

For Immediate Release

November 2, 2021

RESOLUTE: Native Nations Art in the Bruce Collection
November 7, 2021 – January 21, 2022, Guest Curator Kirsten J. Reinhardt

GREENWICH, CT—The rich diversity of Native American nations, which includes hundreds of distinct cultures and languages shared by millions of people, is celebrated in this exhibition of objects from the Bruce Museum’s Native American Collection. Each unique piece represents the creative vision of an artist within the structured cultural context of their location and tribal identity.

Included are Native-made objects that were made for tribal use and designed and manufactured specifically for the tourist trade. From this commercial market rose the individual Native artists who developed a singular style within and at the same time outside the tribal style. These artists have the dual responsibility of providing economic security while maintaining their unique cultural identity.



There are at least two stories behind each object in the Bruce Collection. First, the story of the maker who conceived of and created the object. Second, the person who recognized the importance and the artistic integrity of the object and acquired it for posterity. These stories of our shared American history can and should be told.



In light of important conversations about how museums acquired their collections the Bruce Museum undertook a study of the acquisition process of its Native American collections. Genealogical and historic research has shed light on important figures in American history and the on Greenwich residents who contributed their collections to the Bruce Museum. Research also revealed that the collection was obtained without force or nefarious intent.



Press Release

Collaboration with Native scholars and culture leaders has verified the work of known Native artists who made significant contributions to American art history.

Correspondence with Native knowledge experts and elders from the Mohegan Tantaquidgeon Museum, the Mashantucket-Pequot tribe, the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, the Delaware Tribe, the Choctaw Nation, the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, the Zuni, the Diné and the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes has expanded the interpretation of numerous objects in the collection.

The variety of objects in the collection demonstrates the diversity of ways of knowing, being, and doing within Native American cultures. Native artists have used culturally significant colors, symbols, and patterns to express pride and to reclaim the authority of tribal cultural memory. Native people continue to be resolute, choosing to maintain the resolve necessary to achieve self-determination.

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About the Bruce Museum

The Bruce Museum is a community-based, world-class institution that offers a changing array of exhibitions and educational programs to promote the understanding and appreciation of art and science. Originally built as a private home in 1853 the house and property were purchased in 1858 by Robert Moffat Bruce (1822-1909), a wealthy textile merchant and member of the New York Cotton Exchange, and were deeded the Town of Greenwich in 1908 with the stipulation that they be used as “a natural history, historical, and art museum for the use and benefit of the public.” The first exhibition at the Bruce Museum took place in 1912 and featured works by local artists known as the Greenwich Society of Artists, several of whom were members of the Cos Cob Art Colony. Over the years, largely through the generosity of the Greenwich community, the Bruce’s collection has grown to approximately 25,000 objects representing the arts and sciences. Complementing the Museum’s interest in Connecticut painters, early directors of the Bruce Museum pursued the development of the natural sciences, building particular strengths in the mineral and avian collections. In 1992, the Bruce Museum building underwent a complete renovation and redesign, creating a modern architectural model of museum quality. The Bruce Museum’s current expansion project will take the building from 33,000 to over 70,000 square feet and will add state-of-the-art exhibition, education, and community spaces, while connecting the Museum to its picturesque setting in Bruce Park in a dramatic new way. The grand opening of the New Bruce is planned for late 2022.

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