

## MAIN LABEL—

### In the Service Of: American Indian Veteran Artists and Tributes

In the Service Of displays work created by American Indian veterans as well as pieces made in tribute to them. The importance of such an exhibition comes from the reality that American Indians serve in the United States military at a higher rate than any other ethnic group of the country's population. American Indian veterans have also pursued careers in the arts and refined their craftsmanship through classes with the support of the G.I. Bill, a number of them being renowned in their artistic fields.

The reasoning as to why American Indians have stood ready to serve the United States and its military is complex. Many were not allowed to vote until the mid-20th century, in addition to not being recognized as legal citizens of the United States until 1924. An attempted elimination of Indigenous languages and cultures was also an official government policy enforced through boarding schools that took American Indian children from their homes. Despite the cruel and unjust treatment they suffered, American Indians have served in every conflict and theater of war since the establishment of the United States, a land they have the desire to protect because they are its original inhabitants. Despite the boarding schools and policies, their languages were not erased; in fact, Native languages resulted in the formation of the Code Talkers from multiple tribal nations, who played a vital role in World War I, World War II, and beyond.

The deep respect in Indian Country for those who serve confirms that there remains an enormous devotion to the land they have stewarded for generations, as well as a steadfast dedication to the continuation of their people, cultures, and nations. The service of American Indian Veterans as well as the artistic and cultural interests they followed have created a legacy of distinction that continues to last.

LORI ANN PIESTEWA LABEL—

Lori Ann Piestewa  
December 14, 1979 – March 23, 2003

Lori Ann Piestewa (Hopi) was born in 1979 in Moenkopi, a town near Tuba City, Arizona. She was an enrolled member of the Hopi Tribe with the Hopi name of Kocha-Hon-Mana, or White Bear Girl. She was a great source of joy to her parents, who recall that she was a beautiful child with sparkling brown eyes.

Piestewa, like many other American Indian young men and women aspiring to have better lives for their families, joined the U.S. military. The benefits of service in the military offered hope. With her two small children under the care of their grandparents, Piestewa enlisted in the U.S. Army.

Piestewa excelled in basic and advanced training. She was assigned to and deployed to Iraq as part of the Army's 507th Maintenance Company. On March 23, 2003, Piestewa and the convoy she was part of were ambushed just before sunrise. Piestewa and others in the convoy were killed, making her the first woman to die in the Iraq War, as well as the first American Indian woman killed in foreign combat. Piestewa's death crushed the Hopi and Navajo nations and sent shockwaves throughout Indian Country and the nation. More than 5,000 people, from all ethnicities and walks of life, attended her funeral service.

Since then, her impact has continued to grow. In 2008, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in Washington, D.C., ratified the naming of Piestewa Peak in Phoenix in honor of Piestewa's sacrifice. In a historic victory for American Indian people, this action removed a derogatory reference to American Indian women and replaced it with one of honor. In the Hopi language, Piestewa means "rainwater" or "moisture left after a rain."

Piestewa's father was a frequent participant in the Hopi Powamu (Bean Dance) ceremony. Since her death, Piestewa's parents have come to serve as ambassadors for Hopi culture at events around the country, honoring their daughter's sacrifice.

When the Pentagon announced the death of Lori Ann Piestewa, snow fell in Tuba City. The Hopi interpreted the falling snow as Piestewa's spirit returning to her family and her people.

Piestewa's presence continues to be felt by her children as well as young men and women entering the military. Those who served alongside Piestewa travel to Arizona yearly for the memorials held in honor of their friend and the fellow servicemen and women who died that day.



Photo caption:

Spc. Lori Ann Piestewa, U.S. Army, c. 2003.



Photo caption:

Lori Ann Piestewa (right) with her roommate Jessica Lynch and son Brandon Whiterock at Fort Bliss, Texas, on Feb. 16, 2003, the day before deployment of the 507th Maintenance Company to Iraq. Photo courtesy of the Piestewa family.

## CODETALKERS LABEL—

### Navajo Code Talkers

On July 26, 2001, fifty-six years after World War II ended and 33 years after the U.S. Department of Defense declassified the secret code, the U.S. Congress honored the 29 original Navajo Code Talkers with the Congressional Gold Medal. These World War II veterans provided a unique service to the nation's war effort. In May 1942, they created about 200 code equivalents for more than 200 military terms and an alphabet for spelling messages, all based on the Navajo language. By June 1945, this had expanded to a 614-word code.

In her Code Talkers pictorial textile woven in tribute to the Navajo Code Talkers, artist Helen Begay (Diné) includes a few illustrated examples. The word for tortoise, *ch'ééh degháhi*, was code for tank. *Łq̄q̄ tsoh* (whale) was used as code for battleship. In addition to this, Navajo words were used for letters of the alphabet. For example, *tl'izí* (goat) became the equivalent for the letter G, and *béésh dotl'izh* (zinc) became the equivalent for the letter Z.

Later that same year, on Nov. 24, 2001, the Congressional Silver Medal was awarded to 250 subsequent Navajo Code Talkers. The code that the Navajo Code Talkers helped to develop and then put into use allowed them to quickly send messages over military telephone and radio and was unbreakable by the enemy. From the official website of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence: "The [code] system enabled the Code Talkers to translate three lines of English in 20 seconds, not 30 minutes as was common with existing code-breaking machines." During the war, the Code Talkers participated in every assault conducted by the U.S. Marines in the Pacific from 1942 to 1945, including Guam, Iwo Jima, Peleliu, Saipan and Tarawa.

All together, there were more than 400 Navajo Code Talkers. The creativity and innovation required to turn Diné bizáád, the Navajo language, into an unbroken code made it an art.



Photo caption:

Congressional Silver Medal, 2001. Photo courtesy of the Price family.



Photo caption:

“Grandpa Joe” hoop dancing on Saipan as his fellow Navajo Code Talkers look on. His family mailed him his regalia and Joe made the hoops on the spot using a hose he found nearby. Before becoming a Code Talker, Joe was a champion hoop dancer at the Gallup Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial. Photo courtesy of the Price family.

INDIVIDUAL LABELS—

Helen Begay

Diné, b. 1953

Navajo Code Talkers pictorial textile

Wool, aniline dyes

Begay pays tribute to Navajo Code Talkers who served in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II. Code Talkers are depicted in profile wearing traditional regalia and accompanied by a shadow, which reveals their militaristic counterpart who will always follow them. Above the figures are examples of how the Navajo language was used in battle, connecting the Navajo word and its actual meaning with its coded message. Also embedded within the textile design are feathers, bows and a quiver of arrows—symbols of protection for our veterans.

Gift in memory of Doren Indritz, 4708-10

Sherman Chaddlesone

Kiowa, 1947-2013

Ledger-style painting, 1983

Watercolor on paper

This ledger-style painting represents Kiowa War Mothers. Dedicated to supporting Kiowa military servicemen and women since time immemorial, members of the Kiowa War Mothers send care packages, host dinners on holidays such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day, stand vigilant at wakes, sit at the bedsides of the sick and injured, and seek always to acknowledge and give praise to fighting warriors and veterans.

Gift of Dr. Rennard Strickland, 3485-11

Yazzie Johnson and Gail Bird

Diné/Laguna Pueblo (b. 1946) and Santo Domingo Pueblo (b. 1949)

Belt buckle, c. 1980

Silver, Bruneau jasper, 14K gold

In 1972, Johnson and Bird began making jewelry together and developing their innovative style, demonstrated here using the Bruneau jasper juxtaposed with the Diné silverworking technique. Especially notable is the back of the buckle, which depicts three birds with wings overlaid with 14K gold crosses flying over a mesa. This image beautifully connects and recollects swirling

ivory clouds approaching an ochre landscape on the front side. Johnson enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1966 and served in Vietnam and Germany.

Heard Museum purchase, 4458-1

Artist Once Known

Plateau

Beaded bag, 1940s

Glass beads, commercial cloth, animal hide

The lesser-known Pawnee Code Talkers of World War II tactically utilized the Pawnee language to send sensitive messages across radio transmission. Sgt. Grant Gover was one of seven Pawnee Code Talkers stationed in western Germany. On November 1, 1944, Sgt. Gover was killed in action during the Rhineland Campaign. This beaded bag memorializes Sgt. Gover's service and life through the meticulous beadwork and a design that incorporates both U.S. patriotism and Pawnee allegiance to pride.

Gift of the estate of Elaine Horwitch, 4817-9

Rick Bartow

Mad River Band of Wiyot, 1946-2016

Wood sculpture, 1997

Carved wood, beads, feathers, cloth, string, nails, paper, silver

Bartow served in the U.S. Army from 1969 to 1971 during the Vietnam War as a teletype operator and entertained wounded troops as a guitar player in military hospitals. After returning from combat, Bartow suffered from severe PTSD, which manifested in addiction and deteriorating mental health. The wooden sculpture's face expresses scorn, and the American flag looks forcibly placed. Are the mechanical legs indicative of the elements of control Bartow felt from the military? There are elements to this sculpture that require a critical look into how military service affects the minds of those who have served.

Gift of Helen M. Starr, 3677-1

Artist Once Known

Paiute

Beaded basketry bowl, c. 1930

Willow, glass beads

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Henry S. Galbraith, 3309-269

TahNibaa Naataanii

Diné, b. 1967

Early Classic Style poncho, 2015

Churro wool, aniline dyes

Naataanii joined the U.S. Navy upon graduating from high school. She traveled around the world, spending time in the Philippines and Thailand. Naataanii returned to weaving after her discharge from the service. In this Early Classic style poncho, she pays homage to the Diné weavers who wove in this style—utilizing influence, trade and tradition.

Gift of Kathleen L. and William G. Howard, 4834-1

Charles Loloma

Hopi, 1921-1991

Ceramic jar, 1953

Clay

Loloma served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1945 with the 331st Army Engineers, stationed in the Aleutian Islands. Through the G.I. Bill, Loloma began studying ceramics at the School for American Craftsmen at Alfred University in New York. He then received a fellowship from the Whitney Foundation to research pottery in his community on Second Mesa on the Hopi Reservation. From 1955 onward, jewelry became Loloma's focus.

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Byron Harvey III, NA-SW-HO-A12-3

Jesse Monongya

Diné/Hopi, b. 1952

Bracelet, 1983

Silver, white shell, mother-of-pearl, turquoise, coral, jet, lapis lazuli

Monongya carries the legacy of both military service and jewelry making within his family. His father, Preston Monongya, served in World War II as a paratrooper and later re-enlisted during the Korean War before continuing his prominent work in jewelry making. Monongya served in



the U.S. Marines in the Vietnam War. After returning from service, he learned jewelry techniques by observing his father. Monongya has developed a style influenced by Diné and Hopi silverwork in which he carefully imagines the cosmic through inlay design.

Anonymous donor, 4194-5

Doug Hyde

Nez Perce/Assiniboine/Chippewa, b. 1946

*Round Dance II*, c. 1974

Walnut

Hyde enlisted in the U.S. Army in the late 1960s and was wounded by a grenade during his second tour of duty in Vietnam. Once he returned from service, his career as a sculptor emerged. In *Round Dance II*, Hyde reminds us that our communities hold us and heal us in times of tragedy, conflict, grief or loss of self.

Heard Museum purchase, IAC536

Bob Haozous

Warm Springs Chiricahua Apache, b. 1943

Sculpture, 1993

Steel, nickel

Haozous served in the U.S. Navy for four years aboard a destroyer, the U.S.S. Frank Knox, during the Vietnam War. Once he returned, he attended the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, where he received his BFA in sculpture. Much of his military experience catalyzed his attuned critiques of politics, history and climate change. This sculpture, which was part of an exhibition titled *Vanishing Buffalo Herd*, shows a buffalo with its center pierced by a bullet hole. From 1820 to 1880, the buffalo population significantly declined from approximately 30 to 60 million down to the thousands. The U.S. military initiated this near-extinction to control Native communities.

Gift of Natalie Eigen, 4763-7

T.C. Cannon

Caddo/Kiowa, 1946-1978

Big Foot in the Snow, c. 1969

Oil on canvas

On December 29, 1890, in the Wounded Knee Massacre, the U.S. Army took the lives of more than 300 Lakota women, children and men. In *Big Foot in the Snow*, Cannon references the black-and-white photograph that was taken of Chief Big Foot during the massacre. Cannon reclaims and colorizes the image of Chief Big Foot. The red cloth wrapping his contorted body is isolated against the white landscape.

Cannon served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, from 1967 to 1968, as a paratrooper in the 101st Airborne Division. In a poem, Cannon wrote: “son, you’ve got to stay / cause you killed custer and you’re / gonna pay for this country ...” After he returned from service, he reflected on his relationship with the military and war, expressing conflict through this creative practice.

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Larry B. Gordon, 3537-1

Depree Shadowwalker  
Mescalero Apache, b. 1961  
Digital photo

Shadowwalker served in the Army National Guard from 1981 to 1992. An avid photographer, she captured this image during a coming-of-age ceremony on Mescalero lands in southern New Mexico. The veteran dressed in camouflage fatigues who is running behind the young woman for whom the ceremony is taking place is the young woman’s cousin. The image encapsulates the reverence for veterans held by members of the community.

Courtesy of the artist

Shirley Pino  
Santa Ana Pueblo (Tamaya), b. 1955  
Embroidered shirt  
Vintage monk’s cloth, acrylic thread

Pino served active duty in the U.S. Army from 1981 through 1986 and in the Army Reserve until 1991. She has always been a creative person, but she has never forgotten where she came from and those who have come before her. She credits her early childhood experience for giving her the discipline and attention to detail that served her well both in her military service and in creating custom and traditional clothing for her company, RedWing Collections. The dress on

view is created using vintage clothing and traditional designs. Her sewing practice is one of the ways she maintains her connections and pays reverence to past community members.

Collection of Redwing Shirley Pino

ARTIST PHOTO CAPTIONS (TO BE PRINTED ON INDIVIDUAL LABELS)—



Doug Hyde (Nez Perce/Assiniboine/Chippewa) at the Heard Museum standing next to his newly installed sculpture “Zuni Girl” in the mid-1980s. Native American Artists Collection, Billie Jane Baguley Library and Archives, RC62(H92):3.7.



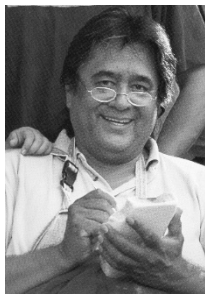
Charles Loloma (Hopi) with a blowtorch in his studio. Native American Artists Collection, Billie Jane Baguley Library and Archives, RC62(64B):7.



TahNibaa Naataanii (Diné) and her mother, Sarah H. Natani, pictured on a page from the artist’s scrapbook for her wool serape poncho. Native American Artists Collection, Billie Jane Baguley Library and Archives, RC62(N33):1.2.



Gail Bird (Santo Domingo Pueblo/Laguna Pueblo) and Yazzie Johnson (Diné) with their pet, c. 1996. Native American Artists Collection, Billie Jane Baguley Library and Archives, RC62(B565):1.



Jesse Monongye (Diné/Hopi), Detail of photograph by Kiyoshi Togashi for Ornament magazine (Autumn 2002).



Rick Bartow (Mad River Wiyot). Photograph by Ernest Amoroso for the National Museum of the American Indian.



Shirley Pino (Santa Ana Pueblo/Tamaya), 2022, Photograph courtesy of the artist.



T.C. Cannon (Caddo/Kiowa), Courtesy of the Archives of the Institute of American Indian Arts and reproduced with the permission of the Cannon estate.



Depree Shadowwalker (Mescalero Apache), 2022, Photograph courtesy of the artist.



Bob Haozous (Diné/Warm Springs Chiricahua Apache), *Old Man Looking Backward*, Self-portrait courtesy of the artist.