

# 2018 Native American Artist-in-Residence Application

## Overview

The Native American Artist-in-Residence (NAAIR) program is an initiative created for the purpose of exposing Native American artists who are currently working within traditional *material* art forms to museum collections and resources, in order to

- 1) advance their understanding of the traditional form of art and
- 2) share this advanced understanding with their home communities *in a way designed by the artist*.

The MNHS collections will also benefit tremendously from knowledge shared by the artists (when appropriate) regarding what they have learned about the construction, style and meaning of various collections items. More importantly, these historic resources can serve as platforms upon which cultural learning and sharing takes place.

NAAIR is open to artists practicing in all forms of traditional material arts. Traditional art can be defined as art forms and techniques that are passed down through generations. Although it is recognized that storytelling, song and dance are elements of traditional culture, and art forms in their own right, this residency is currently specific to traditional material arts. In regards to Native American traditional art, this includes beadwork and quillwork, but also other utilitarian forms such as (but not limited to); bow-making, basketry, traditional games and canoe-making.

## Application and Selection for Residency Program

The NAAIR Program is open to Native American artists currently residing in Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota and South Dakota who are currently permitted to work within the United States. Enrollment in one federally recognized tribe is not a requirement, but the artist must be recognized by their community and demonstrate significant artistic knowledge.

Applying artists will submit a plan that outlines research interests in the Native American collections, as well as a plan for developing a community-based project. Each residency will be between six to twelve months in length, and the actual time spent “in residence” at MNHS will vary per artist, based on each artist’s research.

Participating artists will be responsible for their own equipment, materials, banking options to receive payments, and travel and lodging while in the Twin Cities. An additional travel budget for research visits is allotted for each artist. Additionally, the MNHS collections department will have an acquisitions budget devoted to purchasing at least one piece of work from each artist-in-residence.

Applicants will be evaluated on both the quality of their work and the strength and feasibility of their research and community project plans. An advisory panel consisting of culturally knowledgeable community member experts will review completed applications and make recommendations to program staff. To date these jurors have included writers, curators, community advocates and artists - all Native American and in some way connected to the region.

Program staff will make final selections and notify selected applicants of acceptance to the program. Questions-- including those about MNHS collections and library resources -- are encouraged and should be sent to the program coordinator, Ben Gessner, Associate Curator, Native American Collections at [benjamin.gessner@mnhs.org](mailto:benjamin.gessner@mnhs.org) or 651-259-3281.

## Residency Expectations

### Over the course of the paid residency, each selected artist will:

- Receive a \$25,000 stipend for collections study and development of community programs, to be paid in installments, the last installment paid after completion of program.  
**Applicants should understand that this is taxable income.**
- Receive support from MNHS staff and interns in regards to collections study, program development and logistical support regarding travel.
- Receive support from MNHS staff and consultants to evaluate the outputs and outcomes of the community programs, using culturally appropriate evaluation methods.
- Spend the majority of residency devoted to artistic study of the MNHS collections, but also receive an additional travel stipend to be used for visits to other local and regional museums. The travel stipend may also be used for visits with knowledgeable elders or artists practicing the art form and/or for bringing these knowledgeable elders/artists to view the MNHS collections for joint study.
- Develop a community-based project inspired by this research, in order to share new knowledge of the art form in the artist's home community. Special consideration will be given to projects incorporating a deep transfer of cultural knowledge, such as organizing community-based classes or the development of a relationship with an apprentice artist.  
**This project is to be completed within 3 months of the end of the residency.**
- Participate in two public programs, thereby exposing various communities to traditional Native American art forms. Programs will be designed by the artist with assistance from MNHS staff and may include demonstrations of the art form, gallery talks or public lectures.

### Additionally, artists-in-residence will be expected to:

- Check in with the Program Coordinator by phone or in person on a biweekly (once every two weeks) basis. This includes providing an email address and telephone number that is checked regularly and responding to all communications within a reasonable time.
- Work with MNHS media specialists to create one video documenting their experiences during the residency.
- Work with program staff to contribute periodically to the MNHS *Renewing What They Gave Us* Collections Blog.
- Make available at least one work of art for purchase by the MNHS permanent collection (additional funds designated for this purchase).
- Successfully pass a security background check, if artist is working with youth.
- Agree to abide by MNHS' Statement of Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and Culturally Sensitive Objects Policy and be aware that any culturally sensitive objects requested to be accessed during residency will require special procedures and permissions.

### **Encouragement Grants**

In addition to the residencies, the NAAIR program will also award Encouragement Grants in the amount of \$2500 to selected artists, in order to support their continued exploration of cultural art forms and research. Artists receiving Encouragement Grants will also receive a travel stipend to visit the MNHS collections at least once.

**TO APPLY:** Application materials must be complete and received by the application deadline date in order to be considered. Submit materials via mail or email to:

Ben Gessner, Associate Curator, Native American Collections  
Minnesota Historical Society  
345 Kellogg Boulevard West  
St. Paul, MN 55102-1906  
OR  
Email: [benjamin.gessner@mnhs.org](mailto:benjamin.gessner@mnhs.org)

# Native American Artist-in-Residence Application

## I. Artist Information

(Contact information must be up to date for various methods of contact)

<b>Full Legal Name:</b>
<b>Date of Birth:</b>
<b>Address:</b>
<b>City, State, Zip:</b>
<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Email Address:</b>
<b>Community Affiliation:</b>

## II. Resume or Curriculum Vitae

Attach resume or curriculum vitae.

## III. Artist Statement

Attach artist statement briefly explaining the reasoning behind your work from your own perspective.

## IV. Letter of Support

Attach a letter of support from a community member regarding your art and involvement with the community.

## V. Portfolio

Attach 5-10 current pieces (created within the last 5 years) with corresponding numbered image list with media, date and dimensions.

## **VI. Description of Collections Study (600 word maximum)**

**Use the space below or attach the proposal to describe why your proposed research is important to you as an artist and maker, but also to your community as a whole.**

- Do you consider your art form or area of research to be endangered or lost in your community?
- Outline the cultural areas, art forms and specific time periods, if any, of your research interest.
- Describe the nature of your research and how you plan to conduct it.
- Do you see yourself focusing primarily on material culture (historic objects) research?
- Will you utilize historic photographs, books, manuscripts or oral histories in your research?
- Is there a research collection at another local, regional or national institution that you wish to access?
- As part of your research, will you seek out other experts in the art form and/or elders who may have additional knowledge about the art form?

## **VII. Description of Community Based Project (600 word maximum)**

**Use the space below or attach to describe how you will reach members of your community to share what you've learned through your research.**

- Will you hold a community workshop? Become a mentor or take on an apprentice, or conversely, become an apprentice?
- Explain the need for this project. How will sharing your research enhance the cultural values of your community?
- Specifically identify the individual, group or groups you will reach with your community outreach project, as well as any collaborators (nonprofits or tribal departments).
- Describe what the potential collaborators are willing to contribute to your project (venue, staff time, etc.).