

- total provincial population of 32.4 million (Zhang and Shi 1992:14).
3. According to the 1990 census, forty-eight of China's fifty-five minorities were represented in Guizhou. The majority of these were present in minute numbers, migrants from various historical, military, and political movements. Those who are considered to have a significant historical presence in the province are, in descending order of population size: Miao, Bouyei, Dong, Tujia, Yi, Gelao, Shui, Hui, Bai, Zhuang, Yao, Menggu (Mongolian), Man (Manchu), and Qiang.
 4. Personal communication with Phila McDaniel, February, 1993.
 5. Quotations are drawn from the Mingei Museum brochure authored by Longenecker as well as from personal communication with her, February, 1993.
 6. Although my presence at the events around the opening was unofficial, I was placed in several roles once I arrived. Because of my familiarity with Chinese language, with things Miao and with the Miao experts themselves, I was consulted on exhibit labels, asked to serve as translator, and called upon as a cultural interpreter to render information in terms accessible to westerners.
 7. Personal communication with Li Tinggui, Sept., 1992.

References

- Clifford, James
1988 On Collecting Art and Culture. In *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art*. James Clifford. Pp.215-51. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Handler, Richard
1992 On the Valuing of Museum Objects. *Museum Anthropology* 16(1):21-28.
- Hooper-Greenhill, Eileen
1992 *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*. London: Routledge.
- Inglis, Stephen
1989 Post-Colonial Museums: Dead or Alive? *Public Culture* 1(2):84-85.
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara
1991 Objects of Ethnography. In *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, eds. Pp.386-443. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Lavine, Steven D., and Ivan Karp
1991 Introduction: Museums and Multiculturalism. In *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, eds. Pp.1-9. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Mullin, Molly H.
1992 The Patronage of Difference: Making Indian Art "Art Not Ethnology". *Cultural Anthropology* 7(4):395-424.
- Myers, Fred
1991 Representing Culture: The Production of Discourse(s) for Aboriginal Acrylic Painting. *Cultural Anthropology* 6(1):26-62.
- Price, Sally
1989 *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Schildkrout, Enid
1992 Introduction: Thinking About Things. *Museum Anthropology* 16(3):5-6.

Torgovnick, Marianna

1990 *Gone Primitive: Savage Intellectuals, Modern Lives*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zhang Renwei, and Shi Kaizhong

1992 *Guizhou Minzu Renkou (Population of Nationalities in Guizhou)*. Guiyang: Guizhou Nationalities Press.

CREATIVITY IS OUR TRADITION. The Institute of American Indian Arts Museum, Santa Fe, NM. (Permanent Installation).

BILL MERCER
Cincinnati Art Museum

The Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) Museum, housing the National Collection of Contemporary Indian Art, informs us in its brochure that it is the only institution devoted entirely to contemporary Native American art. Founded in 1972, the museum was originally housed in a small, inadequate facility. However, in June 1992 the museum moved to its present location just off the Santa Fe plaza in a Pueblo revival-style building that formerly housed a series of government offices. Architects Antoine Predock and Louis Weller, a Caddo Indian, designed the basic renovation of the building. Of the total cost, \$2.5 million was provided by the United States Congress. An additional \$2.7 million needed to complete the renovation and supply the furnishings came from the Rockefeller, MacArthur, and Kresge Foundations as well as other private contributions (Haederle 1992:4). The result is a 25,000 square-foot museum facility that includes a permanent gallery, two temporary exhibition spaces, a gift shop, a bookstore, offices and meeting areas, classrooms, a conservation laboratory, and climate-controlled collections storage rooms.

The exhibition areas were designed by Andrew Gartner of Design Techs in Santa Fe, New Mexico; the exhibits were fabricated by Chuck Dailey of the IAIA Museum Studies Department and installed by IAIA students. The curator of the permanent exhibit *Creativity Is Our Tradition* was B. Lynne Harlan, Curator of Exhibitions. The exhibit was overseen by Richard Hill, IAIA Museum Director at that time.

Upon entering the Institute of American Indian Arts Museum visitors are funneled through the Lloyd Kiva New Welcoming Circle—named for former IAIA president Lloyd Kiva New. This space, housing a program entitled "Indian Art Through Indian Eyes," is intended to sensitize non-Indian visitors to native American perspectives. The Welcoming Circle is a large circular

room resembling a kiva with cushioned seats against the inside of the walls. Here visitors may sit and listen to recordings of poems written by former IAIA students. The poems start out dealing with "traditional" concerns and then move on to confront contemporary aspects of Native American life. The lights are lowered inside the room except for a single red spotlight that shines down on the "firepit" in the center of the floor. Combined with the poetry, the lighting creates a rather dramatic effect, amplified by the room's formal resemblance to a kiva structure.

After visitors have been prepared in the Welcoming Circle they are confronted with another preparatory area before they enter the main gallery. This small space, subtitled "Indian Art Has a Long History," focuses on prehistoric and historic American Indian art and is much more intellectually oriented than the emotionally charged Welcoming Circle. Located just outside the doors to the permanent gallery, text panels and objects attempt to provide historical context to contemporary Native American art. One introductory panel makes general statements about Native American art; it begins "Indian art is born out of regional cultures inspired by land, animals, and spirit forces . . ." Eight smaller panels of text make more specific comments regarding eight cultural areas of North America; the Far North, California, the Southwest, the Plains, the Great Lakes, the Southeast, and the Northeast. This exhibit unit includes historic examples of art from each of these regions, in some instances juxtaposing them with contemporary art inspired by a historic example from that region.

Finally, after the emotional and intellectual preparation is completed, visitors are able to step into the permanent gallery which uses pieces from The National Collection of Contemporary Indian Art for the exhibition, *Creativity Is Our Tradition*.

It appears that all of the works of art that make up the collection and are used in the exhibition were produced by current and former IAIA students and faculty, many of whom are among the most influential and illustrious Native American artists of the twentieth century. They include Earl Biss, David Bradley, T.C. Cannon, Allan Houser, Charles Loloma, Otellie Loloma, Dan Namingha, Kevin Red Star, and Fritz Scholder.

The exhibition itself has a definite emphasis on painting and other two-dimensional forms such as drawing and printmaking. Like the various painting styles that exist in the larger contemporary artistic community there are also a variety of painting styles represented in contemporary

Native American painting. These styles are illustrated by a variety of works, including the cubist-influenced *Autumn Morning*, an exploration of color and form by Dan Namingha; an untitled abstract expressionist painting by Earl Biss; and *The Great American Dream* by Delmar Boni, certainly influenced by the Pop Art movement of the 1960s.

In addition to two dimensional works of contemporary Native American art, the exhibit also includes a number sculptural works. Most of the sculptures are small and are presented inside cases. There are, however, several larger sculptures mounted on pedestals and placed at various points in the center of the exhibition area. One large freestanding work, *Wally Koshare Meets Rambo* by Barry Coffin, is located in a corner of the gallery.

Objects such as beadwork and jewelry are also included in the exhibit. However, these objects, which are generally considered to be more historic forms are certainly not highlighted. This is an unfortunate choice because it is these types of objects which combine traditional ideals with new materials and techniques of manufacture that are often incredibly dynamic expressions. Two pieces of beadwork by Marcus Amerman exemplify this innovation. The first piece is a totally beaded portrait based on a nineteenth century photograph of the Kiowa, Big Bow. In this work Amerman has used color to construct a tremendous amount of detail and give the illusion of perspective, creating a remarkably realistic portrait. The second piece, a pair of beaded cuffs, is just as dynamic. One cuff has a red hand design on a black background while the other cuff is black on red. On both cuffs there is a circular design in the palm of each hand that is reminiscent of the swirling patterns painted by Van Gogh in *Starry Night*.

Despite the wide variety of both forms and styles represented in the exhibit there are several common themes that emerge. The first theme is related to the title of the exhibition, *Creativity Is Our Tradition*. By emphasizing painting and sculpture of various modern artistic styles, it is apparent that one of the show's main objectives is to focus on works of art that are not stereotypically Native American in either form or subject matter. While connections between traditional and contemporary works are pointed out, it is the creative process of the contemporary Native American artist that is emphasized, as well as how that process can draw both from traditional Native American cultures and from the contemporary artistic community. It is also pointed out that the art produced by contemporary Native

American artists reflects their society just as much as art produced by historic and prehistoric counterparts was a reflection of their own social contexts.

The second theme that emerges concerns the subject matter of the art. It is obvious that the works are affirmations of cultural identity and frequently reflect what is often the stark reality of contemporary Native American life. In some instances the results can appear to be rather whimsical. For example, a clay sculpture by Laura Fragua depicts a small Anglo boy wearing a souvenir feather headdress and holding a rubber tomahawk; it's entitled *Just Because You Put Feathers in Your Hair Don't Make You an Indian*. In other works the tone is somber. For example, *Trinity* by Da Ka Keen consists of three photographs of a naked and manacled Native American male tacked onto a rough wooden cross and crowned by a halo of barbed wire. It is clear through the subject matter of the works and the artists' statements that they consider their pieces to be documents of the contemporary Native American experience and that they are the modern day chroniclers or ethnographers of that experience.

In spite of the stunning works of art that are exhibited, perhaps the most impressive aspect of *Creativity Is Our Tradition* are the artists' statements that make up the exhibit's text. At times they are lengthy but the visitor's stamina will be rewarded by a fuller appreciation of the artists' motivations and goals. The statements also document how they see themselves as Native Americans as well as artists. There is a great deal of diversity to these statements and they reinforce the idea that there is no Pan-Indian cultural experience just as there is no single Native American contemporary artistic style. Each artist's work is a reflection of his or her own individual cultural experiences which range from the reservation to urban settings.

In analyzing the individual works of art that are included in the exhibition there are several points that need to be discussed. The first is that while there are works from many of the most influential contemporary Native American artists, these works may not be the most well known examples of a particular artist's work. Most of the pieces were created when the artists were students at IAlA and are not examples of the artist's most mature style. Often the works show an artist experimenting with different styles or media. In the case of T.C. Cannon's *Mama and Papa Have the Going Home to Shiprock Blues*, the work was not even completed (Hill 1992:90). While

showing immature works and experiments can be instrumental in showing an artist's development it should be balanced with works that reflect the artist's total career.

The second point that needs to be discussed bears on the exclusion of certain artists. While *Creativity Is Our Tradition* adequately documents the students, alumni, and faculty of the IAlA it ignores artists that have not been associated with the school. By excluding influential artists such as Edgar Heap of Birds, Bill Reid and others, the IAlA museum will remain inwardly focused and its collection will certainly not deserve to be named "The National Collection of Contemporary Indian Art."

While *Creativity Is Our Tradition* has some shortcomings, most notably the small gallery space and the overemphasis on IAlA affiliated artists, it nonetheless is successful. It is strategically located just off the Santa Fe plaza insuring a steady audience and, presumably, a constant cash flow. However, the most significant aspect of the institution is that *Creativity Is Our Tradition* is presented with a Native American point of view by a virtually all Native American staff, thereby serving as a model for other institutions that wish to incorporate the Native American perspective in their own exhibition programs. ♦

References

- Haederle, Michael
1992 American Moderns. *Chicago Tribune*. Section 5, pp.1, 4. 11 October.
Hill, Rick
1992 *Creativity Is Our Tradition*. Santa Fe: Institute of American Indian Arts Press.

* * *

THE ANCIENT AMERICAS: ART FROM SACRED LANDSCAPES. Art Institute of Chicago (October 10, 1992 - January 3, 1993); Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (February 14 - April 18, 1993); Los Angeles County Museum of Art (June 6 - August 15, 1993).

JONATHAN HAAS
Field Museum of Natural History

WINIFRED CREAMER
Northern Illinois University

The key concept for the exhibit *The Ancient Americas: Art from Sacred Landscapes* is "curatorship." The exhibit has been brilliantly