

Native American Artist-in-Residence Call for Submissions

****Submissions must be received by the end of the day, July 1, 2014****

Overview

Collections at the Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) include thousands of works of art and historical artifacts, and millions of photographs and historical documents. The Native American Artist-in-Residence program is an exciting new initiative created for the purpose of exposing Native American artists who are currently working within traditional art forms to these collections resources, in order to

- 1) advance their understanding of the traditional form of art and
- 2) bring this advanced understanding to their home communities *in a way designed by the artist*.
“Community” is not limited to federally recognized tribal reservation communities, but also includes urban communities.

The MNHS collections will also benefit tremendously from knowledge shared by the artists 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.

The Native American Artist-in-Residence program is open to artists practicing all forms of traditional art, including utilitarian forms such as bow-making and canoe-making, for instance; special consideration will be given to regional traditional media such as quillwork, beadwork, and birch bark appliqué, for example.

Applying artists will submit a proposal that encompasses both a research and output component and that outlines his/her plan of study into the Native American collections, as well as a plan for developing the community-based output project. Each residency will be six months in length, and the actual time spent “in residence” at MNHS will vary per artist, based on each artist’s research design.

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.

Over the course of the six-month 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.
- *Receive training in both museum collection and archival collection research, including how to access historic manuscript, photograph and library collections through the MNHS research library.
- *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, regional and national museums, including the Mille Lacs Indian Museum, the Science Museum of Minnesota and the National Museum of the American Indian, if desired. 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 disseminate 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 building curricula and organizing community-based youth 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 and assist in evaluating three public programs, thereby exposing the MNHS (generally non-native) museum audience 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 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 podcast documenting their experiences during the residency.
- *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.

Application and Selection for Program

The Native American Artist-in-Residence 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 his or her community and demonstrate significant artistic knowledge.

Applicants will be evaluated on both the quality of their work and the strength and feasibility of their research and project proposals. An advisory panel consisting of culturally knowledgeable community member experts will review completed applications and make recommendations to program staff. Program staff will make final selections and notify selected applicants of acceptance to the program.

To be considered, applicants must supply the following information

- Background and contact information including name, birth year, community affiliation, address, phone number and email address
- Digital portfolio of 5-10 current pieces (created within the last 5 years) and corresponding numbered image list with media, date and dimensions
- Artist statement and current resume or curriculum vitae
- Letter of support
- Research and community project proposals (see below for criteria)

Criteria for Research Proposal: (600-word maximum)

Use this portion of 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 objects collections 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?

Criteria for Community Outreach Project Proposal: (600-word maximum)

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.).

Questions-- including those about MNHS collections and library resources -- are encouraged and should be sent to the program coordinator, Ben Gessner, American Indian and Fine Arts Collections Associate at Benjamin.gessner@mnhs.org or 651-259-3281. **TO APPLY:** Application materials must be complete and received by the application deadline date in order to be considered. Submit materials listed above via mail or email to:

Ben Gessner, American Indian and Fine Arts Collections Associate
Minnesota Historical Society
345 Kellogg Boulevard West
St. Paul, MN 55102-1906

OR

Email: Benjamin.gessner@mnhs.org