**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 someway 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 21st Century America.

The dance that the two female figures are doing is referred to among Native powwow 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.