



BENJAMIN HARJO JR.

Land of Dreams

Benjamin Harjo Jr. (born 1945) is an award-winning painter and printmaker from Oklahoma. As a child, Harjo liked to draw cartoons, selling some of his comics to his high school newspaper. He graduated college with an art degree from Oklahoma State University and became an award-winner painter and printmaker. To this day, Harjo is always sketching. He draws inspiration from everything he sees around him, including nature, cereal boxes, or even dusty windows.

In his painting *Land of Dreams*, Harjo paints imaginary scenes by repeating shapes and alternating bright colors. Sometimes his vibrant patterns blend themselves into figures that viewers can define, such as a plant, an animal, or a person. The mosaic nature of his painting is reminiscent of Seminole patchwork clothing. Harjo is half-Seminole and half-Shawnee and is enrolled in the Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What COLORS do you SEE?
- What SHAPES do you SEE
- What do you THINK you SEE?

ACTIVITIES

Supplies: Foam stickers and a sticky note.

Instructions: Create an interesting pattern using geometric shapes and alternating colors.

Supplies: Colored pencils, crayons, illustration markers.

Materials: Create a hybrid animal using simple geometric shapes.

Oklahoma Academic Standards

VA.CHP.1.1 Observe works of art from various times, places, and cultures.

VA.P.3.1 Engage in art-making, applying knowledge of art-related vocabulary, materials, techniques, skills, and tools/technology.



Benjamin Harjo. *Land of Dreams*. Image credit: NBC artist series.
<https://nbcwigwam.art/nbcartists>



ONE

DAY LESSON

Posters donated by NBC Bank.

Lesson funded by the OSU Museum of Art Advocates.