



**Learning Through Art: Corwin Clairmont and  
Jaune Quick-to-See Smith**

Missoula Art Museum Missoula School District Collaboration Grant  
to Integrate Indian Education for All  
Sponsored by the Montana Office of Public Instruction and the Montana  
Historical Society

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, *Winds of Change* Lithograph, 1992



## *A People of Vision*

"Our stories teach us that we must always work for a time when there will be no evil, no racial prejudice, no pollution, when once again everything will be clean and beautiful for the eye to behold—a time when spiritual, physical, mental and social values are inter-connected to form a complete circle."

—Salish Culture Comm.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes are comprised of the Bitterroot Salish, the Pend d'Oreille and the Kootenai tribes. The Flathead Reservation of 1.317 million acres in northwest Montana is our home now but our ancestors lived in the territory now known as western Montana, parts of Idaho, British Columbia and Wyoming. This aboriginal territory exceeded 20 million acres at the time of the 1855 Hellgate Treaty.

Tribal Seal design by Corky Clairmont.

January 2016

Dear Teachers,

Thank you for allowing your class to participate in this exciting learning opportunity. The benefits to your students should be multi- faceted as they explore the world of Contemporary Montana Native Americans through art and poetry.

The Essential Understandings of American Indians that will be addressed in this project are :

**Essential Understanding 2**

There is great diversity among American Indians as identity is developed, defined and redefined by entities, organizations and people. A continuum of Indian identity, unique to each individual ranges from assimilated to traditional. There is no generic American Indian.

**Essential Understanding 3**

The ideologies of Native traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern day life as tribal cultures, traditions, and languages are still practiced by many American Indian people and are incorporated into how tribes govern and manage their affairs.

**Essential Understanding 7**

Under the American legal system, Indian tribes have sovereign powers, separate and independent from the federal and state governments.

Through the exercises provided by the Missoula Writing Collaborative and with any additional research projects you choose to pursue, many of the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts will be addressed. Students will use the same approach to viewing a work of art as they do a literary text, creating meaning from the work and drawing inferences from what is seen.

An exciting part of this project will be the student visit to the Missoula Art Museum where students will have the opportunity to meet artist Corwin Clairmont and create a work of art under his guidance. It should be an enriching experience for all.

Thanks once again for being apart of this.

Sincerely,

Renée Taaffe

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## MEET CORKY CLAIRMONT

Corwin "Corky" Clairmont is a celebrated contemporary artist from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Through his work as a printmaker, conceptual and installation artist, he seeks to explore situations that affect Indian Country historically and in contemporary times. His work is highly influenced by tribal issues of sovereignty, colonization, culture, and history.

Corky was born on the Flathead Reservation in Montana and is an enrolled member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. His parents encouraged his natural talent for creative arts from a very young age. At age 15 he submitted a design for the community's tribal seal, which was chosen and is still used to this day. This experience paved the way for his future as a professional artist.

Corky obtained a Bachelors of Art at the Montana State University and did a graduate fellowship at San Fernando State University. He completed his formal education in 1971 with a Masters in Art at California State University Los Angeles. Following graduation he remained in Los Angeles as a fine arts instructor and printmaking department head at the Otis/Parsons Art Institute. In 1984, he returned to the Flathead Reservation and begin work in an administrative position at the Salish and Kootenai College. He took the lead in creating an arts department at the college and is currently the Director of Art the Fine Arts Department. He is also a teacher, mentor, community activist, and continues as a well recognized artist. He has been a member of the Montana Arts Council since May of 2008. Through the years, he has served on many professional boards, curated and juried many art shows, and he has received a Ford Foundation grant, National Endowment for the Arts and Montana Arts Council grants, a fellowship award from the Eiteljorg Museum in Indianapolis. Most recently, Corky was awarded the 2008 Montana Governor's Arts Award for Visual Art. His work has been exhibited from coast to coast and around the world, including Germany and New Zealand, and has been reviewed by the New York Times.

“My passion is visual arts and in particular, that of contemporary art and art education. As an Indian artist, I have directed much of my efforts towards expressing important aspects of our Indian community through contemporary art. It is my belief that to exhibit contemporary Indian art is an important acknowledgment of a culture and people that are very much alive today. Art in general should be a fundamental part of all curriculums in our schools, as it is critical in the development of our youth and their ability to seek innovative solutions to complex problems. Art is an asset to becoming an independent thinker and having the ability to think outside of the box. Through the sharing of knowledge and culture, a better understanding and respect can create a more positive dialogue and resulting decisions that can best benefit our Montana Indian communities and Montana as a whole.”



## **Split War Shield**

Cast handmade paper, lithograph and mixed media 2001

In the three-dimensional work Split War Shield, Clairmont references the traditional element of a shield but, unlike traditional shields, this is constructed of paper fiber made to look like torn fragments of tire track and eagle feathers. A zigzag of white runs down the center of the shield, evoking the controversy when the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes protested the State of Montana's plan to widen Highway 93 through the Flathead Reservation. Clairmont says:

“My ultimate goal as an artist is to remind people of our shared humanity. I wish to give Indian culture back the humanity that has been taken from it by stereotypes created over the past five centuries. Neither the super-shaman nor the drunken Indian do anything to convey what we as a people feel. I want to express the passion, pain and reverence I feel as a contemporary Native person”

...“When you put a road in and take a hillside out, in essence you're taking a page out of our book,” he reflected. “The land becomes more fragmented, and it's done many times without conscience. Sacred sites are destroyed. We don't have a loud voice to talk about those things. Through the arts, it gives us more of a voice.”

Corky had great concerns about the expansion of Highway 93--- concerns for the welfare of the tribal people, the small towns, as well as the animals and natural environment along the way. A multitude of animals cross the highway moving between the rich wetlands, valleys and mountains that comprise much of the reservation.

The tribe exercised its tribal sovereignty (see vocabulary) in insisting the US highway Department make amendments in its plans to expand the highway from 2 to 4 lanes especially while going through towns. Included in the plans were corridors that allowed animals to safely cross the highway

## Thinking Sparks:

First, use the Visual Thinking Strategies to encourage students to look closely and make logical inferences about what they see. All statements should be backed up by what is actually seen. Secondly, ask pointed questions to encourage students to think deeper about the images Corky uses. Below are some examples of questions you might ask to elicit discussion.

1. How does *Spit War Shield* communicate Corky concerns?
2. Why did Corky decide to use tire remnants to create the shield form?
3. Why do you think he chose to put a white zig zag separation in the middle of the shield?
4. How many animals do you see portrayed in the shield? Which is the largest?
5. Why did Corky choose to use images of trucks and road building machines on the feathers of Split War Shield?
6. Why do you think Corky choose to place a red hand print as one of the dominant images of the shield?

## NATIVE AMERICAN SHIELDS

Have students choose from the questions below to do their own research and present their findings to the class.

Research Ideas:

You can look at the following websites to see examples of traditional Plains Indian shields:

<http://www.snowowl.com/histplainsindianshields2.html>

<http://www.nativeartstrading.com/shields.html>

<http://www.trailtribes.org/greatfalls/long-knives.htm>

1. What were shields traditionally used for?
2. Did the designs change over time?
3. What materials were used to create these?
4. What is similar about these shields to the one Corky has created?
5. In a traditional shield, eagle feathers had a very specific purpose. What was the importance of the feathers on a traditional medicine or war shield?
6. Usually the animals depicted on a shield had a very special meaning to the owner. The animal may have been seen in a dream or given to the owner by the medicine man, chief or the animal may have been seen in a dream or vision quest by the warrior. What type of animal would you choose to have on a shield? Why?
7. If you **look closely** you will see small turtle beads imbedded in the tire tracks.

**Research** the types of turtles and other reptiles and amphibians found in the Flathead Valley.

### Blackfeet Shields

Every warrior had a shield. Blackfeet shields were designed to give their owners both physical and spiritual protection. They were made of thick buffalo hide that at one time could resist the metal bullet from musket type rifles. The design on shields could represent various things such as coup marks, marks representing exploits of the owner, also images of animals" (Darrell Norman, 2002).



Traditional shield designs





#### ANIMAL CORRIDORS:

One of the solutions designed to address the tribe's concern of the expanded highway was to create a series of animal corridors, under and overpasses that allow animals to make their way across the highway without being hit.

Go to the following websites to have students view images of the animals that are using the Highway93 animal crossing corridors on the Flathead Reservation.

[http://www.cskt.org/tr/fwrc\\_wildlifecrossing.htm](http://www.cskt.org/tr/fwrc_wildlifecrossing.htm)

[http://www.mdt.mt.gov/other/research/external/project\\_photos/us93info/MISC\\_WILDLIFE](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/other/research/external/project_photos/us93info/MISC_WILDLIFE)

After looking at the website of animal crossing corridors, choose the animal that most interests you. **Do a drawing** of that animal and write a paragraph about its life. **Research** Montana Native American stories that might include that animal.



A view of a bear crossing in a Hwy 93 wildlife corridor

## **Conserving Wildlife (and Culture) on the Flathead Indian Reservation**

**The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes use the latest science to successfully manage grizzlies, deer, swans, falcons, and other species in harmony with traditional values. By Daryl Gadbow**

This story is featured in *Montana Outdoors* March–April 2010 issue

For decades, wildlife species ranging from moose to mice have tried to cross busy U.S. Highway 93 in western Montana. Usually they made it through the stream of trucks and cars, but too often they didn't, resulting in injured and dead deer, bears, bobcats, and other species. Then there was the hazard to motorists. On some stretches, nighttime drivers faced a gauntlet of wild critters, the animals' eyes glittering in frozen reflection as speeding vehicles swerved past.

Today the highway is safer for both people and wildlife. Beginning in 2006 on a newly reconstructed 56-mile stretch through the Flathead Indian Reservation, wildlife began making the perilous crossing often unseen by the stream of passing motorists. Thanks to a cooperative effort between the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) and state and federal highway agencies, new wildlife passageways make the motorway permeable to animal movement while reducing both traffic accidents and the likelihood of wildlife becoming roadkill.

Much credit for the passageways project goes to the CSKT's Tribal Wildlife Management Program. This little-known unit of the Tribes' Division of Fish, Wildlife, Recreation & Conservation is responsible for conserving wildlife on the 1.34 million-acre reservation, an area larger than Delaware. The staff of seven biologists, four wildlife technicians, a habitat restoration

ecologist, and program manager Dale Becker work on everything from game species such as pheasants to federally protected animals like grizzly bears. That wildlife diversity comes from a varied natural environment ranging from high-elevation alpine terrain in the Mission Mountains to wetlands complexes and sagebrush grasslands in the Flathead Valley. “The reservation has an incredible mix of wildlife species,” Becker says, “and that creates an incredible mix of wildlife and habitat issues.”

#### A GOOD FIT

Becker says wildlife has always been an integral aspect of tribal culture, which guides and directs the reservation’s wildlife management program. His team meets regularly with the Tribal Council, culture committees, and tribal elders to discuss projects and how they mesh with the Tribes’ overall goals. Becker says tribal leaders have asked him and his staff to maintain viable and stable wildlife populations, restore habitat, and conserve all species, especially indigenous ones. “Those cultural goals make a good fit with biologists’ overriding philosophy that all species are important parts of the environment,” he says.

The tribal wildlife program works closely with state agencies including Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. “It’s rare when the Tribes’ wildlife management objectives don’t mesh with ours,” says Jim Williams, FWP regional wildlife manager in Kalispell. One joint project is a cooperative hunting and fishing agreement between FWP and the Tribes, in place since 1990, which allows hunting and fishing on the Flathead Reservation by people who are not tribal members. Another is the cooperative management by the Tribes with FWP of a shared bighorn sheep herd in the Perma-Paradise area for hunting by both tribal members and the general public.

One of the Tribes’ most important wildlife projects helps offset damage to thousands of acres of tribal wetlands and other wildlife habitat caused when Kerr Dam was built on the Flathead River in the 1930s. Using mitigation funding the Tribes negotiated from the dam’s corporate owner and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the wildlife program has spearheaded the acquisition of more than 11,000 acres of wetland and riparian habitat on the reservation owned by nontribal members.

#### DEER UNDER THE ASPHALT

If all this activity weren’t enough, Becker and his staff have also spent much of the past decade helping wildlife move unharmed from one side of U.S. Highway 93 to the other. The animals’ safe passage is made possible by 43 crossing structures integrated into the highway reconstruction under an agreement—the culmination of years of negotiations starting in the 1990s—among the CSKT, the Montana Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration. Tribal wildlife biologists, along with representatives of the state and federal highway agencies, visited Banff National Park in Alberta to learn about overpass and underpass structures. They also studied underground structures used successfully in Florida and Europe.

The initial 42 underground passageways on U.S. Highway 93 were sited at spots from Polson to Evaro Hill that had significant wildlife losses. So that animals would be funneled toward the 12-foot-high culverts, fencing was installed on both sides of the highway where the passageways were built.

The underground wildlife corridors worked. On one curvy highway stretch near Ravalli notorious for deer collisions, accidents immediately and dramatically declined after passageways and fencing were installed. “That shows how the structures are enhancing safety both for wildlife and the people driving the highway,” says Becker.

Motion-detecting cameras installed in the underpass crossings have documented a wide range of species. “We have tons of wildlife going through,” says Whisper Camel, a wildlife biologist assigned to monitor the crossings. On one highway section north of St. Ignatius, cameras at three closely located underpass crossings documented in 2008 a combined total of 3,647 white-tailed deer, one black bear, and 110 “miscellaneous species,” including bobcats, muskrats, skunks, raccoons, badgers, mice, rabbits, wood rats, weasels, pheasants, and partridges. That same year at a crossing in grassland habitat on Ravalli Hill, a camera recorded 23 black bears, one elk, 147 mule deer, 17 mountain lions or bobcats, 121 coyotes, and 145 miscellaneous animals. Even grizzly bears and otters move through the tall culverts. “Each time an animal uses the passageways, that represents a collision with a vehicle that might have otherwise occurred,” Becker says.

Initially, the wildlife program staff was concerned the underground crossings would act as “predator traps,” where foxes, coyotes, and other carnivores would lie in wait for prey animals concentrated at the culvert openings. “We haven’t documented any of that happening other than one owl that hangs out on a camera and pounces on small mammals and birds,” Camel says.

#### CAUTION: MOOSE OVERHEAD

The newest crossing structure allows wildlife to travel over traffic. Located on Evaro Hill, about 20 miles north of Missoula, the new overpass is built of 33 concrete rings forming a tunnel above the highway 54 feet wide and nearly 200 feet long...

Becker calls the overpass a “sliver of continuous habitat” that allows large animals—moose, elk, deer, and bears—to cross the busy highway. “It’s a connective corridor between the Seeley-Swan Range and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness,” he says.

Additional underground passageways are planned along the highway in the Ninepipe area. Smaller culverts, designed for smaller animals such as turtles and frogs, will reconnect wetlands bisected by the highway. Larger ones will link riparian habitats.

According to Becker, these and previously installed structures “serve a greater function in maintaining habitat connectivity for wildlife on both sides of the highway.” FWP’s Williams calls the Tribes’ wildlife passageway system “cutting edge” and adds that “as far as I know, it’s the most significant, large-scale habitat-linking wildlife project in the western United States.”

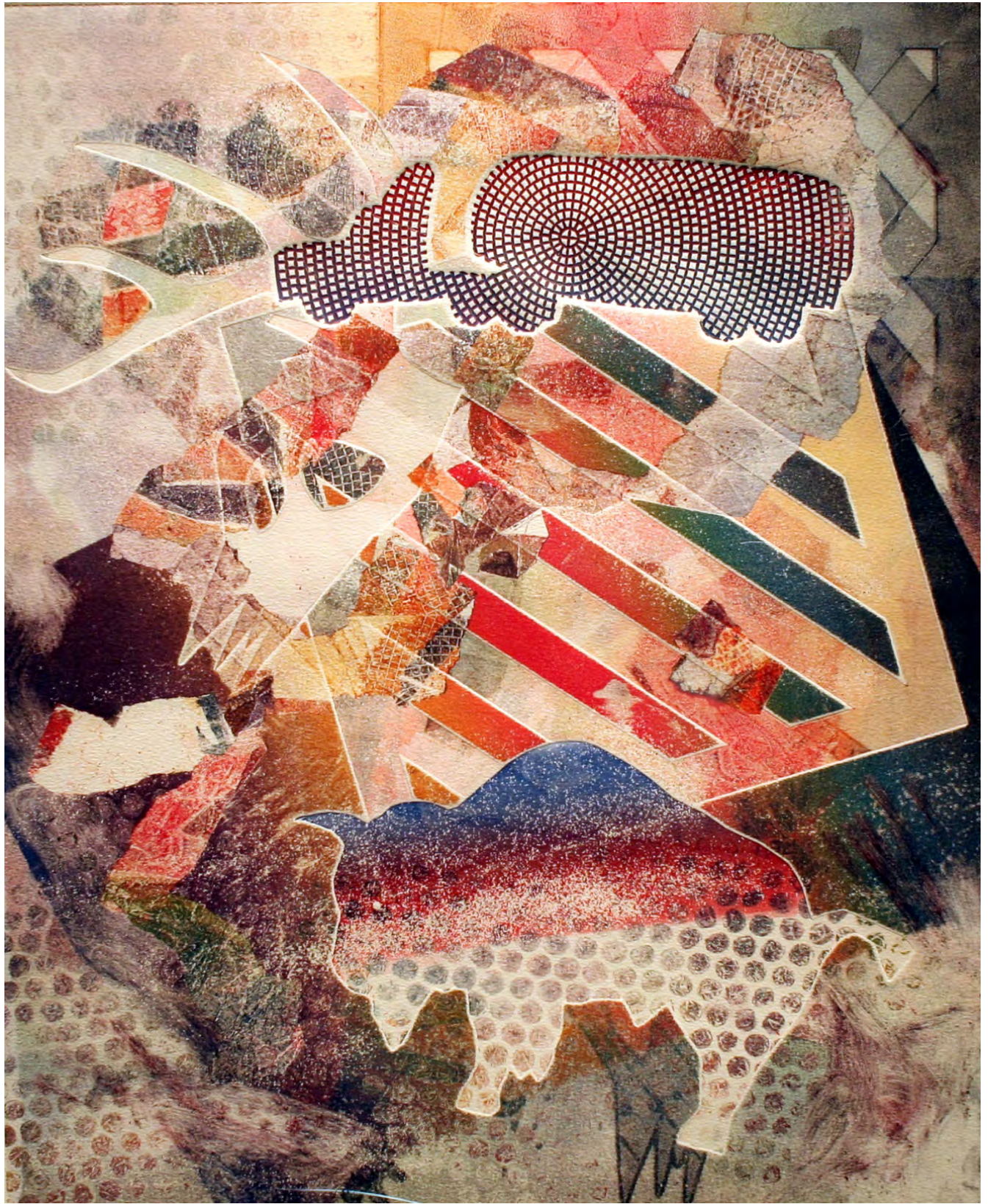
<http://fwp.mt.gov/mtoutdoors/HTML/articles/2010/cskt.htm#.UMERKaz4KSo>

Learn more:

[Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe fish and wildlife resources](#)

[FWP wildlife page](#)

[Native American Fish and Wildlife Society](#)



**Corwin Clairmont**  
*Buffalo Thinking of Ancestors: Yellowstone Pipeline Series #2*  
Monoprint, 1995

## BACKGROUND:

Corky Clairmont created several series of prints in response to the threat of Yellowstone Pipeline that went through the reservation. Tribal officials, recognizing the danger of oil spills and leaks to the environment and the small communities on the reservation worked to get the oil companies to bypass the reservation. Please read the accompanying article published in 1996 in High Country News to get an understanding of this issue. This is also a prime example of the tribe exercising its status as a sovereign, self-governing agency in opposing the oil companies.

In his catalog published by the Missoula Art Museum in 2001, Clairmont writes:

The (series of monotypes) relates to the Yellowstone Pipeline and the oil trucks that traveled within the borders of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Reservation. This series of work ...reflects the potential hazards to the environment and the loss of life.

During the negotiations between the Yellowstone Pipeline Co. and the Salish- Kootenai Tribe a safer truck route was available but not used. It was thought by many people that the pipeline company was not taking the safer route in order to put pressure on the tribe to negotiate the new pipe line lease. To this date (2000) the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes have refused to allow the Yellowstone Pipeline company to run their products through the reservation by way of a pipeline.

# Tribes beat back oil giants

March 04, 1996 issue by [Ron Selden](#) , High Country News



PABLO, Mont. - In a last-ditch effort to renew an easement for a petroleum pipeline through the Flathead Indian Reservation, the Yellowstone Pipe Line Co. ran an extraordinary full-page ad last summer in the Char Koosta News, the newspaper of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes "We've done serious damage to the land," the company admitted in the ad. "For this we are truly sorry ' We're asking for a chance to do things right."

Company officials had reviewed the ad before publication, but they apparently didn't realize the significance of a howling coyote that the paper's sales staff slipped onto the page. Tribal members must have noticed: Coyote is known as a trickster in many tribal legends, one who can't always be trusted. Once again, the executives at Conoco, Exxon and Union Oil of California - the oil giants that control the Yellowstone Pipe Line Co. - had underestimated their adversaries. Like everything else the company had tried, the ad didn't work. While tribal leaders agreed to re-open talks, they denied the new lease a final time in late October. Company officials, still shocked by their predicament, are now scrambling to find an alternate route.

Few people familiar with the tribes' feisty reputation would have gambled on the pipeline's future. In recent decades, the 7,000-member Salish and Kootenai tribes have gained joint control over a Montana Power Co. dam on the lower Flathead River, retained the right to manage the south half of Flathead Lake, and asserted hunting and fishing rights both on and off the 1.2 million-acre reservation. The tribes have also won fights with local irrigators over guaranteeing instream flows and the right to run the area's main electrical utility. Now, they're poised to enforce new water-quality regulations on the reservation, which are tougher than Montana state laws.

The Yellowstone Pipe Line Co. needs an easement through the reservation to continue moving gasoline, diesel and aviation fuel more than 550 miles from refineries in Billings, Mont., to Moses Lake, Wash. Roughly 21 miles of the line runs on land directly owned by the tribes or held in federal trust for tribal members. It's big business for the oil

companies: Along the route, the line serves a variety of wholesale customers including Fairchild Air Force Base, a refueling site for air tankers outside Spokane.

But, according to former Tribal Chairman Mickey Pablo, the company's poor environmental record had become a continuing irritant. Since the pipeline began moving fuel in 1954, it has sprung 71 leaks along the route, and between 1986 and 1993, there have been three major spills on reservation land. Monitoring equipment in faraway Houston, Texas, failed to detect any of the leaks.

At one of the largest oil spills, when some 163,000 gallons spilled into Magpie Creek on the reservation, tribal natural resources program director Sam Morigeau says the company initially used only "cat-box technology" to deal with a pool of gas held underground by a layer of clay. "They scratched around a couple of times until about 1990, and they basically didn't do much after that," says Morigeau. He says the company didn't get serious about environmental problems until the lease renewal was in jeopardy.

In 1993, Pablo says, the company was reminded that its lease was set to expire in two years. In 1994, tribal leaders warned company officials that they'd be wise to get moving on a required environmental impact statement. But company executives dragged their feet, says Pablo, and waited until just months before the old lease was due to expire to embark on the lengthy study. Then, when pressed by company officials last March to reach a decision before the environmental analysis was finished, the Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council voted down the lease proposal, abruptly halting the flow of fuel and sending pipeline executives scrambling for new options.

The company had had a good deal. For two previous 20-year leases, it paid a total of \$193,000, say tribal leaders, which amounted to less than \$5,000 per year. After the first "no" vote, company officials offered roughly \$7.3 million for the new 20-year lease and a \$5 million bond to cover future spills. Tribal leaders held out for more money and better environmental protection.

Company executives in July made an informal offer of about \$29 million for the lease, plus promises of state-of-the-art monitoring, college scholarships, tribal employment and cash for cultural programs, among other inducements. " "They didn't really care about what they're doing," says tribal elder Pat Pierre, a leader in the fight against the company. "All they want to do is make money. It sickens you. This pipeline is just not the Indian way. It destroys what we stand for. I saw a chance to get rid of it, so I went for it."

Tribal leaders were also irked by what they saw as the company's attempt to circumvent and strong-arm them. A sore point was the company's decision after the shutdown to truck much of the pipeline's fuel across the reservation, even though that meant the trucks had to travel narrow, winding roads instead of nearby Interstate 90.

Following the council's initial decision to close the pipeline, company leaders admit they tried - unsuccessfully - to persuade top Bureau of Indian Affairs officials to override the tribes' decision. The company also went to federal court in an effort to condemn some reservation land for a right of way. But the lawsuit was dropped after the tribes pointed out that Indian trust lands are exempt from condemnation.

Next came the public relations blitz, and the ad in the Char Koosta News. Company leaders pressed on, sponsoring free public dinners at "informational" meetings across the



reservation, and offering more promises of a safer, cleaner operation. Their lobbying tactics worked well enough that the tribal council, bowing to internal pressures, agreed to re-open talks and to put any suitable proposals before the voters in the December tribal election.

Meanwhile, the tribal council countered the company's campaign with full-page ads of its own, explaining why members of the tribe should not be swayed by the company's promises. New negotiations never materialized. Instead, company officials formally submitted their previous proposal and offered to pay \$3,561 a day in the interim if fuel could move through the line while final details of a permanent lease were hammered out.

When the company refused to sweeten its offer, tribal leaders proposed a new, short-term \$1.5 million-a-month agreement that would allow fuel to continue flowing. The offer was rejected, however, prompting the tribes in late October to order the company to begin dismantling its pipeline, continue cleaning up past spills and pay \$3,561 a day in trespassing fines, retroactive to the previous easement's expiration in April. "I'm very disappointed," Yellowstone vice president Taylor said after the final go-around with the tribes. "We acted in good faith. I feel like we've gone to an extreme to listen and reply to their environmental concerns."

So far, tribal leaders report that Yellowstone Pipe Line Co. officials have not formally responded to their last demand for cleanup and removal of the pipeline. Although Conoco says it plans to ship more fuel by rail starting this month, dozens of 10,000-gallon tankers still travel some 50 miles across the reservation each day to dump fuel back into the pipeline at Thompson Falls for transport farther west. Thus far, there's been only one serious truck accident.

While company leaders say they may want to reroute the line up the Ninemile Valley west of Missoula, citizen opposition there is already staunch and well organized. Recently, tribal leaders have teamed up with Missoula County officials to warn the company that its environmental record must improve and that aboriginal lands off the reservation will be fiercely protected. Company officials, armed with the power of condemnation, are confident they'll be able to put the pipeline where they choose, so long as it's off the reservation.

Ron Selden writes from Missoula, Montana.



**Jaune Quick-to-See Smith**  
*Winds of Change*, lithograph, 1992



## **Jaune Quick-to-See Smith**

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith was born in St Ignatius, a small town on the Flathead reservation of the Confederated Salish, Kootenai and Pend Oreille tribes of southwestern Montana. Her Shoshone grand mother gave her the name: Jaune , French for yellow, to relate to her French Cree ancestors. The name “Quick- to-See” was an insightful prediction for her life’s work.

Drawing came easily for Smith who wanted to be an artist from childhood. Her hunger for learning took her on a long journey out of the Flathead valley, but the things she learned there are still a part of everything she does. In 1980 she received a master’s degree, and in her work she combines her university training with her tribal heritage. She draws deeply from her own life experiences as well as from mainstream modern art to communicate her concern for the vanishing west and her native American culture. She borrow images from many sources. In the initial stages of her career, Smith's painted landscapes inevitably contained a "portrait" of her horse Cheyenne shown with tepees, tools, pottery, and other Indian artifacts.



*“I think of my work as an inhabited landscape, never static or empty. Euro-Americans see broad expanses of land as vast, empty spaces. Indian people see all land as a living entity. The wind ruffles; ants crawl; a rabbit burrows. I’ve been working with that idea for probably twenty years now.”*

#### JAUNE QUICK-TO-SEE SMITH

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith is an artist whose work explores Native American aesthetic traditions in contemporary art contexts. Over the course of her long and productive career, she has worked in many media, using an impressive vocabulary of techniques. She has made paintings, prints, pastels, and richly layered mixed-media works. Few artists working today are as sensitive to the effects of texts on images. Smith is skilled at creating and appropriating texts that capture the paradigms of American society in ways that reveal the cultural implications of capitalism, historic amnesia, and assignment of racial categories. She embeds her texts in a rich environment of images she creates or among images she borrows from a variety of sources, including art books, magazines, newspapers, and other print materials. By doing this, she creates complex juxtapositions that re-contextualize the ways viewers understand relationships between Euro-American and Indigenous American cultures.

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith is an enrolled member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation. She has shown her art in galleries and museums throughout the United States and around the world. Her work is part of the collections of the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Denver Art Museum, **Museum der Weltkulturen** in Frankfurt, Germany, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the

Walker Art Center, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, the Museum of Modern Art in Quito, Ecuador, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. She has won numerous awards for her work as an artist and arts activist including the American Academy of Arts and Letters Purchase Fund, the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant, the Women's Caucus for Art Lifetime Achievement Award and honorary degrees from Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the Massachusetts College of Art and Design. Quick-to-See Smith has additionally devoted herself to promoting the careers of numerous young and emerging American Indian artists and intellectuals.

VIEW A SHORT (2minute video featuring Jaune Quick -To-See Smith by going to the following link:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=1BtEJqvhosw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=1BtEJqvhosw)

#### **ABOUT *WINDS OF CHANGE*:**

In her print, *Winds of Change* (1992), Quick-to-See Smith relies entirely on visual symbols to tell a complex story. Traditional native imagery and contemporary imagery relate to one another in a way that shows that modern life on the reservation is not locked in some ethnographic present where modernity is foreign. The world of Quick-to-See Smith's print, like the contemporary world of American Indian people, contains both tipi and truck, house and coyote story, Appaloosa and geometric symbol, mountain range and airplane, and there is not contradiction between the traditional elements, the corn, the fish, the men on the canoe journey and the modern world in which they live. Using a design with three colors, red, blue and black, Quick-to-See Smith worked with master printer Mike Simms at Lawrence Lithography Workshop in Kansas to create this work for a fundraiser for a University of Wisconsin film about changes on Indian Reservations. She fits bold areas of design and color together to create a strong diagonal movement from the left margin to the lower third of this piece, so that the viewer's eyes travel, then focus at the bottom center of the picture and then begin to work around to the smaller drawings that explore the theme of both the print and the film it helped to fund.

*From Gail Tremblay essay for the Missoula Art Museum*

***Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: Flathead Contemporary Artist***

## LEARNING SPARKS FROM SMITH'S *WINDS OF CHANGE*.

1. Look closely at Smith's artwork:

Make a list of what symbols that look traditional and the symbols that appear to be from the present.

2. What is the focal (main) point of the artwork? Where do your eyes first go when you look at her work? Where do they notice next?

### RESEARCH:

Choose one of the topics below to research. Write a paragraph using description and explanation and present it to your class.

1. In your library look for stories of some of the animals you see in Jaune's art: the thunderbird, the coyote or beaver, the buffalo, butterfly and trout.

2. There is one image of people rowing a boat in the upper left hand corner. What types of boats did the Salish people use? What types of boats did other native people from the western mountains or plains area use (ie: bull boats)?

3. The triangular design next to the horse looks like it may be diagram of a constellation. Can you find information about Native American constellations?

4. Zigzag images recur in many Native American art forms including weaving, beadwork, pottery, basketry and even ancient rock art. The zigzag motif often represents lightning, an important symbol of change connected with rain, fertility and renewal. Would Smith's artwork be different if she had used flowing lines or circles instead of zig-zag lines? Would the meaning change?

**Teachers: Discover more about Jaune Quick-to-See Smith with lesson plans at:**

<http://www.missoulaartmuseum.org/index.php/ID/86a8ebb51c61e940af96bf947ff34afb/fuseaction/collection.collectionDetail.htm>

## WINTER COUNT LESSONS and QUESTIONS



Winter counts are physical records that were used in conjunction with a more extensive oral history. Each year was named for an event and the pictures referring to the year names served as a reference source that could be consulted regarding the order of the years. People knew the name of the year in which other important events occurred, and could place these in time by referring to the winter count.

The events used to name the years were not necessarily the most important things that happened but ones that were memorable and widely known within the community. ( from [www.wintercounts.si.edu](http://www.wintercounts.si.edu))

Many of Smith's images look like those found in a traditional Winter Count. Visit the wonderful Smithsonian Institute's website on Winter Counts:

**<http://wintercounts.si.edu/>**

1. Look closely at the images on the Winter Counts website. Do you see symbols that might relate to Jaune's drawing?
2. If you were to do a winter count for this past year and could only choose one event from the year, which would you choose to represent symbolically? Do a drawing of the symbol you would use. The event could be from your personal life, or the life of the community in Missoula or an important national or global event.
3. Think of your ancestors from 100 years ago, before cars, airplanes, department stores and the internet existed. What symbols might they have use to represent their lives?

## Vocabulary:

### Art Terms

**Elements of Art:** Basic visual symbols. The elements are the language of art: line, shape, form, space color value ( lights and darks ) and texture.

**Printmaking:** a process in which an artist repeatedly transfers an image from on prepared surface to another. In this way the artist can make multiple copies of an image. There are many different types of creating a print.

**Lithograph:** A surface printing method in which the design is drawn upon a smooth stone or metal plate with a greasy crayon or fluid. The printing surface is dampened and then inked, the ink clinging only to the greasy marks. The ink is transferred to the paper by means of a press.

**Relief Print:** A printing process in which the artist cuts away all areas of the printing surface that are not meant to receive ink. The design is therefore raised in relief. When the printing surface is inked, and pressure is applied the raised inked areas imprint onto the paper.

**Monoprint:** A form of printmaking that has images or lines that can only be made once, unlike most printmaking, where the artist creates multiple images from the originals

**Warm colors:** Red, orange and yellow. Warm colors suggest warmth and seem to move toward the viewer.

**Cool colors:** Blue, green and violet. Cool colors suggest coolness and seem to recede from a viewer.

**Paper casting:** Paper or other cellulose based fiber is pulverized in a blender with water and then poured into a mold. As the paper pulp hardens it takes the form of the mold.

**Texture:** Element of art that refers to how things feel or look as though they might feel if touched. Objects can have or look as is rough, shiny, gritty, smooth etc.

**Collage:** A work of art consisting of bits and pieces of textured paper, fabric and other materials pasted onto a flat surface.

**Symbol:** Something that stands for or represents something else

**Mixed media:** Artist uses a variety of media and sometimes found objects to create a mixed media piece.

### Other Vocabulary

**Sovereignty** is the quality of having independent authority over a geographic area, such as a territory. **Tribal sovereignty in the United States** refers to the inherent authority of indigenous tribes to govern themselves within the borders of the United States of America



**War shields** in Native American cultures were often made from the thick hide of a buffalo neck. The hide was shrunk and toughened over fire, trimmed, and then painted by the warrior. Shields were used in defensive warfare as a protective covering or structure that was carried on the arm to deflect arrows and spears. Warriors also believed that it was the spiritual powers from the symbols that he painted on his shield that protected him, not the shield. “Medicine” Shields were sacred, symbolic objects reflecting the personal vision and “medicine” or spirit-guided inherent power of warriors

### **Winter count**

A “winter count” was a visual depiction of symbols, images and markings on animal hides that documented important events for the First Nation People. Historically, Paleolithic and some neolithic images, cave drawings and carvings were used to tell stories about tribal people before the advent of drawing on hides. Winter counts consisted of pictographic images which were painted on buffalo hides that recorded historical information about the tribes evolution and important events that the people should remember to pass onto the future.

