

INDIAN HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Indian Hills Community College Art Collections

College Art Collections

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- **The Bailey and Betty Webber Mesquakie Indian Artifacts Collection**

During the first half of the 20th century, Betty Webber's father collected an amazing array of artifacts produced by members of the Mesquakie Indian tribe. Most of the artifacts were made between 1890 and 1920. Mrs. Webber shared her passion for her hobby with her children: Richard, David and Elizabeth. They became active in selecting items for the collection as well.

In 1999, Richard, David and Elizabeth Webber graciously gave a large portion of their deceased mother's collection to the Indian Hills Art Gallery. Another portion of this collection was given to the University of Iowa by Mrs. Webber and her sister.

It was thought that the two institutions would be better able to manage the care, storage and display for these important, but extremely fragile, artifacts. Organic materials such as leather, fur, porcupine quills, and feathers will begin to decay if exposed to too much ultraviolet light, so the time spent on view must be limited. They also should be stored in such a way that they can continue to be shown and studied for many more years.

- **The Ray Harm Limited Edition Print Collection**

The collection of Kentucky wildlife artist Ray Harm's limited edition prints came to Indian Hills as a gift from Dr. and Mrs. Paul Scott in 2000. This generous gift is a nearly complete collection of the artist's work in limited edition prints.

Even though the term "print" is popularly used for this type of artwork, "reproduction" would be a more correct term to use. These works are produced from a photograph of the original painting. The photograph is then reproduced using the same offset lithographic process that much of our commercial printing is done in, such as textbooks and newspapers. These reproductions allow an artist to reach a much larger audience than would be possible with one painting. For the buyer, the cost of a limited edition reproduction is a fraction of the price of the original painting. Because the total edition of reproductions is limited and can't be reprinted, the individual reproductions will retain the purchase value. Many popular works by noted artists have gained in collector's value way beyond the original purchase price.

- **Indian Hills Community College Board of Trustees Student Art Awards**

Every spring the Indian Hills Art Department sponsors an exhibit of works produced by students enrolled in art courses of the past year. The art faculty appoints a judge to select the 10 strongest works from the show and these works are then honored with Award of Excellence ribbons. The 10 award winners are then presented to the IHCC Board of Trustees, where one of the 10 is chosen and purchased as a representative work for that academic year.

These student art works are at that time added to the Indian Hills Art Gallery's permanent collection.

These works are some of the most cherished pieces in our permanent collection. Many winning art works from previous years can be seen in the Student Union in Trustee Hall as well as in offices around the Ottumwa and Centerville campuses.

- **Donated Art Works**

Over the years, art collectors and artists have gifted Indian Hills with individual works or whole collections of works.

These gifts are made for a variety of reasons. Some collections require a level of care and maintenance that is prohibitive for the individual and easier managed by an institution, like Indian Hills, with its greater resources. Sometimes collectors simply run out of storage space. Single art works may be given to the college out of a spirit of generosity or to preserve art works by artists of local, regional, or even national importance.

- **The Fahrney Collection**

The art works from the Fahrney Collection were collected by Helen Fahrney (1908-1978) during the late 1930s and 1940s. They were offered by the WPA (Works Progress Administration) as a monthly subscription. Helen Fahrney donated much of her money and belongings to many Ottumwa area organizations. Her collection of artist's original prints was given to the Sisters of the Humility of Mary. With the purchase of the Ottumwa Heights College from the Sisters by Indian Hills Community College in 1981, ownership of the prints transferred to Indian Hills.

The techniques used to create these works involve old traditional printing methods such as wood engraving, intaglio (etching and aquatint) and stone lithography. These printing techniques come to us from the European Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

As many as 5,000 artists, out of work due to the Great Depression, became involved in the WPA's Federal Art Project, creating works from large murals in public buildings to the print subscription works seen in this gallery. In exchange for their creative efforts, the artists received \$25 to \$35 a week. Many highly recognized artists became a part of the Federal Art Project, including John Curry, Thomas Hart Benton, Asa Cheffetz, Adolf Dehn, Isabel Bishop, and Iowa's own Grant Wood.

- **The Family Art Festival Collection**

The Family Art Festival's first year was in 1973. This art festival was started by a committee of local citizens for the purpose of generating a greater interest in fine art. As the event evolved and grew, the festival committee began offering a scholarship each year to an art student attending Ottumwa Heights College, and then in 1980, Indian Hills Community College. Each year during the Family Art Festival, several artists were honored with awards for artistic excellence. One of their art works was then purchased and added to the Family Art Festival Committee's collection.