

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN

Native American Art: The Being of Objects

A four day workshop for graduate students and junior professionals

**Sponsored by the Otsego Institute for Native American Art History,
in cooperation with the Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, New York**

May 20-25th, 2012

Program

The 2012 Otsego Institute will focus on the question of the different ways in which makers, users and custodians of Indigenous North American material heritage have historically conceptualized and today understand the fundamental nature of artistic objects. Both the words 'art' and 'object,' of course, are Western, and carry with them a modern European understanding of aesthetics as universal and materiality as inanimate, lending themselves to distanced, disembodied and 'objective' or scientific modes of study. As Indigenous intellectual traditions testify, there are other ways to understand the qualities of being-- notions of personhood, power, agency, sacrality-- that may inhere in and between objects. When objects are understood to have such attributes, furthermore, they may require to be treated in appropriate ways, so that understanding the being of objects-- objects as beings-- has ethical implications for questions of access, storage, conservation and ownership as well as research and display.

This 4 day lecture seminar and workshop will explore the following topics:

Authenticity, quality, connoisseurship

Varied interpretations and uses of Native American objects

Issues of Native American objects in museums

The workshops will include presentations, discussions and hands-on examination of original works of art. There will be time for participants to present informally their own current and prospective dissertations and curatorial projects to co-participants and faculty.

Seminar/Workshop Leaders and Resource Faculty

Janet Catherine Berlo (University of Rochester), Eva Fognell (Fenimore Art Museum), Aaron Glass (Bard Graduate Center), Richard Hill (York University), Jonathan Holstein (art dealer), Joe D. Horse Capture (Minneapolis Institute of Arts), Aldona Jonaitis (Director Emeritus, University of Alaska Museum), Evan Maurer, (Director Emeritus, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts), Ruth Phillips (Carleton University), Jolene Rickard (Cornell University).

Participation

The workshop is open to graduate students and beginning professionals specializing in or considering specialization in Native American Art History, whether in Art, Anthropology, or Native Studies Departments or Museums.

The Otsego Institute for Native American Art History

The Otsego Institute for Native American Art History was founded in 1996 to support and promote the highest standards of the discipline of art history in the field of North American Indian art. It has sponsored three invitational conferences at the Fenimore Art Museum. The first meeting was held in June 1997 and the topic was The State of Native American Art History. The second meeting, held in August 1998, focused on current research on Northwest Coast art and was tied to Native Visions: Northwest Coast Art from the 18th Century to the Present, a loan exhibition from the Seattle Art Museum. In August 1999 the Institute held the third conference, Native Art History and Folk Art History: Critiquing the Paradigms. In 2002, the format of Otsego Institute activities was modified from an academic conference to an advanced workshop for graduate students who examined aboriginal art history within a framework of formal lectures, hands-on workshops, and informal discussion of contemporary research and scholarly practices with co-participants and faculty.

Location

The Fenimore Art Museum, which houses the Thaw Collection of American Indian Art is in the historic village of Cooperstown, in central New York State, on the shore of Lake Otsego.

Application Process:

Up to twelve participants will be chosen on the basis of competitive application. Their travel and living expenses will be paid for by the Otsego Institute for Native American Art History.

Note: We do not make accommodations for spouses or children. Participants may be assigned a roommate.

A. Application form

1. Name

2. Mailing address

3. Email

4. Phone

Fax

5. Current work/educational status:

6. Please list relevant courses you have taken in the fields of Native Studies, Art History, Visual/Cultural Studies, Museum Studies, Visual or Cultural Anthropology, History

7. Please describe any museum experience or teaching experience you have had relevant to the workshop

8. State tribal affiliation (if any)

9. Statement

500 word statement about the relationship of your own work to the discipline of Native American art history, your own regional and/or theoretical areas of interest, and how you think this workshop might contribute to your professional development.

The complete application should consist of:

1. This application form

2. Curriculum vitae

3. Recommendation from a professor, museum/cultural center supervisor or other relevant professional. This is to be sent separately by the recommender to Otsegoinstitute@nysha.org

Application deadline: **February 15, 2012**

Applicants will be notified of their status by **March 30, 2012**

PLEASE SUBMITT YOUR APPLICATION BY EMAIL TO:
Otsegoinstitute@nysha.org

Eva Fognell, Curator
Thaw Collection of American Indian Art
Otsego Institute for Native American Art History
Fenimore Art Museum
Lake Road / P.O. Box 800
Cooperstown, New York 13326
Otsegonstitute@nysha.org
607-547-1482