

Moose hair and bead embroidery

Overview

Personal adornment has existed as long as humans have been on earth. Whether it was painting the human body or decorating clothing with mineral paints, feathers, quills, shell, bone, fur, vegetal matter, or using manufactured goods of fabric, thread, glass beads, all were representational to the artist creating this design.

The decision of the artist regarding the imagery used may be related to spiritual understanding of their particular world, or it may represent the importance of specific botany used in everyday life. The colors of beads selected may have specific tribal importance. It is impossible to paint a single uniform picture of the beadwork done by the various tribes throughout North America. We must never underestimate the importance and influence of trade among European Americans, Asians, and Native peoples.

These slides contain a miniscule sampling of examples of beadwork, but they are a basis for examining the skills necessary to create beautiful patterns with implements more challenging to use than what we have available in the 21st century. Imagine doing such intricate work without your needles, scissors, hoop, frame, and advanced light source while your family responsibilities are constant and you may migrate during the course of a year to maximize your food supply and participate in ceremonial practices.

This powerpoint presentation focuses on the techniques of beadwork and moose hair embroidery used by Native American artists represented by the slides donated to the Embroiderers' Guild of America by Nina Lee Soltwedel and additional photographs by Neebin Southall and Leatrice Armstrong and drawing by Maggie Muchmore to supplement the concepts presented. Other slides

donated by Soltwedel highlight ribbon applique, weaving (both textile and basket), and some culturally sensitive ceremonial items. These slides are omitted from this presentation.

And we should note that many Native American (United States)/First Nations (Canada) people are reclaiming their traditional names and English spellings have been changed. Names may continue to change, and this program should be amended accordingly.

A bibliography is included for additional reference.

Powerpoint presentation

Slide 2

The materials used by Native American artists changed with the influences from European conquerors. The 16th and 17th century fur trade provided glass beads, woolen cloth, silk ribbon, guns, knives, axes, kettles, tobacco and alcohol in exchange for furs. French cargo manifests from 1692 included imports of blue and black glass beads, red and blue wool, cotton and silk threads and ribbons. Glass beads were generally a larger size than what we see in current use, and could be cylindrical, ovoid or spherical in shape. Beads offered greater flexibility in design motifs both for geometric designs adapted from traditional quillwork, as well as floral imagery.

A strong influence occurred when the French brought nuns from the Ursuline convents to “New France”, the area around present-day Quebec, to help convert the aboriginal population to Christianity. The Ursuline nuns were well known in France for their exquisite embroidery skills. The sale of the items that they stitched brought revenue to support the convent. In 1639 the nuns produced altar cloths and vestments with heavily embroidered designs using glass beads, silk, and gilt threads. However, the

ability to secure silk ribbon, silk thread, and other fabrics on a regular basis became problematic. The Ursulines adapted to this loss of imported manufactured goods by learning to use the Native American materials of birch bark and moose hair to create items they sold as early as 1700 as curiosities for convent upkeep.

For the next two hundred years the generic types and representational images became established as a standard iconography of Indianness throughout northeastern North America. At the same time the nuns were developing their own stylistic floral designs, they shared European imagery with the Native Americans, undoubtedly influenced Native American creativity. The native group that most readily adopted the practice of embroidering moose hair on birch bark and later on hide, and eventually, glass beads on hide and cloth, were the Huron-Wendat who lived closest to Quebec City. It is probable that the skills developed by the Huron-Wendat were shared with the neighboring tribes. The Mi'kmaq and Maliseet were two of the tribes who embraced the use of these new materials and motifs. Later, tribes along both the Canadian and United States sides of the Great Lakes adopted the practice of using beads on fabric. Initial designs were based on the practice of using ceremonially important images prior to the use of natural elements (plants, flowers, etc.) as well as those images which would appeal to the European immigrants and tourists as evidenced by the clothing and ceramics Europeans prized.

The creativity used by Native Americans is evident on the items they made and used personally. As traditional life was changed by the dominant culture, they created items for commodity production. By the end of the 19th century moose hair and bark souvenirs declined in popularity.

Moose hair is a difficult item to use in embroidery. The longest hairs are found in the mane, on the cheeks and rump of the animal.

The longest hairs may reach five inches in length. As with quillwork, the hairs must first be cleaned, and then can be dyed with either vegetal or aniline dyes.

Several hairs are placed in a group to achieve the desired width of the line on the hide and stitched down with a couching stitch at regular intervals. As the end of the hair group is near, additional hairs are inserted into the end of the bundle. The end of a line of moose hair embroidery is secured either by covering the hairs with a series of stitches, or folding the hairs under themselves to create the end of the line. Moose hair can also be used for satin stitch and French knots.

Slide 3 [Gloves, Huron, c.1860 - Denver Museum of Natural History 2777

Slide 4 Birch bark container, Huron, c. 1922 - Denver 1374.27 AB]

The beadwork designs used by Native American (US) and First Nations (Canada) cultures are varied. When beadwork is stitched to a hide, the needle does not pierce the hide, but rather goes through only a part of it.

Remember that the majority of the garments and accessories we'll see in this presentation would have been worn only on special occasions or sold to European Americans for their collections.

For purposes of this presentation, we'll start with the Woodlands and move westward.

Slide 5 [Two needle applique stitch for beadwork

Slides 6, 7 Lane Stitch] drawn by Maggie Muchmore

Woodlands

The land in North America from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River, from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes including the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Rivers, is referred to as the Woodlands because of the extensive forests which existed prior to European contact.

In the Great Lakes area Haudenosaunee tribes (formerly referred to as Iroquois) included Onondaga, Seneca, Mohawk, Cayuga, Oneida, and Tuscarora.

Slides 9, 10 [Moccasins and detail photo, Iroquois -1875-1900 Speed Museum 93.4

Slide 11 Woman's skirt, Mohawk - Denver 10325 B]

The designs incorporated on this skirt are reminiscent of those found in the work of well-known bead worker Caroline Parker (Seneca). Parker utilized historic iconographic designs in her creations. Using the color red as the background is associated with well-being, the Sky World, and Skywoman. The arches represent the sky world; parallel lines represent water; triangles represent Turtle Island; and, the large botanical design in the corner represents the Celestial Tree.

Just as the Ursuline nuns introduced floral embroidery techniques to the tribes in Quebec, mission schools located in the western part of North American territories taught Native American girls to do embroidery using European implements and copying European designs. Each tribe developed its own standards of embroidery,

and specific designs were frequently passed on from mother to daughter.

Slide 12 [Leggings, Chippewa, c. 1890s - Denver 5734 AB

Slide 13 Moccasins, Chippewa, c. 1905 - Buffalo Bill Historical Center 202.6 AB]

Men used small pouches and shoulder bags to hold personal medicines and power objects, and were easy to carry. Over time they became exaggerated in size, and were used as symbols of wealth and prestige. They also could be used as currency. The wide shoulder straps were copied from the military bags worn by European soldiers. While the European bags were used to carry cartridges or ammunition, the Native American bags did not have openings at the top. Bandolier bags were frequently loom-woven designs (especially on the shoulder strap) that were then appliqued to fabric. Later, the practice of beading directly onto the hide or fabric became the norm.

Slide 14 [Bandolier bag, Ojibwa, c.1890 -Speed 37.72

Slide 15 Bandolier bag, Ojibwa -Speed 37.68.149]

The quantity of beads used on any item was a further indication of the owner's wealth and importance. Clearly the beadwork on these Sauk (Sac) and Fox moccasins denoted the ability of the artist to procure and utilize beads extensively. This style is often referred to as "Prairie Style" beadwork.

Slide 16 [Moccasins, Sauk (Sac) and Fox, c. 1890 - Buffalo Bill 202.448]

Just as beads were used for personal adornment, so were they used to make items for sale. The best-known examples are the frequently disabused "Whimsies" produced in the Great Lakes

region. Both in Europe and the United States, the Victorian era [1837-1901] resulted in an increased use of floral embellishments on clothing as well as functional objects. The use of floral motifs became popular as Victorians wanted to idealize a connection to the natural world.

While the 18th century encouraged the acquisition of curios for display, many items produced in the 19th century for the Victorian era were designed to be worn or carried. The recognition of an individual artist creating a functional object was in direct conflict with the mechanized creation of objects. The Victorian woman's responsibility of decorating the home had the purpose of creating an environment that fostered the civilized moral lives of those who inhabited it.

In the greater Niagara Falls area, a substantial trade developed between Native American artists and tourists. Just as the Ursuline nuns did in Quebec, other European Americans adapted Native American designs and created patterns that appeared in Victorian lady's magazines. Native and non-native individuals could copy both patterns and designs.

Beadwork embellishment appeared on caps, moccasins, whimsies, pincushions, mats, containers, cigar cases, wall pockets, tablecloths, and dress accessories (hats, Glengarry caps, bags, purses).

Slide 17 [Whimsy, c. 1910 - private collection, photograph by Leatrice Armstrong

Slide 18 Whimsy, c. 1910 - private collection, photograph by Leatrice Armstrong

Slide 19 Whimsy, Seneca, c. 1840s-1850s - private collection, photograph by Leatrice Armstrong

Slide 20 Whimsy-obverse side of above, Seneca, c. 1840s-1850s - private collection, photograph by Leatrice Armstrong]

Besides the flat decorative stitching used on many pieces, textural interest was added through raised beadwork. Because the beadwork was being done on velvet, paper templates were used both as patterns, as well as support for the beads. Paper supports for beadwork were not needed when beads were used on hide.

Slide 21 [Moccasin, c. 1910 - private collection, photograph by Leatrice Armstrong]

Slide 22 Close-up of moccasin - note paper under floral shapes for support - private collection, photograph by Leatrice Armstrong]

SOUTHEAST

Southeastern tribes, particularly the Seminole and Choctaw, used beads to decorate their clothing. Commercial glass beads supplanted hand-drilled shell or bone. Beadwork appeared on buckskin jackets and bandolier bags. Beads represented beauty, wealth, and tradition with women often wearing up to 25 pounds of beads around their necks during the day.

The next examples show the geometric designs they used.

Slide 24 [Sash, Seminole - Denver 8223]

Slide 25 Sashes, Choctaw, pre 1900 - Denver, 8476]

The use of geometric designs on beadwork was translated onto fabric when sewing machines were introduced to the region in the 1890s. The intricate patchwork developed from both Euro-American and African-American cloth applique traditions supplanted the use of beads for decoration on clothing.

GREAT PLAINS

Probably the geographic area that people most readily identify with massive sections of beadwork covering the entire garment is that of the Great Plains. The Great Plains covered the geographic areas from the Mississippi River, north into Canada, south into Texas, and west to the Rocky Mountains. A variety of tribes called this area home. Beads arrived in this part of North America about 1800 and began to supplant the use of quills. Seed beads became prevalent after 1850.

Slides 27, 28 [Lane stitch method of bead attachment] drawn by Maggie Muchmore

The style of attaching beads has been dismissively referred to as “lazy stitch” because several beads are placed on the thread before they are stitched to the hide. Most bead workers now refer to this as “lane stitch”. While at first glance it appears to be faster to stitch, it is difficult to have the same number of beads start and end in parallel lines due to the variations in the bead shape. It is most likely that the decision to use the lane stitch is a reference to the well-known and used geometric quillwork designs, which mimicked painted designs on hide containers known as parfleche.

As the artist gained access to beads, she would frequently combine quillwork with beads, as seen on this Assiniboine man’s shirt.

Slide 29 [Assiniboine shirt - Buffalo Bill—202.195]

Extensive quillwork appears on the shoulder tabs and sleeve tabs with ermine and hair strips attached on this commercially tanned and dyed hide. A shirt like this would need two deer or antelope hides. The use of hair was not “scalps” taken in battle, but rather gifts from the family or tribe to denote the owner of the shirt did something noteworthy. The lane stitch was used for the geometric

design on the neck and back tabs. Shirts like these were used for special ceremonial occasions.

Slide 30 [Vest, Sioux, c. 1900 - Denver 4464]

Dentalia shell is also used for a decoration on clothing. These shells were common in the Pacific Northwest, especially around Vancouver Island, and used as currency as well as adornment and were traded with other tribes. The end is snapped off to form an open tube for stringing. Dentalia shell was traded between tribes and into the Plains area.

Slide 31 [Example of dentalia used in necklace—private collection, photo by Neebin Southall]

Slide 32 Buckskin jacket, Sioux - Buffalo Bill 1.69.784]

As mentioned previously, the use of the lane stitch was used predominately among Sioux artists. This slide has been identified as being a “Prince Albert” jacket designed for and worn by Buffalo Bill as part of his Wild West Show. The floral motifs shown on the slide are a portion of the overall design that includes beaded eagles, a lane strip on each sleeve, and both American and Cuban flags on the back.

Slide 33 [Vest, Sioux - Buffalo Bill 202.298]

This example shows the geometric designs used in beadwork patterns with a variety of colors used in each pattern. The artist has included the United States Flag in the design. After the United States government forcibly removed tribes to reservations in the late nineteenth century, the use of flags in Native American designs became prevalent, as did the practice of beading the entire surface of clothing and on non-traditional containers such as suitcases and handbags.

Slide 34 [Hat, Sioux - Buffalo Bill 202.9]

This example shows the increased availability of seed beads in a variety of colors. Again, the use of geometric design is clear.

Slide 35 [Needle case, Sioux - Denver 1936]

This is most likely an item created for sale to a European-American as a souvenir.

Slide 36 [Vest, Hidatsa - Denver 4501]

As additional materials came through the trading posts, artists included them in the creation of garments. This vest shows the use of sequins and mirrors added to the black wool.

Slide 37 [Coat, unknown plains - Buffalo Bill 202.193]

This coat shows a clear departure from the use of lane stitches on all sections of the hide as a uniform background. Borders on the sleeves, collar, seams, bottom, and front are all done with the lane stitch. The images of horses and humans were beaded using an applique stitch. Horses were very important to the Plains tribes.

Slide 38 [Moccasins, Southern Cheyenne - Buffalo Bill 202.398]

These moccasins were painted as well as beaded. The use of white, red, blue, dark blue, and yellow were colors used extensively by Southern Cheyenne artists.

Slide 39 [Dress, Southern Cheyenne - Buffalo Bill 202.774]

Many Plains tribes included elk teeth as a design element on the garment. This woman's dress includes 63 teeth as well as white,

red, blue and metallic beads around the neck, and the inclusion of mescal seeds.

Slide 40 [Dress, Crow, c. 1890s - Denver 6984]

This dress from the 1890s shows the combined use of commercial navy stroud cloth, rickrack, and red fabric with real and imitation elk teeth.

Slide 41 [Dress, Blackfoot - Buffalo Bill 202.466]

This dress combines the use of beads and ribbon as decoration. Four rows of brass beads are used on the front and back of the yoke, with fringes of blue and white beads ending in bells or thimbles.

Slide 42 [Shirt, Blackfoot - Buffalo Bill 202.48]

This shirt has a combination of native tanned deer hide and commercially tanned leather sleeves. Geometric designs are on the shoulder and arm tabs and the rosette, while ermine strips appear on the shoulders and down the seam on the sleeves.

Slide 43 [Shirt, Blackfoot, c. 1885-1904 - Denver 1163.1]

Weasel tails abound on this red cloth shirt. Bands of beading in blue, yellow and pink are seen along the sleeves and shoulder panels with rosettes on the front and back.

Slide 44 [Horse breastplate/collar, Blackfoot - Denver 2864]

Regalia is not limited to the human form. Many of the Plains tribes felt it equally important to showcase the importance of the horse in their lives. Just as extensive beadwork on clothing showed individual status and wealth, so did decorative horse

paraphernalia. This is a stunning design incorporating silver conchas, bone beads, thimbles and horsehair with both geometric and floral designs.

PLATEAU

When we examine Plateau (sometimes referred to as Intermontaine) beadwork we continue to see the mix of cultural influences. Wide-ranging trading sites from the Columbia River, south along the Pacific Ocean, north as far as the Sub-arctic, east to the Plains, and southeast to the Great Basin in addition to the European-American trappers and traders created a rich basis for artistic creativity. The removal to reservations curtailed the historic seasonal migrations to secure food. But the loss of this tradition led to the creation of exquisite beadwork that embraces geometric forms as well as pictorial designs. Bead artists developed a contour beading approach that eliminated the straight lines associated with lane stitch.

Slide 46 [Dress, Flathead - Buffalo Bill 202.77]

This dress shows the geometric design used by many of these regional tribes. In addition to the beadwork covering the yoke, cowrie shells have been added for additional graphic design. A fringe of oblong and tubular beads hangs from the bottom of the yoke.

Slide 47 [Yoke, Flathead - Buffalo Bill 202.88]

This is a clear example of the use of geometric designs against a solidly beaded white background. The fringe contains beads and cowrie shells.

Slide 48 [Dress, Kutenai - Buffalo Bill 202.76]

This dress has a single row design along the yoke with additional rows on the sleeves. The dress has long fringes of beads, seashells, and cowrie shells.

Slide 49 [Dress, Kutenai - Buffalo Bill 202.369]

As cloth became accessible, bead artists began to use it instead of relying on the availability of hide. This artist used a variety of sizes of beads to create her diamond and pyramid patterns.

Slide 50 [Yoke, Piegan - Buffalo Bill 202.84]

This yoke shows the lane-stitched background with geometric designs, including the structured floral motif.

Slide 51 [Moccasins, Yakama, c. 1937 - Buffalo Bill 202.307 A/B]

These moccasins show a covered vamp with three horizontal rows around the outside heel, and three blue diagonal rows on the inside heel edge. There is also a single vertical bead row down the center of the back. Chief Tommy Thompson wore these moccasins at the dedication of Bonneville Dam in 1937.

Slide 52 [Shirt, Yakama - Buffalo Bill 202.309]

This shirt was also part of the regalia worn by Chief Tommy Thompson at the 1937 Bonneville Dam dedication. It shows geometric design applique beading on the front and back shoulder panels with a band of red beads along the neck and in the v of the shirt front.

Slide 53 [Dress moccasins, Nez Perce - Buffalo Bill 202.187 A/B]

The use of identifiable organic floral designs is evident in these moccasins. Lane stitch was not used for the white background beads.

Slide 54 [Dress and belt, Nez Perce, c. 1920 - Denver 6983]

Red flannel has replaced the use of hide. The yoke of the dress is heavily beaded with rows of blues, green, white and yellow. The cowrie shells are at the bottom of the fringes of a double string of round beads. In contrast to the geometric bands, the belt has a floral motif.

SOUTHWEST

Beadwork was not as prevalent an artistic medium among Native American tribes located in Arizona and New Mexico as elsewhere. We've seen the use of beadwork spread from French and English missions and trading posts to the surrounding territories. The Spanish came to the southwest specifically in search of gold, marching through Mexico and north to the territory they called Nuevo Mexico. They didn't establish trading posts in the same manner as the French and English, but did build churches and forcibly converted the Native Americans they encountered.

Slide 56 [Girl's dress, Apache - Buffalo Bill 202.555]

This deerskin-fringed dress has loom-beaded strips across the shoulders with red and dark blue beads on a blue background. The strips at the neck and around the bottom are blue, dark blue, red, and yellow. The red beads are called white hearts because the inside of the bead is white.

Slide 57 [Woman's moccasins, Apache - Buffalo Bill 202.656 A/B]

The upturned toe section identifies Apache moccasins. The upturned ends protect the toes in a desert climate from cactus, sharp rocks, snakes, and sticks. These deerskin boots in addition to their simple stripes of beading are painted yellow.

Slide 58 [Beaded awl case, Apache - Denver 561]

Awl cases would have been an important part of a Native American woman's possessions. This heavily beaded case is 5 ½ inches long and has zigzag bands of beads at the top with geometric designs on the base. A 3 ½ inch flap extends from the base and has "tinklers" attached to it. Tinklers are rolled pieces of metal that make a lovely sound as they move and hit each other.

Slide 59 [Boy's shirt, Jicarilla, c. 1900 - Denver 11677]

This black wool shirt is lined with suede and has red cloth shoulder extensions. Geometric beadwork patterns are shown on the shoulder tabs, with a beaded line with heavy hide fringe on the front section, and beaded trim along the sides. A metal ornament with ribbons is on the shoulders.

Slide 60 [Vest, Hopi - Denver 7064]

Among the Hopi and other Pueblo peoples, men wove the fabric for blankets and clothing. While this vest does not have any beadwork, it does show the Pueblo embroidery stitch, a variant of backstitch, used on garments.

GREAT BASIN

The Great Basin encompasses much of Nevada, from the Sierra Nevada Mountains in northeastern California, north into Oregon,

and south into Utah. Basketry skills were highly prized, but beadwork became an additional artistic outlet for women.

Slide 62 [Saddle Blanket, Shoshone, c. 1900 - Denver 4238]

This piece shows the importance of decoration for the horse. Just as we've seen in other examples, an owner would show his status by having beaded accessories for his horse. This blanket is on navy blue wool with orange and red edging. The corners show great examples of floral motifs.

Slide 63 [Beaded bottles, Paiute - Denver 1926 A/B]

Bottles such as these would probably have been beaded and then sold to non-natives.

NORTHWEST COAST

The Northwest Coast had contact with the Japanese in the early 18th century and with European Americans in the later eighteenth century. These contacts did not seem to have had as much of an influence on the native cultures as we have seen elsewhere. The art forms we primarily attach to this area include basketry and carved wood, both as totem poles, and containers. Artists incorporated abalone shell in their carvings and as decoration on their clothing. Contact with Asian traders as well as European American traders increased the use of beads as decoration.

Slide 65 [Dress, Salish - Buffalo Bill 202.978]

This dress shows very similar design elements to both the Kutenai dress in the Plateau section and the Blackfoot dress in the Plains section with the row yoke decoration and long fringes decorated with beads.

Slide 66 [Spirit Dance Regalia, Salish - Denver 111535 AF]

This shows the use of stylized floral beadwork with bird images and is heavily decorated with cedar amulets. Often referred to as carved wood paddles, they more probably resemble ancient war clubs. In addition to this shirt, there are pants, and leggings not shown on the slide.

Slide 67 [Dance dress, Kwakwaka'wakw - Denver 10626]

Many pieces of Northwest Coast clothing feature the use of mother-of-pearl buttons as an outline. Here the artist has applied a salmon to the black wool, trimmed the dress with different size buttons, and included a beaded strip with Chinese coins along the bottom of the dress. Trade with China resulted in mother-of-pearl buttons being used in place of abalone shell.

Slide 68 [Moccasins, Tlingit - Buffalo Bill 202.929]

These sealskin moccasins show a yellow and black beaded frog figure heading towards the toe of the shoe, while the moccasin collar has an open form foliate design. Not shown in the slide is a petal flower design at the heels. An edging stitch of blue and white beads is used on the collar of the moccasins.

Slide 69 [Shirt and bag, Tlingit, c. 1890-1900 - Denver 11362/11354]

On this shirt, mother-of-pearl buttons are not used to enhance the image created by the appliqued fabric, but rather to create the image of a raven. The accompanying bag is beaded in a floral design. The bag is referred to as an octopus bag due to the extensions on the bottom.

SUBARCTIC

The Subarctic refers to the territory from Alaska, through the upper portions of the Canadian provinces and east to the Atlantic Ocean. After it ceased being used by eastern tribes, moose hair embroidery continued in the subarctic and arctic into the late 20th century. Moose hair in these examples is tufted rather than being couched down in floral designs. To tuft the hair, a large number of hairs (15-20) are attached to the hide or fabric by sinew or thread that is tightly stitched down, causing the moose hair to stand upright. The long remaining end is cut off. The moose hair can be shaped and trimmed to provide dimensionality to the floral designs. The practice of tufting became prevalent after World War I.

Slide 71 [Mukluks, Slave, c. 1971 - Denver 1259.1AB]

Slides 72, 73, 74 Embroidered panel and details, Slave - Denver 10674]

First Nations and Native American artists continue to adapt by using new materials as they became available. This slide from a pouch made in the 1930s shows the use of silk buttonhole twist in European embroidery stitches of outline and stem, satin, and detached chain to create a floral motif that would once have been completed with beads.

Slides 75, 76 [Hide pouch, Swampy Cree, c. 1930s and detail-Denver, 10806]

ARCTIC

The Athapaskan (also spelled Athabaskan) had a sophisticated tradition of quill embroidery at the time of European contact. Beadwork production revolved around the fur trading posts where

embroidery was taught and encouraged in mission schools. Just as we've seen with other tribal communities in North America, each tribe developed preferred motifs.

The area around the Great Slave Lake and the McKenzie River Region were noted for precise, ornate examples of beadwork while the Tahltan had formal, elegant motifs rooted in aboriginal non-floral designs. Those tribes located in the Yukon-Tanana region synthesized the best from both these traditions for their designs.

Embroidery was done during the winter months, or when women were secluded during puberty and then menses. While secluded, the women were expected to sew, quill, make baskets and fishnets, and bead.

Slide 78 [Sled bag, Gwitch'in, c.1905 - University of Alaska]

This bag shows a highly symmetrical design with a combination of stylized floral and geometric motifs. The stems have a greater prominence than those of eastern tribal designs. Yarn tassels were used around the edges of the bag.

Slide 79 [Game bag, Athapaskan, c. 1920 - University of Alaska]

You can see the prominent stems on this bag with symmetrical placement of flowers. Rather than using a flag as the center focal point, the artist has incorporated a variation of the coat of arms on the federal seal of the United States.

Slide 80 [Chief Thomas' Jacket, c 1910 - University of Alaska]

This jacket shows completely beaded front band motifs with solid white beaded background. The shoulder tabs, cuffs and pocket flaps do not have a solid beaded background, and the collar is decorated with dentalia shells.

Slide 81 [Mittens, Athapaskan, c. 1925 - University of Alaska]

Elegant mittens with fur trim. The beading is dense, but still has a symmetrical design.

Slide 82 [Baby belt, Gwitch'in, c. 1940 - University of Alaska]

This belt shows both floral and geometric beaded motifs with larger beads and yarn fringe on one edge.

Conclusion

Hopefully this presentation has given you insight into the creativity of selected Native American beadwork artists. Beadwork continues to be an art form embraced by contemporary Native American artists. Current artists use their creativity to bead images on surfaces both old and new, creating new images or using traditional motifs, adapting to new technologies and materials, just as did their predecessors.

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