

## **Native Fashion Now**

**Mylar dresses. Stainless-steel boas. Iridescent-leather bomber jackets with a futuristic vibe. Stunning clothes and accessories you'll find on the runway, in museum collections, and on the street. Welcome to Native American fashion and the contemporary designers from the United States and Canada who create it! They are pushing beyond buckskin fringe and feathers to produce an impressive range of new looks.**

**In this exhibition you'll find the cutting edge in dialogue with the time-honored. Some Native designers work with high-tech fabric, while others favor natural materials. Innovative methods of construction blend with techniques handed down in Native communities for countless generations. Mind-bending works such as a dress made of cedar bark—a reinvention of Northwest Coast basket**

**weaving—appear alongside T-shirts bearing controversial messages. This wearable art covers considerable ground: the long tradition of Native cultural expression, the artists' contemporary experience and aesthetic ambition, and fashion as a multifaceted creative domain.**

**Native Fashion Now groups designers according to four approaches we consider important. Pathbreakers have broken ground with their new visions of Native fashion. Revisitors refresh, renew, and expand on tradition, and Activators merge street wear with personal style and activism. Get ready for the Provocateurs—their conceptual experiments expand the boundaries of what fashion can be.**

**So let's get started! Native fashion design awaits you, ready to surprise and inspire.**

**[signature and photo]**

**Karen Kramer**

**Curator of Native American and Oceanic Art and Culture**

**The artists have loaned these works except where otherwise noted.**

**[HOTSPOT #1]**

**Fashion Forward**

**Designers like Patricia Michaels are actively redefining contemporary Native fashion. For a long time, Michaels' work ranged so far from typical expectations of Native clothing and accessories that Native fashion shows would not accept it. Not anymore. Her ensembles turned heads throughout the fashion world when she participated in the hit reality-TV show Project Runway, in the season that aired in 2013.**

**Pueblo principles of balance govern Michaels' work. She integrates the handmade and the machine-made, the representational and the abstract. The hand-painted feathery brushstrokes of her Cityscape dress evoke Manhattan buildings reflected in water, yet from a distance they read as pure pattern.**

**Michaels often has her models carry parasols. To her they are physical embodiments of prayer, a connection to the natural world—a way to express an uninhibited inner voice.**

**Patricia Michaels**

**Taos Pueblo**

**Born 1966, works in Taos Pueblo, New Mexico**

**Cityscape dress, Project Runway, Season 11  
Collection, 2012**

**Leather, paint, and silk**

**On loan from Kathryn Rossi**

**Parasols, 2015**

**Patricia Michaels**

**Handles by James Duran (Taos Pueblo)**

**Blacksmith work by Frank Turley**

**Salt cedar, metal, cloth, dye, hide, beads, and  
paint**

**Commissioned by the Peabody Essex Museum**

**[MEDIA – RUNWAY FOOTAGE]**

**Runway show**

**Ensembles and parasols by Patricia Michaels**

**Indian Market, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 2011**

**Runway show, PM Waterlily  
Fashion Week El Paseo, Palm Desert, California,  
2015**

**Gabriel Mozart Steven Abeyta  
Taos Pueblo, born 1992  
5 minutes, 15 seconds, looped  
Courtesy of Gabe Abeyta/Claymo productions**

## **Pathbreakers**

**It's such a common cliché—Native design is ultra-traditional. Yet since the 1950s and right up to the present, indigenous designers have been blazing trails in daring and distinctive ways.**

**The result? They have overturned the simplistic notion that all Native design tends to look the same.**

**These designers dare to dream. They marry the worldview and aesthetics of their communities with modern materials and silhouettes. Clothing is their language, and they write it in silks and stainless steel, in rhythm, shape, and line.**

**These Pathbreakers increasingly source their fabrics globally and use New York runways as a jumping-off point for their careers. Along the way they create opportunities for those who follow in their footsteps.**

**[HOTSPOT #2]**

## **Vintage Classic**

**Lloyd “Kiva” New is the father of contemporary Native American fashion. He was the first Native designer to create a successful international high-fashion brand, under the label Kiva, which refers to an architectural structure used for Native religious ceremonies in the Southwest. New developed a signature style featuring a Native aesthetic—abstract and figural symbols—and modern cuts and color palettes. Working with silks and cottons, he created clothes that evoke the Southwestern landscape: patterns from riverbeds, striated cliffs, and desert scrub. Just as important to his legacy is his promotion of Native art and artists in the mid-20th century, when Native Americans and other marginalized peoples faced widespread discrimination.**

**Lloyd “Kiva” New**

**Cherokee**

**1916–2002, worked in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Dress, 1950s**

**For Kiva**

**Screen-printed cotton and metal**

**On loan from Fashion by Robert Black with**

**Doreen Picerne**

**Lloyd “Kiva” New**

**Cherokee**

**1916–2002, worked in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Dress, about 1960**

**For Kiva**

**Screen-printed cotton**

**On loan from Fashion by Robert Black with**

**Doreen Picerne**

**Frankie Welch**

**Cherokee**

**Born 1924, worked in Alexandria, Virginia**

**Dress designed for First Lady Betty Ford, 1974**

**Silk brocade**

**On loan from the Gerald R. Ford Museum**

**1983.88.3**

**In her posh boutique in Alexandria, Welch styled Washington's elite, including five First Ladies, from the 1960s through the 80s. She sold her own line alongside those of Halston, Oscar de la Renta, and other leading designers. This brocade gown, designed for and worn by First Lady Betty Ford, combines a sleek modern silhouette, exquisite workmanship, and colors that suggest power and prestige—a combination well-chosen for the president's wife.**

**[caption for label photo]**

**First Lady Betty Ford wearing this dress, White House Christmas Party, December 17, 1974**

**[credit line] Courtesy of the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library**

**Dorothy Grant**

**Haida**

**Born 1955, works in Vancouver, British Columbia**

**Eagle Gala dress, 2013**

**For DG Gold Label**

**Silk, tulle, synthetic fabrics, sequins, and floral appliqué**

**Dorothy Grant**

**Haida**

**Born 1955, works in Vancouver, British Columbia**

**She-Wolf tuxedo jacket and pants, 2014**

**For DG Gold Label**

**Italian wool and embroidery**

**On loan from Michael Horse**

**Dorothy Grant blazed a trail as the first Native woman to gain an international following—paving the way for other Native designers with her stunning Feastwear tuxedos and other iconic**

**Northwest Coast fashions for men and women. Dorothy Grant's over 30 year career reached a high point this year when actor Duane E. Howard, portrayed as Elk Dog in the Academy Award winning motion picture, Revenant, wore Grant's Eagle Raven Shawl tuxedo design on Oscar's red carpet.**

**[caption for label photo]**

**Howard pictured at his fitting in Grant's studio, February 2016**

**[credit line] Courtesy of Dorothy Grant**

**Orlando Dugi**

**Diné (Navajo)**

**Born 1978, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Dress, headpiece, and cape, Desert Heat  
Collection, 2012**

**Dress: dyed silk, organza, feathers, beads, and  
24-karat gold**

**Cape: feathers, beads, and silver**

**Headpiece: African porcupine quills and feathers**

**This ensemble reveals Dugi's keen eye for elegant eveningwear and luxurious detail. The headpiece's sharp quills add a sexy danger to the dramatic volume and fluidity of the dress. Glittering beads capture the experience of watching all-night Diné ceremonies under a starry sky. Dugi owes a debt to the fashion designers Yves Saint Laurent and Valentino and to Dugi's Diné grandmother, who wore elaborate clothing and accessories every day. Their love of opulent adornment, layering of textures, and**

**draping are qualities that drive his work.**

**Wendy Ponca**

**Osage**

**Born 1960, works in Fairfax, Osage Reservation,  
Oklahoma**

**Dresses, 2015**

**Dresses and accessories: Mylar, fox fur, golden  
and bald eagle feathers, crystals, space-shuttle  
glass, and shell**

**Mannequins painted by the artist**

**Mylar, a material used in space shuttles, doesn't  
seem like the typical stuff of Native fashion, but  
these are the real deal. This reflective fabric  
recalls the Sky World, home of the ancestors  
in Osage creation stories. And in motion, Mylar  
actually makes a crinkling sound, an auditory  
reminder of this ancestral connection.**

**Ponca taught fashion at the Institute of American**

**Indian Arts. In the mid-1980s she cofounded a collective of Native designers, models, and artists, establishing Santa Fe as a center for Native haute couture.**

**Virgil Ortiz**

**Cochiti Pueblo**

**Born 1969, works in Cochiti Pueblo, New Mexico and**

**Donna Karen**

**Born 1948, works in New York City**

**Skirt, Spring/Summer 2003**

**For Donna Karan**

**Cotton**

**On loan from Ellen and Bill Taubman**

**In 2002, Ortiz was selling his ceramics and couture at Santa Fe's Indian Market when the New York fashion powerhouse Donna Karan strolled over. Struck by Ortiz's bold forms and**

**motifs, she invited him to collaborate on her 2003 couture collection. They worked together to marry her silhouettes and fabrics with his graphic patterns, which symbolize wild spinach, clouds, and fertility. Their partnership is an inspiring example of collaboration between artists, cultures, and businesses.**

**[MEDIA: RUNWAY FOOTAGE]**

**Runway show, Donna Karan, New York, Spring/  
Summer 2003**

**Courtesy of Fashion Channel Publishing  
fashionchannel.it**

**27 seconds, looped**

**Derek Jagodzinsky**

**Whitefish Cree**

**Born 1984, works in Edmonton, Alberta**

**Dress, belt, and handbag, Four Directions  
Collection, Spring/Summer 2014**

**For LUXX ready-to-wear**

**Spandex and synthetic blend**

**Cree language syllabics swirl around the waist of this fringe dress, encircling the wearer at the center of her being. This garment celebrates the Cree language, still spoken daily by tribal members in Canada despite government efforts to suppress it in the past. Its appearance on the runway conveys Jagodzinsky's ongoing message: "We will succeed."**

**Charles Loloma**

**Hopi Pueblo**

**1921–1991, worked in Hotevilla, Hopi Pueblo,  
Arizona**

**Bracelet, about 1975**

**Ironwood, silver, lapis lazuli, turquoise, coral,  
fossil ivory, and abalone shell**

**On loan from Leslie M. Beebe and Bruce  
Nussbaum**

**Loloma is widely considered the most renowned Native jeweler of his day. This landscape-in-miniature reveals his sources of inspiration: the colorful stepped mesas of Arizona and the sharp angles used by Frank Lloyd Wright, the 20th-century architect. Loloma's chunky inlays, vertical slabs, and exotic woods and stones depart from Southwestern silversmith conventions, heavy with silver, turquoise, and stampwork.**

**Robin Wayne**

**Saginaw Chippewa**

**Born 1971, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Necklace with detachable brooch pendant, 2014**

**18-karat gold, blackened sterling silver, Tahitian pearl, sphene, diamonds, and pink sapphires**

**Orlando Dugi**

**Diné (Navajo)**

**Born 1978, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**and**

**Troy Sice**

**Zuni Pueblo**

**Born 1977, works in Albuquerque, New Mexico**

**The Guardian—Bringer of Thunder, Lightning and Rain handbag, 2013**

**Elk antler, stingray leather, parrot feathers, bobcat fur, rubies, shell, glass beads, and sterling silver**

**On loan from Ellen and Bill Taubman**

**Denise Wallace**

**Chugach Aleut**

**Born 1957, works in Hilo, Hawai'i**

**and**

**Samuel Wallace**

**1936–2010, worked in Hilo**

**Craftspeople Belt, 1992**

**Sterling silver, 14-karat gold, fossil ivory, and  
semiprecious stones**

**On loan from the Museum of Contemporary**

**Native Arts**

**AT-58**

**This belt tells Denise Wallace's story of meeting influential Alaska Native artists during a group exhibition in Anchorage. Ten figures appear, separated by scrimshawed medallions, to celebrate the makers of boats, dolls, and masks, as well as basket weavers and ivory carvers. Northern Alaskan jewelry often condenses a story through imagery—a more permanent**

**version of what is conveyed through dance and ceremony.**

**Wallace's Aleut heritage is a major influence shaping her jewelry. She combines older Arctic artistic genres, such as stone carving, mask making, and storytelling, with Southwestern-style stone inlay and silver.**

**Frankie Welch**

**Cherokee**

**Born 1924, worked in Alexandria, Virginia**

**Cherokee Alphabet scarf, about 1970**

**Printed synthetic fabric**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Gift of Karen Kramer**

**2015.11.3**

**In 1966, Virginia Rusk, wife of Dean Rusk, the U.S. secretary of state, commissioned Welch**

**to design a scarf as an official presidential gift. She requested an “all-American design.” What could be more American than the first Native American language to be expressed in writing? Welch’s bold graphics and esteem for her Native heritage come through clearly in this design, which features syllabics from the Cherokee language. This is the most popular of her 2,000 scarf designs.**

**Maria Samora**

**Taos Pueblo**

**Born 1975, works in Taos, New Mexico**

**Lily Pad bracelet, 2014**

**18-karat gold, palladium white gold, and diamonds**

## **Revisitors**

**One tradition never changes in Native art: things change. Native artists have always brought new materials and ideas into their work. This gallery celebrates fashion designers who refresh and expand on time-honored symbols, forms, and techniques even as they adopt new ones. In turn, Revisitors use contemporary and innovative approaches to strengthen and carry forward ancient understandings of the world that sustain their tribal communities. Some make clothing and other objects specifically for powwows and Native ceremonies, while others intend their work for outside markets.**

**Revisiting also has other connotations worth thinking about. Some of today's non-Native designers are inspired by Native patterns, motifs, and styles past and present—a common practice not without controversy. When symbols**

**used in Native cultures are employed out of context, their intended message can become garbled. Also, profits from the sale of such items will never reach the Native artists who created the designs.**

## **Revisitors**

### **Trending Tribal**

**Totem-pole designs of the Pacific Northwest Coast captivated the fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi, inspiring him to create this MASTERFULLY EMBROIDERED dress. The characters and symbols on totem poles chronicle histories, indicate social status, and represent family identity among the Northwest Coast Native communities. And yet Mizrahi is not Native—so what to think of his appropriation of these motifs?**

**CULTURAL BORROWING** is complex. Fashion designers are **RENOWNED REMIXERS**— voracious consumers of images and ideas. Mizrahi makes reference to totem poles, but he does not replicate one exactly. He emulates, yet he also produces a new style.

In fact, this garment deeply influenced the Taos Pueblo designer Patricia Michaels. She saw a part of herself embraced by the mainstream in this Native-inspired piece, a **CATALYST** to pursuing her dream of a career in fashion.

**Bethany Yellowtail**

**Apsáalooke (Crow) and Northern Cheyenne**

**Born 1988, works in Los Angeles, California**

**Old Time Floral Elk Tooth dress, Apsáalooke  
Collection, 2014**

**For B.Yellowtail**

**Lace, leather appliqué, and elk teeth**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Museum purchase**

**2015.22.1**

**Bethany Yellowtail's family heirlooms, including beaded garments and photographs of her relatives wearing elk-tooth dresses, inspired this piece. A line of elk teeth, symbolizing Apsáalooke wealth, runs along the sleeves and chest, popping against the garment's delicate Italian-made lace and leather floral appliqués. The interplay between dark and light, foreground and background, defines Crow aesthetics and suggests balance—something Yellowtail aspires**

**to achieve aesthetically and spiritually while living in Los Angeles, far from her Montana home.**

**[HOTSPOT #3]**

## **Convergence**

**For centuries, Native designers have found inspiration through cultural exchange. In the second half of the 19th century, Plains artists began using colored pencils and Euro-American accounting books, or ledger books, instead of painted buffalo hides to record pictorial histories. Plains Indians also adopted the fashionable top hats and parasols of the era, adding personal embellishments such as porcupine quills, lace, and beads to give them new meaning.**

**Wilcox's hat refers to those sported by stylish**

**19th-century Plains Indian men. Wilcox made his from vintage paper. The dragonfly on top symbolizes protection. Greeves found inspiration for her parasol in the ones carried during parades at the annual Crow Fair in Montana and in the umbrella her mother always brought to what she called “Indian doings.” Williams depicts horses galloping across a kimono in response to a friend’s mixed Native and Asian heritage. Like their Plains predecessors, these artists have imaginatively fused Plains iconography with their current experiences.**

**Toni Williams**

**Northern Arapaho**

**Born 1953, works in Taylorsville, Utah**

**Kimono and obi, 2011**

**Silk with appliqué**

**Anonymous loan**

**Dwayne Wilcox**

**Oglala Lakota**

**Born 1957, works in Rapid City, South Dakota**

**Medicine Hat, 2013**

**Vintage paper and pigments**

**Teri Greeves**

**Kiowa**

**Born 1970, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Indian Parade Umbrella, 1999**

**Brain-tanned deer hide, glass beads, abalone shell, Bisbee turquoise, cloth, brass and nickel studs, Indian bead nickels, and antique umbrella frame**

**On loan from Gilbert Waldman**

**Dallin Maybee**

**Northern Arapaho and Seneca**

**Born 1974**

**and**

**Laura Sheppherd**

**Born 1957**

**Both work in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Corset and skirt, 2010**

**Corset: silk, cotton, and steel**

**Skirt: silk shantung**

**Necklace: dentalium shell and brain-tanned hide**

**Earrings: sterling silver, 24-karat gold, and  
mammoth ivory**

**Jewelry by Dallin Maybee, 2015**

**Juanita Lee**

**Kewa (Santo Domingo) Pueblo**

**1910-1974**

**Dress and belt, 1970**

**Commercial fabric and embroidery thread**

**On loan from the Heard Museum**

**Gift of Maren Allen Nichols**

**4353 29 a–c**

**Margaret Wood**

**Diné (Navajo) and Seminole**

**Born 1950, works in Phoenix, Arizona**

**Biil (Blanket Dress), 1980s**

**Wool**

**On loan from the Heard Museum**

**Gift of Mr. Tom Galbraith and Ms. Margaret Wood**

**NA-SW-NA-C-82**

**In this re-creation of the classic 19th-century Navajo blanket dress, Wood kept the**

**characteristic palette of navy and red and the stepped pattern. She updated the cut, changing it from knee-length to floor-length, and added a bateau neckline.**

**D. Y. Begay**

**Diné (Navajo)**

**Born 1953, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Biníghádzíltł'óní (Woven Through) serape, 2012**

**Wool and natural dyes**

**After visiting Peru, the fourth-generation weaver Begay created this Diné version of a Peruvian serape. Its abstract pattern derives from the landscapes of the Diné homeland in the American Southwest, and the Tshape refers to Spider Woman's cross. This holy character in Diné cosmology holds particular significance for Begay: Spider Woman taught the Diné people to weave.**

**Niio Perkins**

**Akwesasne Mohawk**

**Born 1980, works in Akwesasne, St. Regis**

**Mohawk Reservation, New York**

**Emma ensemble, 2010**

**Cotton, velvet, glass beads, and metal pins**

**On loan from the Southwest Museum of the**

**American Indian Collection, Autry National**

**Center, Jackie Autry Purchase Award, American**

**Indian Arts Marketplace, 2010**

**2010.62.1–7**

**For Perkins, a box of beads holds endless possibilities. She poured her heart into this elaborate ensemble—fit for a traditional wedding—and titled it Emma, a favorite name. She likens the outfit to a close friend she spent months getting to know.**

**Beadwork is deeply rooted in Perkins' Native heritage. She embraces its power to stimulate**

**community involvement and pride: “Our designs are like stories, thoughtfully woven into a ceremonial dress. They capture personality and identity.”**

**Elizabeth James-Perry**

**Aquinnah Wampanoag**

**Born 1973, works in North Dartmouth,  
Massachusetts**

**Blouse, skirt, sash, moccasins, wampum  
friendship collar and earrings, and bracelet,  
2014–15**

**Blouse and skirt: linen with trade silver and  
ribbons**

**Sash: oblique-weave wool and beads**

**Moccasins: leather with glass beads**

**Collar and earrings: leather, glass beads, and  
quahog shell**

**Bracelet: porcupine quills**

**“The colors, textures, the creative rhythm of someone . . . weaving and threading and beading together a certain pattern; it’s like telling a story. Being part of that storytelling process is central to my identity as a Wampanoag woman.”**

**—Elizabeth James-Perry**

**Jonathan Perry**

**Aquinnah Wampanoag**

**Born 1976, works in Aquinnah, Massachusetts**

**Blue Heron necklace, 2014**

**Slate, copper, glass trade beads, and sinew**

**“I am grounded in the traditions of my ocean-going ancestors. I consider designs by examining the raw materials closely and drawing my images from the grain, hues, and patina of wood, stone, and copper. I enjoy using the materials and knowledge handed down from my ancestors to express my understanding of the**

**natural world as well as the changes over time since our creation.”**

**—Jonathan Perry**

**[HOTSPOT #4]**

## **It's All in the Mix**

**There's style, and then there's styyyyle. These elegant boots demonstrate how personal fashion sense can mix the antique with the contemporary, the accessories of one culture with those of another. Jamie Okuma catapults moccasins into the 21st century. She hand-stitched thousands of antique beads onto boots by the French designer Christian Louboutin. Only his signature red soles (a symbol of the French aristocracy) remain exposed. The graceful swallows and abstract floral motifs evoke Okuma's childhood on her grandmother's land.**

**Jamie Okuma**

**Luiseño and Shoshone-Bannock**

**Born 1977, works in La Jolla Indian Reservation,  
California**

**Boots, 2013–14**

**Antique glass beads on boots**

**Boots designed by Christian Louboutin (born  
1964, France)**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Commissioned by the Peabody Essex Museum  
with support from Katrina Carye, John Curuby,  
Karen Keane and Dan Elias, Cynthia Gardner,  
Merry Glosband, and Steve and Ellen Hoffman  
2014.44.1AB**

**Mike Bird-Romero**

**Ohkay Owingeh (San Juan) and Taos Pueblos**

**Born 1946, works in Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo,  
New Mexico**

**Four bracelets, 2000–2010**

**Top left: sterling silver, spiny oyster shell, and turquoise**

**Top right: sterling silver, spiny oyster shell, and abalone shell**

**Bottom left: sterling silver, abalone shell, and onyx**

**Bottom right: sterling silver, onyx, and turquoise**

**Left Center**

**Eddie Begay**

**Diné (Navajo) bracelet, 2000–2010**

**Sterling silver, turquoise, coral, and jet**

## **Right Center**

**Ray Adakai**

**Diné**

**Born 1965**

**and**

**Alice Shay**

**Diné**

**Both work in Gallup, New Mexico**

**Bracelet, 2000–2010**

**Sterling silver, spiny oyster shell, and stones**

**All six bracelets on loan from Catherine B.**

**Wygant**

**Keri Ataumbi**

**Kiowa**

**Born 1971, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Beach Water Drop earrings and Mussel Shell necklace, 2013–14**

**Sterling silver, diamonds, and 22-karat gold**

**Each piece of Ataumbi's jewelry forms a small sculpture, enhanced when worn on the body. She created the delicate mussel-shell beads using a hydraulic press, etching tools, and a soldering iron. Rather than focus on traditional form or potential markets, she seeks inspiration in current visual culture, the history and theory of modern art, and her personal aesthetic, which blends natural organic forms with sleek modern design and technology.**

**Kevin Pourier**

**Oglala Lakota**

**Born 1958, works in Scenic, Pine Ridge**

**Reservation, South Dakota**

**Rez Bans glasses, 2009**

**Buffalo horn, malachite, gold and white mother-of-pearl, coral, lapis lazuli, sandstone, metal, and glass**

**Kenneth Williams Jr.**

**Northern Arapaho and Seneca**

**Born 1983, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**He Was Iconic, 2014**

**Glass beads, turquoise, coral, seed pearls, brass, wool, yarn, brain-tanned hide, gold, and human hair**

**On loan from the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art**

**[caption for label photo]**

**Reverse side of He Was Iconic. This piece honors the Native jeweler Charles Loloma, whose work can be seen in the Pathbreakers gallery. Photo courtesy of the artist.**

# **Activators**

## **Speak Your Piece**

**Self-representation, a recurring theme in contemporary Native fashion, is a major focus for the artists who use fashion to express identity and political ideas. When you think about it, what you wear and how you wear it can say a lot—about yourself and your engagement with others. Clothing can help get a message across.**

**Activators design and style casual-chic outfits, blending tribal-specific patterns and colors with street-style sensibilities and bypassing the catwalk and the corporation. Many younger Native designers are Activators, constantly responding to trends and current events by way of the Internet and social media.**

**Kenneth Williams Jr.**

**Northern Arapaho and Seneca**

**Born 1983, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Styling of the ensemble**

**Blazer: linen with painted designs by Thomas**

**Haukaas (born 1950, Sicangu Lakota), 2013**

**Moccasins: glass beads, wool broadcloth, brass,  
wool, yarn, and brain-tanned hide**

**Shirt and pants: dyed cotton**

**Thomas Haukaas designed this stunning linen blazer for his friend Kenneth Williams Jr. to wear for the opening of a museum exhibition of Williams' work. Haukaas decorated the jacket in a classic Plains pictorial style, showing high-ranking warriors on horseback. Traditionally painted on buffalo hides and tipis, such images often recorded "counting coup"—feats in battle or hunting that brought prestige to the warrior and his family. The designs on this jacket serve a similar function: Haukaas's riders and horses**

**celebrate his friend's achievements as an artist,  
a contemporary equivalent of counting coup.**

**Tommy Joseph**

**Tlingit**

**Born 1964, works in Sitka, Alaska**

**My Ancestors, 2009-15**

**Wool and dye**

**On loan from The Fabric Workshop and Museum**

**This piece references Joseph's Tlingit clan group, Ch'aak, or Eagle (Wolf is sometimes used interchangeably). The flattened Eagle figure, rendered in heavy black outlines, wraps around the wearer's body. Joseph collaborated with Philadelphia's Fabric Workshop and Museum to create this experimental three-piece suit. By profession a carver of masks and totem poles, Joseph translates Tlingit stories into three-dimensional art.**

**Winifred Nungak**

**Inuit**

**Born 1987, works in Kangirsuk, Nunavik, Quebec**

**Parka and Nasaq (hat), 2015**

**Parka: Commander fabric, Hollofil, and fox fur**

**Nasaq: wool and fox fur**

**Jamie Okuma**

**Luiseño and Shoshone-Bannock**

**Born 1977, works in La Jolla Indian Reservation,  
California**

**Jacket, pants, and purse, 2013–14**

**For J.Okuma**

**Jacket: holographic Italian lambskin**

**Pants: leather and lace**

**Purse: leather, pony hair, dye, and brass**

## **Bethany Yellowtail**

**Apsáalooke (Crow) and Northern Cheyenne**

**Born 1988, works in Los Angeles, California**

**Yellowtail shift dress, 2013–14**

**For Project 562**

**Polyester, satin, and polyester mesh printed with photograph by Matika Wilbur (born 1984, Swinomish and Tulalip)**

**On loan from Karen Kramer**

**Yellowtail's dress reflects a fast-growing trend in fashion: photoprint fabrics. She created this limited-edition garment as a reward for the Kickstarter campaign for Project 562, the photographer Matika Wilbur's effort to photograph contemporary Native America in all its diversity. The cut of the fabric positions the horizon of one of Wilbur's photograph along the hems of the skirt and the sleeves. The filmy black band at the bottom evokes the flutter of wings and the spirit of birds in flight.**

**Caroline Blechert**

**Inuit**

**Born 1987, works in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories**

**Cuff, 2014**

**Porcupine quills, Delica beads, caribou hide, and antler**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Museum purchase**

**2014.52.1**

**Blechert lives where the arctic winters are long and dark—snow covers the tundra for eight months at a time. But in the summer, flowers, mosses, and lichens fill the landscape with bursts of purples, greens, and rusts—colors Blechert uses in her jewelry. Natural materials reflect the art of her Inuit roots. The laser-cut beads and contemporary color scheme ground her in the present.**

**Douglas Miles**

**San Carlos Apache and Akimel O'odham**

**Born 1963, works in San Carlos, San Carlos  
Apache Indian Reservation, Arizona**

**T-shirt, pants, cap, belt with buckle, and skate  
shoes, 2008–15**

**Miles fuses bold, graffiti-inspired graphics with Apache iconography and language. Years ago he painted his first skateboard, for his son. His brand, Apache Skateboards—the first Native-owned skateboard company—grew from that first deck, and soon it included a line of streetwear. In 2009–10, Miles collaborated with the internationally popular skate brand Volcom to create its Stone-Age product line. His mission is to empower Native youth and highlight social issues that confront their communities today.**

**For Apache Skateboards and Volcom Stone-Age**

**T-shirt: cotton, 2010**

**Pants: denim and paint, 2015**

**Cap: cotton, 2010**

**Belt with buckle: leather and pewter, 2010**

**Skate shoes: suede and rubber, for Ipath, 2008**

**Douglas Miles**

**San Carlos Apache and Akimel O'odham**

**Born 1963, works in San Carlos, San Carlos**

**Apache Indian Reservation, Arizona**

**The Original Apache Skateboard deck, 2007-08**

**For Apache Skateboards**

**Acrylic on wood**

**[MEDIA: FILM]**

**Dustinn Craig**

**White Mountain Apache and Diné (Navajo), born**

**1975**

**Young Raiders, 2014**

**For 4-Wheel War Pony**

**9 minutes, 38 seconds, looped**

**Rico Lanaat' Worl**

**Tlingit and Athabascan**

**Born 1984, works in Juneau, Alaska**

**Raven and Eagle skateboard decks, 2014**

**For Trickster Company**

**Wood and paint**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Museum purchase**

**2014.53.1–2**

## **[HOTSPOT #5] Fresh Takes**

**Ever since the graphic tee emerged as a fashion statement in the 1970s, designers have used T-shirts to flaunt individuality and voice political protest. For young designers, these affordable, easy-to-produce shirts offer a way to grab attention and express opinion.**

**Jared Yazzie's Native Americans Discovered Columbus T-shirt reclaims America as indigenous country, and his Mis-Rep tee challenges the use of images of Native people as sports mascots. For Yazzie and the other T-shirt designers, words are weapons, provoking people to think harder about history.**

**Dustin Martin**

**Diné (Navajo)**

**Born 1989, works in Albuquerque, New Mexico**

**Ceci n'est pas un conciliateur (This is not a peacemaker) T-shirt, 2013**

**For S.O.L.O.**

**Cotton**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Gift of Karen Kramer**

**2015.11.6**

**Jeremy Arviso**

**Diné (Navajo), Hopi, Pima, and Tohono O'odham**

**Born 1978, works in Phoenix, Arizona**

**Definition T-shirt, 2013**

**For Noble Savage**

**Cotton**

**On loan from Jeremy Donovan Arviso-Noble**

**Savage LLC**

**Jared Yazzie**

**Diné (Navajo)**

**Born in 1989, works in Chandler, Arizona**

**Native Americans Discovered Columbus T-shirt,  
2012**

**For OxDx**

**Cotton**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Gift of Karen Kramer**

**2015.11.4**

**Jared Yazzie**

**Diné (Navajo)**

**Born in 1989, works in Chandler, Arizona**

**Mis-Rep T-shirt, 2014**

**For OxDx**

**Cotton**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Gift of Karen Kramer**

**2015.11.5**

**Jolene Nenibah Yazzie**

**Diné (Navajo)**

**Born 1978, works in the Southwest**

**Warrior Women T-shirt, 2012**

**For Asdzaan**

**Cotton**

**On loan from M. McGeough**

**Virgil Ortiz**

**Cochiti Pueblo**

**Born 1969, works in Cochiti Pueblo, New Mexico**

**Scarf, Indigene Collection, 2013**

**For VO**

**Silk**

**On loan from Madeleine M. Kropa**

**Ortiz's fashion line features hard-edged looks in leather jackets, luxury handbags, and silk**

**scarves like this one. This scarf depicts Kootz, a character in Evolution, a film script that Ortiz is writing. A futuristic reimagining of the 1680**

**Pueblo Revolt, it will feature Ortiz's costumes. Through his art, he hopes to engage Cochiti youth in their own culture and its language, artistic practices, and history.**

**Alano Edzerza**

**Tahltan**

**Born 1980, works in West Vancouver, British Columbia**

**Chilkat tunic, 2013**

**Cotton**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Gift of Karen Kramer**

**2015.11.2**

**Edzerza's tunic draws from the formline style of Northwest Coast indigenous art—particularly its heavy black outlines, oval-like shapes, and U-forms. This design is borrowed from woven ceremonial-dance blankets. Edzerza works in**

**many mediums, from clothing and silver jewelry to painting and glass.**

**Maya Stewart**

**Chickasaw, Creek, and Choctaw**

**Born 1979, works in Los Angeles**

**Carmen clutch, 2010**

**Calfskin**

**Marcus Amerman**

**Choctaw**

**Born 1959, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Untitled (Lone Ranger and Tonto Bracelet), 2004**

**Glass beads, leather, thread, rubberized cotton, and brass**

**On loan from the Museum of Arts and Design**

**Museum purchase with funds provided by the**

**Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation**

**2004.27**

**In the 1980s Amerman created a new genre of beadwork portraiture featuring bold, colorful mashups of history and pop culture. This cuff is a commentary on the Lone Ranger and Tonto, characters from the popular 20th-century radio and TV Westerns who embody cultural stereotypes of the white male leader and the faithful Indian servant. By depicting such characters with humor and irony, Amerman aims to raise awareness of misunderstandings and myths about his Native heritage.**

**MaRia A. Bird**

**Diné (Navajo), Hopi, and Santa Clara Pueblo**

**Born 1982, works in Arizona**

**American Horse earrings, 2013**

**For Mea B'fly Designs**

**Graphic adhered to balsa wood**

**On loan from Karen Kramer**

**Nathalie Waldman**

**Yellowknives Dene**

**Born 1974, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Abalone Fringe bag, 2014**

**For Urban Dogrib Designs**

**Deer hide, abalone shell, silver, and tin**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Gift of Karen Kramer**

**2015.11.1**

**Lloyd “Kiva” New**

**Cherokee**

**1916–2002, worked in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Handbag, 1955–65**

**For Kiva**

**Leather**

**On loan from the Heard Museum**

**Gift of Selma E. and Jerome Targovnik**

**4734-1**

**Paul E. LaPier**

**Haida and Tlingit**

**Born 1977, works in Portland, Oregon**

**Flat cap, 2014**

**Red cedar bark**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Gift of Lynda Roscoe Hartigan**

**2014.55.1**

**Dylan Poblano**

**Zuni Pueblo**

**Born 1974, works in Zuni Pueblo, New Mexico**

**Knuckle ring, 1999**

**Silver and gemstones**

**On loan from the Museum of Arts and Design**

**Gift of Natalie and Greg Fitz-Gerald**

**2008.42.3**

**Cody Sanderson**

**Diné (Navajo), Hopi, Tohono O'odham, and  
Nambé Pueblo**

**Born 1964, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Polished Wet Spider bracelet, 2013**

**Sterling silver**

**Peabody Essex Museum**

**Gift of Lynda Roscoe Hartigan**

**2015.51.1**

**[HOTSPOT #6]**

## **Say It with Sole**

**Louie Gong merges art and activism in his custom-designed sneakers. Bored with the styles available in stores, he bought a plain pair of Vans, the classic skateboarding slip-ons, and used Sharpies to decorate them—a spontaneous moment of self-expression. He has since decorated more than 200 pairs of street sneakers, giving each its own contours, colors, and lines.**

**His designs integrate graffiti influences from Seattle’s urban environment with designs called formlines—heavily outlined abstract figures and motifs—derived from his Coast Salish background. Gong aims to raise awareness of issues related to his mixed heritage and has established programs in the Seattle area that help kids express themselves by decorating their**

**footwear.**

**Louie Gong**

**Nooksack and Squamish**

**Born 1974, works in Seattle, Washington**

**Wolf Chucks, 2015**

**Fabric dye and acrylic on sneakers**

**REPRODUCTION**

**Yatika Fields**

**Cherokee, Creek, and Osage**

**Born 1980, works in Seattle**

**Dreaming Beyond the Horizon, 2015**

**Inkjet photomural**

# **Provocateurs**

**Some Native designers can be thought of as Provocateurs. They embrace the experimental and erase boundaries between art and fashion. Their one-of-a-kind clothing and accessories demonstrate remarkable craftsmanship and at the same time hurl familiar materials and forms into an entirely new dimension. Some of these works stretch the concept of wearability. How would such garments feel on your body? Can these clothes truly be worn?**

**As these designers work from drape to pattern to fabrication, they deconstruct typical ideals of beauty while constructing new ones.**

**Their fashions dance between the imposing and the delicate. Our Provocateurs carry on a question-and-answer dialogue between material and concept, inviting viewers to engage with issues of identity, sovereignty, and creativity.**

**Kent Monkman**

**Cree**

**Born 1965, works in Toronto, Ontario**

**Louis Vuitton Quiver, 2007**

**Leather, printed fabric, and arrows**

**This quiver, inspired by a luxury brand, belongs to Monkman’s alter ego, Miss Chief, who plays a starring role in his artwork. Miss Chief is “two-spirit”—physically male but self-identified as female. Two-spirits were historically revered in Native communities but mostly reviled by outsiders.**

**According to the classic Hollywood Indian stereotype, a quiver holding a bow and arrows was standard gear for all Native people, whatever their specific background. Miss Chief, hunter of men and irony alike, slyly transforms this object. If audiences want Native people equipped with a quiver, she will satisfy expectations—with**

**her own special twist. In her hands it becomes a high-fashion vehicle for Native identity and gender politics.**

**Margaret Roach Wheeler**

**Chickasaw**

**Born 1943, works in Joplin, Missouri**

**The Messenger (The Owl) cape and headpiece,  
Mahotan Collection, 2014**

**For Mahota Handwovens**

**Cape: silk-wool yarn**

**Headpiece: silk-wool yarn, metal, silver, glass  
beads, and peacock feathers**

**This ensemble turns two-dimensional  
handwoven fabric into a three-dimensional  
soft sculpture. In the Native worldview of the  
Southeast, birds figure prominently as warriors,  
hunters, protectors, and messengers. This  
ensemble evokes traditional dancers who wear**

**feathers to embody these beings and to summon their powers. Owl, a messenger from the spirit world, often warns people of danger. Wheeler's Mahotan Collection also features Raven, Crane, and Snow Goose, demonstrating the enduring role of birds in Chickasaw art and culture.**

**Lisa Telford**

**Haida**

**Born 1957, works in Everett, Washington**

**PochaHaida dress, 2009**

**Red cedar bark, cordage, and faux-leather fringe**

**On loan from the Bill Holm Center for the Study of Northwest Coast Art, Burke Museum**

**2014-50/1**

**Pilar Agoyo**

**Ohkay Owingeh (San Juan), Cochiti, and Kewa  
(Santo Domingo) Pueblos**

**Born 1969, works in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Dress, 2009**

**Vinyl**

**[HOTSPOT #7 ]**

**Lavish and Luxe**

**This dress's title, Wile Wile Wile, means “the sound of wings in flight” in the Kaska Dene language. Its surprising textures update a classic feminine silhouette. The dress honors Esquiro's departed loved ones—she designed it for them to wear at an imagined joyful reunion.**

**Taking visual cues from Mexico, including the paintings of Frida Kahlo and the observance of the Day of the Dead, this dramatic evening**

**gown demonstrates Esquiro's hallmark love of juxtapositions as well as technical sophistication and artistry—qualities associated with European couture houses and with indigenous art.**

**Sho Sho Esquiro**

**Kaska Dene and Cree**

**Born 1980, works in Vancouver, British Columbia**

**Wile Wile Wile dress, Day of the Dead Collection,  
2013**

**Dress: seal fur, beaver tail, carp, beads, silk, and  
rooster feathers**

**Fascinator: tulle and skull by Dominique Hanke  
(United Kingdom) for Sho Sho Esquiro**

**[MEDIA: RUNWAY FOOTAGE]**

**VIDEO**

**Runway show, Spring 2014 Collection**

**Sho Sho Esquiro**

**Couture Fashion Week, New York, 2013**

**Couturefashionweek.com**

**40 seconds, looped**

**Nicholas Galanin**

**Tlingit and Aleut**

**Born 1979, works in Sitka, Alaska**

**Shoes, 2015**

**Leather and copper**

**[HOTSPOT #8]**

## **Crowning Glory**

**The feather boa is one of those accessories that scream flamboyance, turning the fashion volume to 10. In this collaboration, the brothers Gaussoin kick it up to 11. They have transformed the feather boa's flounce and fluff into something sleek, even ominous. Is Postmodern Boa dangerous or whimsical? Can it be both? This work is in step with the Gaussoins' jewelry designs, which showcase the human body and push materials into new sculptural realms. As 21st-century designers with a long family tradition of artistic expression, they interpret their culture in a progressive way.**

**David Gaussoin**

**Diné (Navajo) and Picuris Pueblo**

**Wayne Nez Gaussoin**

**Diné and Picuris Pueblo**

**Born 1982**

**Both work in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Postmodern Boa, 2009**

**Stainless steel, sterling silver, enamel paint, and feathers**

**Consuelo Pascual**

**Diné (Navajo) and Maya**

**Born in 1981, works in Mesquite, New Mexico**

**Gunmetal Pleat dress, 2010**

**Taffeta**

**Wendy Red Star**

**Apsáalooke (Crow)**

**Born 1981, works in Portland, Oregon  
and**

**Terrance Houle**

**Blood**

**Born 1975, works in Calgary, Alberta**

**Síkahpoyíí, bishée, baleiittaashtee (Motor Oil,  
Buffalo, Dress), 2013**

**Vinyl, and plastic beads**

**Dress on loan from Portland Art Museum**

**Museum purchase**

**Funds provided by Barbara Christy Wagner**

**2014.19.1a–c**

**Vinyl silhouettes on loan from Terrance Houle**

**Red Star's dress stands before buffalo  
silhouettes designed by Houle. Their  
collaborative piece draws attention to the  
depletion of natural resources on Native lands—  
both the environmental destruction and the**

**economic exploitation involved in drilling for oil and gas. The drips of vinyl from Houle's black buffalo suggest both oil and blood, while the long, trailing fringed dress—a traditional garment still worn among the Apsáalooke—and the elaborate breastplate invoke the strength and resilience of Native people.**

**Barry Ace**

**Anishinaabe (Odawa)**

**Born 1958, works in Ottawa, Ontario**

**Reaction shoes, 2005**

**Leather shoes, computer components, wire, paper, rubber, and metal**

**On loan from John Cook**

**Ace made these modern-day “moccasins” out of reclaimed computer parts. Clusters of coated copper wire stand in for traditional ground-trailing fringe, originally designed to**

**erase the wearer's tracks. Reaction, the brand name for Ace's shoes, gives the piece its title; it suggests responsiveness, a theme important to Ace's work. He does more than upcycle—he completely reimagines the cast-off remnants of our culture of consumption, turning found objects into art.**

**Kristen Dorsey**

**Chickasaw**

**Born 1985, works in Los Angeles, California**

**Stingray breastplate and ring, Shokmalli'**

**Collection, 2013–14**

**Sterling silver, stingray leather, larimar, copper, and brass**

**Ring on loan from Sarah Jay**

**This breastplate and ring embody the duality of Sky Serpent, the fearsome yet gentle Chickasaw deity who controls the movement of celestial**

**bodies. The delicate wings in this jewelry offset the snake's angular lines, creating a sense of sweeping movement.**

**Pat Pruitt**

**Laguna Pueblo**

**Born 1973, works in Paguete, Laguna Pueblo,  
New Mexico**

**Tahitian Bondage necklace and earrings, 2008  
316L stainless steel and natural Tahitian pearls  
On loan from Catherine Sullivan-Kropa and  
William Kropa**

**Pruitt's pearls roll freely yet remain trapped inside clawlike pendants. Compare this work to the familiar turquoise-and-silver jewelry of the Native American Southwest—the difference is radical. Industrial design, fast cars, and tattoos infuse Pruitt's aesthetic, and computer-aided technology drives his jewelry production. Pruitt's**

**use of color is refined—a spectrum of subtly varied grays and blacks.**

## **Motivators**

**Bunky Echo-Hawk (Pawnee/Yakama), b. 1975**

**War Cry, 2015**

**Acrylic paint on canvas**

**Courtesy of Nike, N7 Collection**

**Bunky Echo-Hawk (Pawnee/Yakama), b. 1975**

**Paths We Walk, 2014**

**Converse Shoes, acrylic paint on cotton canvas  
and rubber**

**Courtesy of Nike, N7 Collection**

**When I was young, I was a basketball player who was into skateboarding and punk rock. I always customized my own clothes to better fit my personality, whether it was a leather jacket or a pair of Chucks. My inspiration for these Chucks came from the Native quest for environmental justice.**

**Bunky Echo-Hawk (Pawnee/Yakama), b. 1975**

**Triple Threat T-Shirt, 2011**

**Cotton and acrylic blend fabric**

**Courtesy of Nike, N7 Collection**

**Nike N7 Shoes**

**Synthetic fabric and rubber**

**Courtesy of Nike, N7 Collection**

**Painter Pants, 2015**

**Acrylic paint on cotton denim cloth**

**Courtesy of Nike, N7 Collection**

**My painter pants mean the world to me. My ancestors would go into battle wearing their finest leggings--they dressed up for the occasion. In that spirit, I wear my finest jeans into the studio, onto the stage, in front of my canvas. I use my jeans as a palette, and as a rag; I mix colors on them, straighten my bristles, remove excess paint on them, and sometimes**

**take notes on them. Each color, each splatter, each stroke, each word represents a community I've visited, a story I've been told, and a painting I've created. My pants carry the thoughts, concerns and dreams of so many people.**

**Marcus Amerman**

**American and Choctaw, b. 1959**

**The Gathering, 1997**

**Glass beads on cotton cloth**

**Museum Purchase: Caroline Ladd Pratt Fund,  
1999.7**

**Tessa Sayers**

**Chippewa/Cree, b. 1982**

**Anishinabe Men's Tie, from the Love and Culture Collection, 2016**

**Glass beads on wool**

**Courtesy of the artist**

**Anishinabe Women's Necklace, from the Love and Culture Collection, 2016**

**Glass beads on wool**

**Courtesy of the artist**

**Anishinabe Women's Satchel, from the Love and Culture Collection, 2014**

**Glass beads on velvet**

**Courtesy of the artist**

**Tessa Sayers is a Chippewa/Cree artist, poet, and historical enthusiast. Inspired by traditional Anishinabe design, Tessa creates original contemporary pieces that are unique and sophisticated. Fueled by her personal**

**struggle with autoimmune disease, she uses art as spiritual medicine to the soul. Every piece is imbedded with rich storytelling that makes each design a true representation of the human experience. Through art therapy and teachings of the medicine wheel, she hopes to inspire others to live authentically and find their own spiritual medicine.**

**Her “Love and Culture Collection” is inspired by her affinity for vintage fashion, romantic love, and culture. The men’s tie and women’s necklace feature the same red flower that unites the couple as one. The black background of the tie and white background of the necklace represent duality and contrary energies between genders, highlighting the important of independence, balance, and strong identity of self. When we heal and honor ourselves, we compliment and have the ability to truly love others.**

**Sarah Agaton Howes**  
**Anishinabe, b 1976**  
**Restoration, 2016**  
**Wool and commercial dyes**  
**Courtesy of 8th Generation**

**Sarah Agaton Howes is an artist, teacher, and emerging community organizer from Fond du Lac Reservation in Minnesota. Widely known for her handmade regalia and moccasins featuring Ojibwe floral designs, which are in demand across Minnesota and Wisconsin, Sarah is the second art entrepreneur to participate in Eighth Generation's Inspired Natives Project. Sarah started creating art as a teen with guidance from her mother. Later, when she expressed interest in traditional dance, she learned to bead from her brother so she could make her own traditional regalia. Her current work – which specializes in Ojibwe Floral – represents the perpetuation of that tradition.**

**Michelle Lowden  
Acoma Pueblo, b 1989  
Reflection,  
Wool and commercial dyes  
Courtesy of 8th Generation**

**Michelle “Milo” Lowden is the founder and owner of Milo Creations which specializes in hand-painted Pueblo jewelry. She is the first arts entrepreneur to participate Eighth Generation’s Inspired Natives Project. Michelle is the youngest of two, born to Roberta Charlie and Aaron Lowden, both from the Pueblo of Acoma.**

**She currently operates and resides on the Pueblo of Acoma Reservation in New Mexico. Michelle has been creating jewelry for nearly five years. Her inspiration to reconnect traditional designs through a contemporary medium began with studying her family’s history of illustrious potters.**

**The “Reflection” blanket represents the prayer for rain. During monsoon season, the cisterns at Acoma become full again. It is then the people visit the cisterns to gather water for drinking. When you look down to see the cisterns full and you are met with your reflection, you can’t help but smile with gratitude. It is a reminder that “water is life.” The design features Acoma Pueblo abstract symbols representing mountains, clouds, and rain.**

## **Blankets as Ceremonial Wear Wearable Art**

**Blankets often serve as honor gifts, presented to individuals for their achievements and contributions to the community. In an honoring ceremony, a blanket is wrapped around the shoulders of the honoree as a symbol of warmth and protection of the community. Though each community has its own unique method of**

**wrapping, honor blanket ceremonies are a long-held tradition across Indian Country.**

**While consumers may purchase Eighth Generation blankets as decorative household items, each blanket is created with the traditional honoring function in mind, as with the outstretched wings of the Thunderbird or the expansive tendrils of Woodlands florals. The aesthetic follows the function, and the designs look equally vibrant as wearable art or as utilitarian home decor.**

**Eighth Generation's blankets are always designed by Native artists. By creating opportunities for Native artists to apply cultural art to blankets, Eighth Generation helps ensure a sustainable future for this significant aspect of cultural heritage.**

### **“Salish Pattern” Wool Blanket**

**Louie Gong first developed this signature Salish Pattern design to honor the tradition of**

**Salish textile weaving. Although referred to as a pattern, it does not repeat in a fixed order, but continues as a random sequence of individual design elements.**

**Prior to European contact, a blanket with similar artwork would have been created using traditional materials such as mountain goat wool and dog hair. The basis for the pattern is hundreds of years old, but the simple design, using only two contrasting colors, has a highly contemporary feel to fit a wide range of uses and environments.**