us learn about *where* and *when* the person lived? How?

What might your observations tell us about the cultural identity of the maker or wearer of these clothes, shoes or jewelry?  
(Think about place, group, statement of ideas and relationships)

### Ask Questions

What questions do you have about this object of adornment?

## **IMAGES OF BASKETRY AND POTTERY**

### **These designs relate to Cher Thomas's work**

Andrew Higgins, curatorial assistant for ethnology, Arizona State Museum

The Akimel O'odham weave a coiled technique with cattail as the foundation and willow and devils claw as the coils. The designs often are believed to have a connection to water and sometimes they even look like waves. The designs were common on the red on buff pottery of the Hohokam culture. Hohokam are the ancestors of the O'odham. They lived in the Sonoran Desert region from AD 300-AD 1400.

It's great to see how these designs have not disappeared and have gone from being used on pottery to basketry to clothing today.

The baskets in the photographs are Akimel O'odham dating from 1900-1920 and the pottery is Akimel and Tohono O'odham dating from 1910-1930, from the collection of the Arizona State Museum.

Photos of Arizona State Museum objects by Jannelle Weakley, Arizona State Museum/University of Arizona

### **Photos of Cher Thomas collection, courtesy of the designer:**

Ties, photos by Amy Davila

Skirt and Crop Top, photos by Roshan Spottsville

Silver Dress, photos by Larry Price

Sundress and Mini Skirt, photos by Steve Yap

## IMAGE INFORMATION - JAMES FENDENHEIM

### Works by James Fendenheim

#### **Tohono O'odham Mountain Bracelet and Earrings**

Made in 2014, courtesy of Arizona State Museum gift shop with permission of the artist.

Artist statement about piece: The Sonoran Desert mountains are a reflection of my backyard, my home. The earrings' shape, sort of a hook, are a reference to something sharp, like a thorn on many of the desert plants. The bracelet slopes from 2 inches wide to a half inch wide to give it perspective, like the perspective you see when looking at the mountains.

#### **Desert Law Necklace**

Made in 2009, Arizona State Museum collection

Artist statement about piece: I call this piece "Desert Law," as nature, not man, controls the law of the Sonoran desert. That's why I use the star badge—it is the desert who is on control. The piece has 18 karat gold, silver, Bisbee turquoise—all mined in Arizona. It also has quartz from Brazil in it. The hands are me holding the piece together. I use the hands a lot. The horse is a Papago pony to relate to a story my grandmother told me.

#### **TO Highway Serpent Bracelet**

Made in 1999, Arizona State Museum collection

Artist statement about piece: This piece refers to Indian Road 86 that runs through the Tohono O'odham reservation. The serpent represents the perilous serpent of the highway—referring to all the death that occurs along this road because of drinking and driving. The skull alludes to that too, like the roadside crosses and shrines erected along the highway where people have died in accidents. This one has my initials on it rather than my newer stamp.

#### **Man in the Maze Necklace**

Made in 2014, courtesy of the artist.

Artist statement about piece: Man in the Maze is our top tribal symbol. It's kind like the cross to Catholics—that powerful a symbol. The meaning is almost secretive. Each person has his own maze to follow in life. It speaks to people on a personal level—it represents my way of life.

Man in the Maze story from We R Native website

<http://www.wernative.org/SubTopicDetails.aspx?id=299&type=MyCulture>

This figure is called Se:he or l'itoi ("Big Brother") in the Tohono O'odham language. He is shown at the top of a labyrinth, or maze, and is often referred to as the "Man in the Maze". For the Tohono O'odham, the symbol represents a person's journey through life. The twists and turns represent choices made in life; with each turn, man becomes more understanding and stronger as a person.

In the middle of the maze, a person finds their dreams and goals. At the center (the last turn in the design), man has a final opportunity to look back upon his or her choices and path before they pass into the next world. Several other tribes related to the Tohono O'odham use the same or similar symbol, sometimes with a slightly different interpretation.)

Here is how Alfreda Antone, a Tohono O'odham tribal member, sees Se:he and the labyrinth:

"Elder Brother lived in the maze ... and the reason why he lived in the maze was because ... I think how I'm gonna say this ... magician or oh, medicine man that can disappear, and that can do things, heal people and things like that ... that was Elder Brother ... Se:he ... they called him ... he lived in there ... but he had a lot of enemies so he made that, and to live in there people would go in there but they couldn't find him ... they would turn around and go back.

"But in real life ... when you look at the maze you start from the top and go into the maze ... your life, you go down and then you reach a place where you have to turn around ... maybe in your own life you fall, something happens in your home, you are sad, you pick yourself up and you go on through the maze ... you go on and on and on ... so many places in there you might ... maybe your child died ... or maybe somebody died, or you stop, you fall and you feel bad ... you get up, turn around and go again ... when you reach that middle of the maze ... that's when you see the Sun God and the Sun God blesses you and says you have made it ... that's where you die."

The maze is a symbol of life...happiness, sadness...and you reach your goal...there's a dream there, and you reach that dream when you get to the middle of the maze...that's how I was told, my grandparents told me that's how the maze is."

### **Related Images**

Map of southern Arizona/northern Mexico showing Tohono O'odham Nation and Tucson locations

Seal of the Tohono O'odham Nation.

The Tohono O'odham Nation is a federally recognized tribe located in southwestern and central Arizona. Tohono O'odham translates as "desert people" and our people have lived in the region since time immemorial. We have a rich history and culture that continues to thrive today. –from the Tribal Chairman, <http://www.tonation-nsn.gov/>

Constable Star badge, circa 1927, Tucson. Worn by Constable Fred Wilding. Arizona Historical Society, Southern Division collection

Photograph "Entering the Tohono O'odham Nation," by Terrol Dew Johnson

Photograph "Saguaro National Park," by Jörn Napp, October 2006

Photograph "Barrel Cactus" from Cambridge University Botanic Gardens, July 2010

Rattlesnake drawing from The Wild Man at Home: or, Pictures of Life in Savage Lands ... With woodcuts ... and Coloured Illustrations, page 176, from the British Library

Two photographs of roadside crosses on the Tohono O'odham Nation, Route 86, from [http://www.pbase.com/ravenoaks/roadside\\_memorials\\_on\\_the\\_reservations&page=1](http://www.pbase.com/ravenoaks/roadside_memorials_on_the_reservations&page=1)

## **IMAGE INFORMATION - TERI GREEVES**

### **BEADED TENNIS SHOES**

**Photographs** of three pairs of beaded high heeled, high top tennis shoes made by Teri Greeves (Kiowa), courtesy of the artist.

#### **Fully Beaded Tennis Shoes as a Series of Work**

Artist Statement: Teri Greeves, 2015

I make beaded tennis shoes because through the ages Kiowa people have almost always adorned their footwear. Making beaded tennis shoes is simply a continuance of something started long before me: the idea that personal adornment can be an expression of self, of society, of tribe, and of humanity.

I understand the immediate appeal of beaded tennis shoes—they are whimsical, fun, and familiar. However my intention is once the viewer is comfortable, to tell a more complex story of contemporary Indian life with the beaded illustrations. Most of my tennis shoe stories deal with our living history, culture, society and daily life through imagery from a particular dance or custom. In some way then the viewer becomes educated, even if only sub-consciously to the fact that we, as Native people, exist in the here and now and not as caricatures and stereotypes but as real and multifaceted human beings.

The story then of all of the shoes I have made is that of survival from genocide. We, as Kiowas, have lived through a violent, dangerous, awesome, and proud history and I believe in some way these shoes can stand as testament to our survival not just as people but also of a material culture that expresses our lives and values as Kiowas in the 21st Century. The beaded tennis shoes I make are my hopeful and joyful expression of the continuance of the Kiowa people.

#### **Great Lakes Shoes: Fully Beaded High Heeled Shoes**

Artist Statement: Teri Greeves, 2008

(Shoes are in the collection of the Brooklyn Museum of Art, NY)

These stiletto “tennis” shoes are my illustration of the beauty of Native women living in 21<sup>st</sup> Century America.

The dance that the two female figures are doing is referred to among Native pow-wow circles as the Jingle Dress. This name comes from the type of dress the women wear. Made out of cloth and heavily embellished with cones made from the twisted metal lids of tobacco snuff cans, the dress itself is a testament to the absorption of the material world the dominant culture brought with them and the

Native creativity with those new mediums. Though this dance is now done by women of many different tribes, it is my understanding that it began in the Great Lakes Region among the Ojibwa and Chippewa. These are the people whose ancestral home is now called Lake Shore Drive. And these people still maintain communities in the city that has grown around them.

On the inside of the shoes, I chose to do my version of traditional Great Lakes floral designs. Being ever mindful of the appropriation of cultures and the ways in which it can dishonor the original meanings behind design aesthetic and the proper ways in which ideas and symbols are passed on, I never thought it was proper that me, a Kiowa, should bead Great Lakes florals though I found them so outrageously beautiful. As fate would have it, I married an Ottawa man from Michigan and now have two beautiful Ottawa/Kiowa sons. In some way, I feel I can bead my personal version of the flowers those Great Lakes ladies did so well.

These shoes are my tribute to the beauty and survival of the Anishnaabe Quaa, the Great Lakes Indian Women who have always known the shores of Lake Michigan as home.

## LAKOTA VEST

**Image:** Lakota Child's Pictorial Beaded and Hide Vest, Circa 1890  
Arizona State Museum Collection, Collected by General John A. Logan.  
Catalogue # E-1512

**Image:** Crow Beaded Moccasins, Circa 1870's  
Arizona State Museum Collection, Acquired in 1919 from Nellie Dermont.  
Catalogue # 8472

**Image:** Ojibwa Beaded Floral Vest  
Arizona State Museum Collection, Collected in 1893-1895 by T.P. Smith who was commissioner of Indian Affairs in Oklahoma at the time.  
Catalogue # E-5741

**Image:** Eastern Sioux Beaded Hide Leggings, Circa 1900  
Arizona State Museum Collection, Collected by Miss Adela C. Van Horn.  
Catalogue # E-447

All photos of Arizona State Museum objects by Jannelle Weakley, Arizona State Museum

### **The Use of Vests and Beading Designs by Plains Peoples**

Andrew Higgins, curatorial assistant for ethnology, Arizona State Museum

1. Vests are a European style of clothing that was pushed on American Indians

to wear by US officials, schools and missionaries in the 1800s so they would look “white”. However, the Plains Indian nations (and other cultures) took the vest style and made it out of tanned leather and began to sew beaded designs that were both from their culture and from the Anglo culture. Images of flags were popular.

2. Beginning in the early 1800s, fur traders traded glass and metallic beads to American Indians for beaver pelts. The beads were desired because previously Native crafts people had used porcupine quills and paints to decorate their clothing. The beads came from Italy and few other European countries.

3. Some Native crafts people used the flag design as selling gimmick trying to lure Calvary men and tourists to buy their pieces. Early pictures of parades show many Lakota and other Plains regions peoples wearing clothing with the flag and other pictorial designs on them. It was a popular design both for the American Indians and for the Americans buying their work.

## POWWOW JINGLE DRESSES

### **Image: Dancer wearing jingle dress**

Photograph by Ken Rahaim, 2007, [National Museum of the American Indian](#)  
Accession number: 07natl-powwow\_0376

### **Image: Detail of jingle dress**

Photograph by Cynthia Frankenburg, 2005, [National Museum of the American Indian](#)  
Accession number: 081405CFPWc141

The National Museum of the American Indian sponsored the National Powwow in 2002, 2005, and 2007 as a way of presenting to the public the diversity and social traditions of contemporary Native cultures.

Powwows are large social gatherings of Native Americans who follow traditional dances started centuries ago by their ancestors, and which continually evolve to include contemporary aspects. These events of drum music, dancing, singing, artistry and food, are attended by Natives and non-Natives, all of whom join in the dancing and take advantage of the opportunity to see old friends and teach the traditional ways to a younger generation. During the National Powwow, the audience see dancers in full regalia compete in several dance categories, including Men and Women's Golden Age (ages 50 and older); Men's Fancy Dance, Grass and Traditional (Northern and Southern); Women's Jingle Dress, Fancy Shawl, and Traditional (Northern and Southern); Teens (13-17); Juniors (6-12) and Tiny Tots (ages 5 and younger). The drum groups are the heart of all powwows and provide the pulsating and thunderous beats that accompany a dancer's every movement. The powwow is led by three "host drums" that

showcase three distinct styles of singing (Northern, Southern and contemporary) and represent the best examples of each style. The drum contest highlights groups of 10 to 12 members each, and they sing traditional family songs that are passed down orally from one generation to the next.

## ABOUT FLAG DESIGNS ON LAKOTA VEST



Some History | Independence Day

<http://www.beyondbuckskin.com/2012/07/some-history-independence-day.html>

Dr. Jessica Metcalfe, July 4, 2012

Reservation Era, Native people incorporated their cultural practices into US holidays, such as Independence Day, as a way to continue their then-outlawed dances and ceremonial life.

It was actually 'illegal' to do 'Indian things' like dance or continue ceremonies, so participating in holidays like Independence Day was actually a subversive way to continue traditions and keep the US government at bay at the same time.

American flags would come to be associated with the only celebrations that were still allowed by government agents.

Sometimes, when you look at the sheer amount of diverse items that had beaded flags put on them, it seems as though the beader thought, "Stick a flag on it so we won't be thrown in jail, or shot and murdered."

One great example is how the American flag became a popular design motif among the Sioux during the latter part of the 19th century. The flag symbol was actually adopted into their culture and represents a number of meanings. It could have been a coup that was taken as a war honor, and later it became a symbol of protection.



Shirts decorated like the one above are often identified as garments of a highly select group of leaders among the Sioux. The decorations on these fine shirts have prestigious connotations, and they become popular among the elderly war veterans and the members of the tribal police. This one has flag symbols through the shirt, demonstrating how important this symbol would become in the late 1800s.

The girl's dress below is one of my favorite dresses from this era. A couple of things are significant about this dress. First, it is fully beaded. Fully beaded girls' dresses are rare – this dress was probably intended to bring prestige to a respected family. Secondly, you can see the American flag symbol at the top of the yoke. But even though the flags have red and white stripes, their white stars on blue background don't look like the traditional American 5-point stars because they aren't. These 4-point stars represent the single morning star. The morning star features greatly in Plains Indian symbolism and oral tradition. I love how the beader made this important alteration.



Many of the activities that made life meaningful were no longer possible to do. Only the women were able to maintain some of their traditional occupations. So the fact that these women combined the important roles of clothing-maker with the changing worlds around them (such as including these new symbols of protection) is really quite significant.

In memory of that era, I wish you all a safe and happy 4th of July.

*Note: The shirt and dress are from the [Fenimore Art Museum](#).  
Posted by [Dr. Jessica R. Metcalfe](#)*