

METAPHOR, MYTH, & POLITICS

Art from Native Printmakers

"Printmaking, unlike many other media, is unique in promoting community and building connections beyond what is usually possible. The networking and sharing that takes place in our communities is democratic, and creates a place where anyone and everyone can take part and feel welcomed. It is for these reasons that I have chosen to be known as a printmaker." – Melanie Yazzie, 2017

Within the canon of Native American art, the medium and practice of printmaking holds a vital and endearing position that can be attributed to the core ideals of artistic collaboration, community relationships, and intellectual and physical exchange.

Since the earliest histories of the medium, printmaking has emerged within a legacy of collaboration. In many instances, artists work closely with print studios or workshops to expand the boundaries of printmaking technologies. In some prints, artists work together to create the content and design of a print, resulting in complex layers and elements that simultaneously blend together while reflecting distinctive artistic styles.

The creative process is also reflective of the larger artistic, Native American, and printmaking communities. Many of the works in this exhibition are part of larger portfolios, unified by common themes that a diversity of artists visually explore to address social and political issues. Regional, national and international artist gatherings, community events, and printmaking conferences are some of the creative contexts for printmaking, alongside the development of coordinated group portfolios.

Ultimately, however, it is the intellectual sharing of ideas and physical exchange of prints that is most significant to printmaking. In the collaborative process of creating is the exchange of ideas, technologies and aesthetics. The multiples created in the production process foster physical sharing of prints, gifting to collaborators, friends, repositories and communities. The majority of prints in this traveling exhibition, and in the C.N. Gorman Museum's permanent collections, have been generously donated by the artists to serve as a repository and be publicly accessible.

This exhibition was created to culminate the process – to share artworks, artists, techniques, and social commentary with visitors.

– Veronica Passalacqua, Curator, C.N. Gorman Museum

Metaphor, Myth, & Politics: Art from Native Printmakers is a traveling exhibition created in partnership between the C.N. Gorman Museum at UC Davis and Exhibit Envoy, a non-profit.

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