

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Benjamin Harjo Jr.: We Are a Landscape of All We Know

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Comprised of a selection of more than thirty rarely seen works on paper, prints, and sculpture, drawn from several private collections, this exhibition explores how Benjamin Harjo Jr. (Absentee Shawnee and Seminole) creates his place in the world. Through a connection to his own heritage and to the wider American and international aboriginal communities, Harjo generates an individual perspective that is rooted in the past, informed by the present, and looking to the future.

Curated by Cassidy Petrazzi, this exhibition is on view at the OSU Museum of Art from July 10 - Dec. 8, 2018.

Visit <https://museum.okstate.edu/harjo> to learn more.

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Benjamin Harjo Jr is one of the nation's preeminent American Indian artists, often referred to as the "Picasso of Native American art." He studied at the Institute of American Indian Arts and Oklahoma State University, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1974. Harjo has received dozens of prestigious honors and awards during a career that has spanned more than 40 years. Museums and private collectors alike treasure his work, which can be viewed in public collections at the Fred E. Brown Collection at the Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, Red Earth Center, Gilcrease Museum, Wheelwright Museum, and the National Museum of the American Indian at the Smithsonian. He is Seminole and Absentee Shawnee.

[Visit the artist's website to learn more.](#)

ABOUT THE CURATOR



Cassidy Petrazzi is a writer, curator, and master's candidate in the Department of Art History at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK. She is a contributor to Art Focus OK Magazine, for which she is currently writing a preview of Tunde Darvay's upcoming exhibition at the Gardiner Art Gallery at OSU. Petrazzi received her BFA from NYSCC at Alfred University, Alfred, NY, studying under Peer Bode in the Department of Expanded Media. Before arriving in Stillwater, Petrazzi worked in contemporary fine art galleries in New York City; her most recent posts were associate director at Derek Eller Gallery and exhibition and art fair manager at Pace/MacGill Gallery. Most recently, Petrazzi worked as associate producer on "George," a documentary portrait of Fluxus impresario George Maciunas. The film premiered at MoMA's Doc Fortnight Festival in February of 2018. She is curating an upcoming exhibition of work

by artist Zoe Friedman to open this winter at Modella Art Gallery in Stillwater, of which Petrazzi is a board member.

BIG IDEAS: Identity, Place, and Belonging

Benjamin Harjo Jr. combines abstract and figurative imagery to create environments that reclaim a sense of place, belonging, and identity.

Use the questions below to guide conversations in the gallery and make personal connections to the art.



Identity

- How do you define yourself?
- What labels do you use to identify yourself?
- How would you define yourself ten, five, or even one year ago? In what ways have your identity and relationship with the world changed?

Place

- How does place define you?
- Have there been places in which you've felt a deep sense of connection or disconnection to your surroundings? How did you feel in those places? Why?
- How does place define your emotional state or behavior?

Belonging

Recall a time when you were in unfamiliar territory. Have you ever moved to a new place, left home, or attended a program away from home?

- What did that feel like?
- How can recovery happen?
- How might you define home wherever you go?
- How do you define family? Who makes up your family?

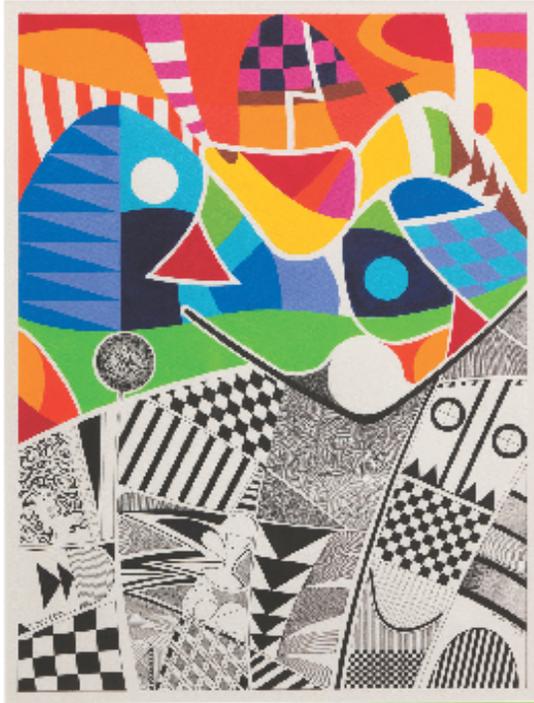
THINK ABOUT IT

Create a list of the things you brought with you to college. Write about or discuss why you brought them and how they make you feel.

Objects can inform identity - by bringing them with you, you have given them value. What does that say about the object itself? What does it mean to you?

Share your thoughts on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or Snapchat @OSUMuseumofArt #OSUMA

PROGRAMS



Benjamin Harjo Jr., *Heaven and Earth*, 2009, gouache, pen, and ink, 37 x 29 1/2 inches

**JULY 10 -
DECEMBER 8, 2018**

RECEPTION: OCTOBER 4

[5 PM at the OSU Museum of Art]

ARTIST TALK: OCTOBER 5

[10 AM at Prairie Arts Center]

LUNCH + LEARN WITH THE

CURATOR: OCTOBER 16

[12 pm at the OSU Museum of Art]

Comprised of a selection of more than 30 rarely seen works on paper, prints, and sculpture, drawn from several private collections, this exhibition explores how Benjamin Harjo Jr. (Absentee Shawnee and Seminole) creates his place in the world. Curated by Cassidy Petrazzi.

Opportunities for University Student Engagement

- **Student engagement/class partnerships:**
 - Thurs, Oct. 4, 9-11:40 am, Prof. Piehl's Advanced & Intermediate Oil Painting
- **Printmaking Demonstration: Oct 5 | Benjamin Harjo Jr. will discuss and demonstrate his printmaking techniques. 10 am to 2 pm.**
- **Artist Talk: 10 am – 2 pm, Oct. 5 @ Prairie Arts Center / 20 participant max. (30 min. lunch)**
 - Harjo will discuss his artwork and demonstrate his printmaking technique.

RESOURCES

Video Resources



[PBS OETA Gallery: Benjamin Harjo \(Season 3, Episode 329. 4m 58s\)](#)

Oklahoman Benjamin Harjo, Jr. has gained nationwide acclaim as a Native American artist. OETA's documentary program Gallery takes a look inside his studio and his particular style of abstract art. Originally Broadcast on January 31, 2014.

<https://www.pbs.org/video/onr-gallery-benjamin-harjo/>



[OStateTV: Benjamin Harjo Jr.](#)

OSU graduate Benjamin Harjo Jr. is one of the nations leading artists. Harjo talks with Chris Ramsay, head of the OSU Department of Art, about his time at OSU and his work. Art and Soul, an exhibit of his work, is on display at OSUs Gardiner Art Gallery through Feb. 5.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwB39m3B_dk&feature=youtu.be



[Oklahoma Oral History Project - Oklahoma Native Artists Interview Series: Benjamin Harjo Jr.](#)

Benjamin Harjo, Jr. is a Shawnee/Seminole artist, whose exploration of pattern and form has greatly expanded the parameters of Oklahoma Indian art. In this oral history interview excerpt, Harjo talks about his path the Institute of American Indian Arts, wood block printing, along with select works. For more information, visit

<http://www.library.okstate.edu/oralhi...> © 2010 Oklahoma State University

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8w9_3McPMV0&feature=youtu.be



OSU Alumni Association - 2012 OSU Alumni Hall of Fame: Benjamin Harjo Jr.

Benjamin Harjo Jr. of Oklahoma City, Okla., graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1974 with a bachelor's degree in fine arts. Harjo is a Seminole and Absentee Shawnee who is one of the nation's leading American Indian artists. He was inducted into the OSU Alumni Hall of Fame on February 17, 2012, at the ConocoPhillips OSU Alumni Center.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tk-iqlm-NAE&feature=youtu.be>

Books and Articles

All available in this guide and online at <https://museum.okstate.edu/Harjo>.



Oral History Interview with Benjamin Harjo, Jr.

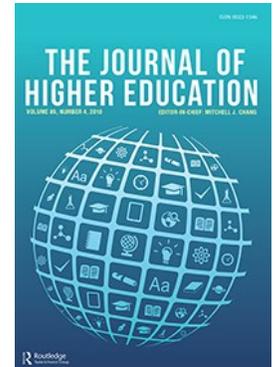
Interview Conducted by Julie Pearson-Little Thunder October 14, 2010

Spotlighting Oklahoma Oral History Project

Cross-Cultural Education vs. Modernist Imperialism
The Institute of American Indian Arts

Joe Greer

The Institute of American Indian Arts, founded in 1974 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, has been a central institution in the development of American Indian arts and culture. This article explores the historical and contemporary significance of the Institute, examining its role in the education and empowerment of Native American youth. It discusses the Institute's commitment to the preservation and promotion of traditional arts and crafts, as well as its efforts to foster a sense of pride and identity among its students. The article also addresses the challenges the Institute has faced, particularly in the area of funding and institutional support, and offers suggestions for ways to strengthen its impact on the future of American Indian arts and culture.



The Earth, The Moon, and the Stars Above

OSU Spotlight Oklahoma Oral History Project: Oral History Interview with Benjamin Harjo, Jr.

Cross-Cultural Education vs. Modernist Imperialism: The Institute of American Indian Arts

Native Connection to Place: Policies and Play

Home Away From Home: Native American Students' Sense of Belonging During Their First Year in College



How America's Past Shapes Native American's Present



Figure 2: National Museum of the American Indian Opening Celebration, 2004. Artist: Phoebe Farris (Powhatan). c-print.

Visual Power: 21 st Century Native American Artists/Intellectuals



Critical Issues in Recent Native American Art

K12 Resources

Available online at <https://museum.okstate.edu/harjo>

The Mathematics of Seminole Patchwork	
Translation only	
Perpendicular Reflection	
Parallel Reflection	
Parallel & Perpendicular Reflections	
Glide Reflection	
Half Turn Rotation	
Perpendicular Reflection & Half Turn Rotation	

The Mathematics of Seminole Patchwork

Symmetries of Culture, Mathematics of Seminole Patchwork, The Traditions of Storytelling, The Origins of the Seminole Clans, How to Make a Seminole Patchwork Bookmark

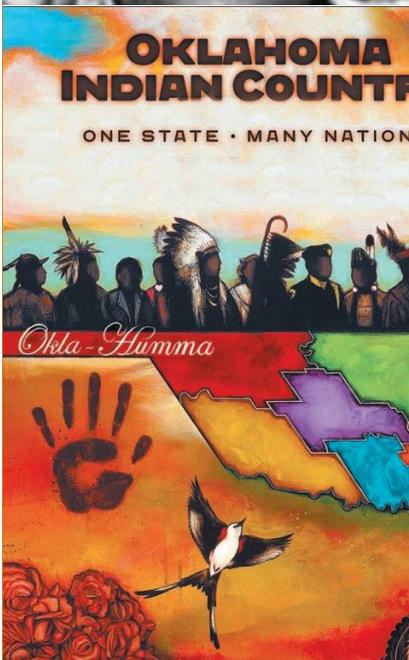
<http://www2.austin.cc.tx.us/hannigan/Presentations/NSFMar1398/MathofSP.html>



Oklahoma Native Artists Project

The Oklahoma Native Artists Project is a series of oral history interviews with Native artists, collectors, and gallery owners. The interviews are recorded in audio and video formats, and at the end of each oral history, specific examples of an artist's work are discussed. The purpose of this project is to highlight the lives and careers of Native artists, to draw attention to the political aspects of making Native art, and to raise awareness of its cultural and economic importance.

<https://library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/digital/oklahoma-native-artists-project/>



Native American Heritage: Indian Country Guide

This edition of our bi-annual Native American Heritage program will help your students increase their tribal knowledge. Comprised of an overview of all 39 of Oklahoma's tribes, your students will learn key facts about each tribal nation such as where it originated, size, language family and more! This program is complimentary to schools thanks to the continued support of the Chickasaw Nation, Citizen Pottawatomie Nation, Otoe-Missouria Tribe and the American Indian Cultural Center and Museum.

<https://nie.newsok.com/educators/curriculum/native-american-heritage-indian-country-guide/>

IN THE ARTLAB

artLAB

Make Connections



Don't miss the details! Harjo works in various sizes – some large and some are very small. Use one of our magnifying glasses to discover the beauty in all of his pieces.

Grab an Abstractables bag and create animals, humans, hybrids and more using the felt lines, shapes, and colors. Find them in the artLAB or in the galleries.

Snap a picture when you're done and share on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or Snapchat @OSUMuseumofArt #OSUMA

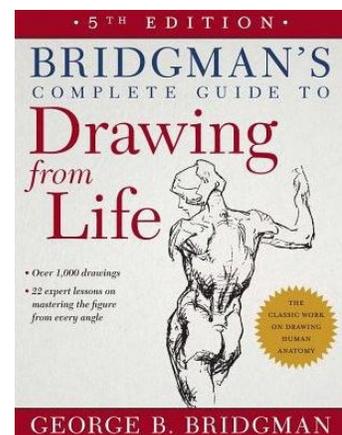


Harjo's geometric, colorful figures are stunning. How many shapes can you find in one of his figures?

You can create your own digital, geometric self-portrait at the Kravis innovationLAB in the artLAB. [Visit the artLAB to learn more.](#)

Are you new to using a Mac or the Adobe programs? Don't stress! The artLAB attendants are here to help.

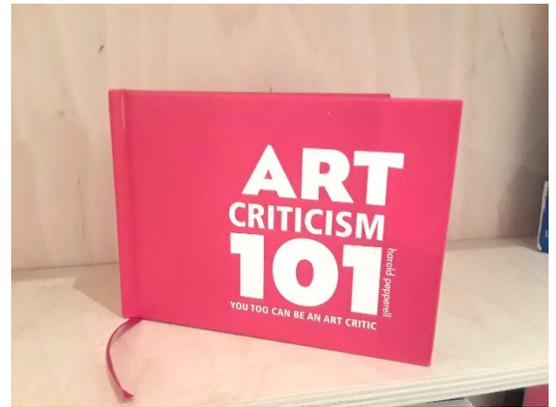
Ben Harjo learned to draw the planar structures of the body using *Bridgman's Complete Guide to Drawing from Life*. Use this book as a guide when you try your hand at creating a planar portrait using the materials of your choice. *Available in the artLAB.*



Harjo draws inspiration from many sources in his daily life including nature, a cereal box, or dusty windows. He also draws on his Native American heritage and includes shapes and symbols often found in Seminole patchwork. He then combines abstract shapes and figurative imagery to create environments that reclaim a sense of place, belonging, and identity.



- What shapes and symbols surround you?
- Go on a "shape hunt" through a picture book, on a nature walk, or at your local museum.
- Walk around your neighborhood and notice the shapes you see. Cut the shapes you find out of construction paper to create a new landscape or creature, or swing by the artLAB and use our new *Shape Scapes*.



- Feeling creative? Pick up a **Draw bag** stuffed with paper, pencils, and a clipboard and sketch in the artLAB or galleries. Stools are available in the galleries.
- Not sure how to look at art? Take a look at one of the "**Looking and Talking**" boxes. Each box holds a set of cards to help jump start your experience.
- Have some fun with this list of actual quotes from art critics with **Art Criticism 101**. Find the works of art that you feel fit the critique. Critique a work of art with randomly selected card. Anything goes with this game, you're the critic!

Looking + Talking/Writing

ARTIFACT ANALYSIS

What materials is it made out of?
(Some possibilities: wood, glass, metal, plastic, bone, pottery, leather, cardboard)

What color is it? Does this appear to be its natural coloring or has it been painted or dyed?

What is the general shape?

Does it have any moving parts? Describe them.

What is the size?
(Height, length, width)

Describe THE ARTIFACT

Draw a sketch of your object.

Are there any words, pictures, or symbols printed on the artifact? Describe them.

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
MUSEUM of ART

7 WAYS TO READ AN OBJECT

MANUFACTURE
WHAT IS THE OBJECT MADE OF? HOW WAS IT MADE?

FUNCTION
WHAT POSSIBLE USES DOES THIS OBJECT HAVE?

ENVIRONMENT
WHERE MIGHT PEOPLE USE THIS OBJECT?

DEVELOPMENT
WHAT TIME PERIOD IS THIS FROM? IS IT SIMILAR TO OTHER OBJECTS FROM THIS TIME PERIOD?

CONTINUE ON BACK

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
MUSEUM of ART

Want to learn more about how to talk or write about art? Check out these helpful worksheets. Visit our website for a downloadable copy or ask a Museum Associate or artLAB attendant for a copy.

[Artifact Analysis Worksheet - OSU Museum of Art](#)

What can we conclude about an artifact by looking closely and studying the object?

[7 Ways to Read an Object - OSU Museum of Art](#)

These questions guide students to consider an object more closely. Where did it come from? Who may have used it? Etc.

About this Guide

This Resource Guide was created by the Education and Programming team at OSU Museum of Art. As a teaching museum, we are passionate about arts education and visual literacy. To find more guides like this, visit the exhibition pages and look for the "Additional Resources" link, or visit <https://museum.okstate.edu/educator-resources>.

To learn more about visiting the museum, scheduling tours, or to access our Letter of Support for Educational Administrators, visit <https://museum.okstate.edu/tours>.

Come back soon!

[Check our website for extended hours. Admission is always free.](#)

Is there something you'd like to see at the museum? [We would love to hear from you.](#)

Oklahoma State University Museum of Art

720 South Husband Street, Stillwater, OK 74074

405.744.2780 | museum@okstate.edu | museum.okstate.edu

