

Timeline of Modern Native Art History for *Action/Abstraction Redefined*

1920's

1922 – First Santa Fe Indian Market held, sponsored by the Museum of New Mexico

1924: *Passage of Indian Citizenship Act*

1925 – Native Arts department of the Denver Art Museum was founded

1927 – First Nations art exhibited with Euro-Canadian art in the Exhibition of the Canadian West Coast Art in the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa

1928 – Kiowa Six (Spencer Asah, James Auchiah, Jack Hokeah, Stephen Mopope, Monroe Tsatoke, and Lois Smoky) participate in the International Art Congress in Prague, Czech Republic

1928: *The Meriam Report, a three-year study to examine the economies, health, education, and government administration of Indian affairs and trust funds, was commissioned.*

1930's

1931 – Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts opens at the Grand Central Art Galleries in New York City. Sponsored by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the Secretary of the Interior, and the College Art Association, the exhibition of over 600 artworks then toured the Venice Biennale.

1932:

- Kiowa Six participate in the Venice Biennale. Their art, according to Dorothy Dunn, "was acclaimed the most popular exhibit among all the rich and varied displays assembled."
- Professor Mary Stone McClendon "Ataloo" (Chickasaw, 1895–1967) founds the Ataloo Art Lodge, a Native American art center at Bacone College, in Muskogee, Oklahoma
- The Studio at the Santa Fe Indian School is established by Dorothy Dunn was an American art instructor (December 2, 1903- July 5, 1992)

1933 – The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) organized the exhibition American Sources of Modern Art

1934: *The Indian Reorganization Act passed in the United States*

1934 – Arts and Crafts of the Indians of the Southwest opens at the DeYoung Museum in San Francisco

1934–1941: The Seneca Indian Arts Project, a WPA-funded project at the Rochester Museum and Science Center, headed by Arthur C. Parker (Seneca, April 5, 1881 – January 1, 1955) hires 70 Haudenosaunee artists to create almost 6,000 artworks

1936 – Indian Arts and Crafts Board created in the US

1938 – Osage Nation establishes the oldest tribal museum in Pawhuska, Oklahoma

1939 – Many Native artists participate in the 1939 New York World's Fair, including realist landscape painter Moses Stranger Horse (Brulé Lakota, 1890–1941) and Fort Sill Apache sculptor Allan Houser (1914–1994)

1939 – Hopi artist Fred Kabotie (1900–1986) curates a Native American art show at the Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco

1940's

1941 – Indian Art of the United States exhibition shows at the Museum of Modern Art, New York City

1944: *National Congress of American Indians founded in the United States*

1945:

- Hopi artist Fred Kabotie (1900–1986) receives Guggenheim Fellowship
- Leon Polk Smith (Cherokee descent, 1906-1996) participated in Sidney Janis Gallery's exhibition, Post Mondrian Painters, which also included works by Josef Albers and Ilya Bolotowsky.
- *Native soldiers returning from World War II boost Native political activism in the United States and Canada, increase trend to urban migration*

1946:

Annual juried exhibition inaugurated, Philbrook Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma

- George Morrison (Chippewa, 1919-2000) was included in exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts
- Qualla Arts and Crafts is founded on the Qualla Boundary in North Carolina by Eastern Band Cherokee artists, becoming the first arts and crafts cooperative founded by Native Americans in the US

1948 – Allan Houser (Fort Sill Apache, 1914–1994) completes his first monumental sculpture at the Haskell Indian School in Lawrence, Kansas

1948-60: *Canadian Government establishes permanent settlements for Inuit in the Arctic, some groups experience forced relocation*

1950's

1950 – Mungo Martin (Canadian Kwakwaka'wakw, 1879-1962) hired to restore totem poles at the University of British Columbia, stimulates renewal of traditional Northwest Coast arts.

1950: *The Lakota people openly revive the Sun Dance.*

1951: *Canada's Indian Act amended; compulsory enfranchisement and ban on potlatch dropped.*

1952 – The Whitney Museum of American Art included Leon Polk Smith (Cherokee descent, 1906-1996) and George Morrison (Chippewa, 1919-2000) in their annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting.

1953: *Mungo Martin holds potlatch at the British Columbia Provincial Museum.*

1954 – George Morrison (Chippewa, 1919-2000) participated in an exhibition at the Tanager Gallery with Ad Reinhardt (1913-1967), Joan Mitchell (1925-1992), Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008), and others.

1957 – George Morrison (Chippewa, 1919-2000) had another solo exhibition at the Grand Central Moderns, from which the Whitney Museum of American Art acquired *The Antagonist* (1957)

1958:

- Yanktonai Dakota artist Oscar Howe (1915–1983) writes his famous letter after his work was rejected from the Philbrook Museum art show for not being "Indian" enough.
- Leon Polk Smith (Cherokee descent, 1906-1996) had his first exhibition with the Betty Parsons Gallery and joined her influential roster of artists.
- George Morrison (Chippewa, 1919-2000) was included in group exhibitions at the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and an invitational at the Nonagon Gallery in New York along with the artists Willem de Kooning (1904- 1997), Philip Guston (Canadian, 1913-1980), Hans Hofmann (1880-1966), Franz Kline(1910-1962), and Milton Resnick (1917-2004).
- Heard Museum Guild hosts their first annual Indian Fair and Market in Phoenix, Arizona.

1958-1962 – Norval Morrisseau (Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek First Nation, 1932-2007) develops new pictorial style (Woodlands Style) using traditional Anishinaabe imagery in northern Ontario.

1959 – West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative issues first limited edition of prints.

1959 – Rockefeller Conference on Indian Art, University of Arizona. The meeting set the stage for a new discussion regarding Indian art production. Among the participants was MoMA director Rene d'Harnoncourt (1901-1968).

1960's

1960 – Oscar Howe (Yanktonai Dakota, 1915-1983) appears on an episode of *This Is Your Life*, Ralph Edwards Productions, NBC, 13 April 1960. The guest host was Vincent Price. Among the surprise guests was Howe's former teacher, Dorothy Dunn.

1960 – 1961: As a result of Rockefeller Conference, a new exploratory workshop, the Southwestern Indian Art Project was created. Indian youth from around the country learned about contemporary art forms and practices. The Project was the precursor to the Institute of American Indian Arts. All three Native instructors, including Lloyd Kiva New (Cherokee, 1916- 2002), became the first faculty members at IAIA.

1961: *National Indian Council formed, the first national Canadian native political organization*

1962 – The Institute of American Indian Arts is founded in Santa Fe, New Mexico: <https://iaia.edu/about/mission/>

1962 – The overnight success of Norval Morrisseau's (Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek First Nation, 1932-2007) first one-man show, Toronto, gives momentum to new school of Anishinaabe painting

1965:

- Native Arts Program inaugurated, University of Alaska, Fairbanks

Bill Holm (1943-2009) publishes influential *Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form*

1965 – Leon Polk Smith (Cherokee descent, 1906-1996) participated in MoMA's landmark exhibition, *The Responsive Eye*.

1966 – Art's critic and curator Lawrence Alloway (1926-1990) included Leon Polk Smith's work in *Systemic Painting* at The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

1966 – Leon Polk Smith (Cherokee descent, 1906-1996) received the National Council of Art Award

1967:

Fritz Scholder (La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians, 1937 -2005) paints *Indian No. 1*, 1967, Oil paint on canvas, 20 x 18 in, the first of his famed *Indian series* painting

- Red Cloud Indian School in Pine Ridge, South Dakota hosts its first annual juried, competitive, intertribal art show which continues today
- First major exhibition on Native history and culture by Aboriginal curators shown at the Indians of Canada Pavilion of Expo 67, Montreal World's Fair, alongside newly commissioned contemporary Native art.
- Canadian Inuit artist Kenojuak Ashevak (1927-2013) awarded the Order of Canada.
- US Congress passes American Indian Civil Rights Act
- American Indian Movement (AIM) founded by Dennis Banks and Russell Means

1969:

- N. Scott Momaday (Kiowa, b. 1934) is awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.
- At the Haida Village of Masset, Robert Davidson (Haida, b. 1946) erects the first new totem pole to be carved since the nineteenth century.

1969-71: *Occupation of Alcatraz Island in the San Francisco Bay by group of Native Americans.*

1970's

1970:

- Lloyd R. Oxendine (Lumbee Nation, 1942-2015) opens his groundbreaking American Art Gallery (1970-1978)
- Ksan Art School and Cultural Centre established, Hazelton, British Columbia
- Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy petitions US courts for the return of wampum belts held in New York State Museums.

1971: *Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act awards 44 million acres and \$962 million to Indigenous people of Alaska.*

1971 – The Cherokee Heritage Center in Park Hill, Oklahoma hosts the first *Trail of Tears* art show, an annual juried, competitive, intertribal art show which also continues today

1972:

- The Institute of American Indian Arts Museum (now called the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts (MoCNA)) is founded by the [Institute of American Indian Arts](https://iaia.edu/) in Santa Fe, as the only museum to focus on

contemporary intertribal Native American art: MoCNA's art collection grew out of a student honors program. Donations from outside artists and private collectors lead to the establishment of a museum in 1972: <https://iaia.edu/mocna/>

- Two American Painters shows at the [Smithsonian Institution's National Collection of Fine Arts](#) in [Washington, DC](#), featuring [T. C. Cannon \(Kiowa/Caddo, 1946-1978\)](#) and [Fritz Scholder \(Luiseño, 1937-2005\)](#).
- Sarain Stump (Shoshone-Cree, 1945-1974) founds the Indian art Project, Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College
- Salteaux artist Robert Houle (b. 1947) helps to establish Monitou College, La Macaza, Quebec

1972: *American Indian Movement (AIM) "Trail of Broken Treaties" march ending with occupation of Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) headquarters, Washington, D. C*

1973: *AIM occupation of Wounded Knee on Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota, and siege by FBI.*

1974 – Inuit artist Pitseolak Ashoomna (1904-1983) elected to the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts.

1975 – Woodland Cultural Center Museum, Brantford, Ontario, initiates annual exhibition of contemporary Native art.

1976:

- Bill Reid's (Haida, 1920-1998) monumental sculpture "Raven and the First Men," unveiled at the new Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia.
- *Saskatchewan Indian Federated College is first Native-controlled college in Canada.*

1977: *First Inuit Circumpolar conference, Barrow, Alaska*

1977: *First United Nations Conference on Indians in the Americas in Geneva*

1978: *American Indian Religious Freedom Act signed and incorporated into US law.*