

CHIHULY'S INSPIRATIONS



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We humbly acknowledge our presence on Coast Salish, Duwamish land. Aligning with our values of openness and inclusivity, we recognize that without these people, we would not have access to this gathering and dialogue. We pay our respect to the indigenous people of all area Tribes that are still here, continuing to honor and bring to light their heritage as the original caretakers of this land.

CHIHULY'S INSPIRATIONS

Like all artists, Dale Chihuly draws inspiration from the world around him.

Chihuly was born and raised in Tacoma, and has spent much of his life immersed in the cultures and natural environs of Washington State. The sources of his inspiration include the waters of Puget Sound, his mother's gardens in Tacoma, and the art of dozens of Indigenous tribes, particularly those who reside along the Pacific Northwest Coast and in the Southwestern US, where he has spent time. He also draws inspiration from other places he has travelled, such as Italy and Japan. Chihuly gratefully acknowledges the many influences on his art and aesthetic understandings.

CHIHULY AND NATIVE AMERICAN INFLUENCES

In this room, Chihuly shows the various ways his work has been inspired by arts and cultures by displaying his collections of Native and Native-influenced art alongside his own glass art. On the three shelves to the left of the entrance, Chihuly has placed his own glass pieces alongside a variety of baskets made by several tribes from around the Northwest. Here, Chihuly shows how the asymmetric forms of the woven baskets influenced the design of his glass baskets.

In a 1977 visit to the History Museum at the Washington State Historical Society in his hometown of Tacoma, Chihuly was impressed by a collection of Native American baskets made by indigenous basket weavers from the Pacific Northwest. Struck by the slumped forms the baskets had taken over time, Chihuly sought to replicate the effects of weight, gravity, and time in the wavering forms of his *Baskets* series. This marked a turning point in which he freed himself from the tradition of symmetry in glass blowing. This freedom from formal composition constraints remains a central aspect of Chihuly's work, for which he is highly recognized. The *Tabac Baskets* in the center of the room are from Chihuly's earliest *Baskets* series and display the muted colors and slumped forms of the Salish and other American Indian

baskets which influenced Chihuly's approach to creating baskets in glass.

For his Navajo Blanket *Cylinders* series, represented by two works on the middle shelf of this display, Chihuly researched blankets made by members of the Diné (Navajo) tribe after being exposed to rugs and blankets handloomed by Dine artists, which he saw while spending time in New Mexico in 1974. In this *Cylinders* series, Chihuly initially experimented



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with drawings on glass vessels, using what is known as a “pick-up” technique. Colorful glass threads were laid out in an intricate design, inspired by Navajo textile designs, before being fused to the vessel in its molten state in a process informed by the artist’s background in weaving. On the wall opposite the entrance to Chihuly’s *Inspirations*, Chihuly shows a variety of machine-made Trade Blankets. These blankets were created by commercial woolen mills, and not by Native Americans, but they often incorporated traditional Native designs. They were made in the early 1900s to be traded with Native Americans at posts throughout the Western United States and Canada. Chihuly collected these century old blankets because of his appreciation for their vivid colors and designs.

The final collection in this room consists of fifty photogravures by Edward S. Curtis. A photogravure is similar to a photograph, but it is created using a copper plate that allows for fine detail. These images, taken in the early 1900s, depict Native Americans from numerous tribes across much of the United States and into Canada. Curtis’s project was substantial, documenting over 80 tribes in over 40,000 images, and they provide a unique and vital record of Native American lives and cultures from this period. These images are controversial, however, because Curtis deliberately created an altered version of some of his subjects, which often involved posing them in traditional clothing from various tribes and not from the subject’s own



Dale Chihuly, *Tabac Baskets* (detail), 2008
Chihuly Garden and Glass, Seattle, installed 2012
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tribe, also by removing any traces of non-traditional technology to hide the ways that American expansion had already affected their daily lives. Chihuly collected these images for his appreciation of their historical value, as well as Curtis’s technical skill and artistry as a photographer.

By displaying these baskets, blankets, and images alongside his own glass work, Chihuly hopes to convey his appreciation and respect for the histories, cultures, and arts of the Indigenous tribes of North America, as well as to recognize the influence of Native cultures on the works of others, including his own perceptions of beauty.

BASKETS

The collection of 40 woven baskets presented here is part of Dale Chihuly's personal collection of Northwest Coast Native American basketry. These baskets were made in the 19th century through the beginning of the 20th century. They were woven by members of over a dozen different tribes in the Northwest, ranging from southern Alaska down to northern California.

Many of these baskets were made by members of local Coast Salish tribes, including the Cowlitz, Nisqually, and Suquamish tribes. The Coast Salish tribes are a grouping of tribes from the western coast of North America that are linked by ethnic and linguistic ties, all speaking one of the Salishan languages. Coast Salish peoples have lived in this region for over 10,000 years. The City of Seattle and Chihuly Garden and Glass are on Coast Salish land.

The rest of the baskets were made by members of numerous other tribes from the western coast of what is now called the United States and Canada. The northernmost tribe represented is the Tlingit tribe, who reside in southeastern Alaska and British Columbia, while the southernmost is the Atsugewi in northern California.

Woven baskets were used in all aspects of life for precontact tribes of the Northwest Coast. Baskets were used to collect, store, and cook

food. For many tribes in the Pacific Northwest, baskets were often given as gifts at ceremonial events like potlatches. In addition to the types of baskets on display on these shelves, basket makers would also weave objects such as fish traps and hats.

The techniques, forms, and decoration of the baskets depend on both the function of the basket and the choices of the weaver. For the tribes of the Northwest Coast, weaving has historically been the domain of women. The styles of the baskets reflect the methods and



Suquamish Or Tulalip Coiled Storage Basket, early 20th century

designs common to the weaver's tribe of birth, the tribe they married into, and personal taste.

The baskets on display here were made after contact with European settlers and use a combination of traditional materials and materials introduced after contact. Traditional materials include red cedar, bear grass, dogbane cord (often called natural Indian hemp), and spruce root, while the post-contact materials include raffia and commercial wool.

Chihuly has chosen to display these woven baskets alongside his glasswork to illustrate the ways that these objects inspired and influenced his own art.

In 1977, Chihuly visited the Washington State Historical Society and saw their collection of baskets made by members of local tribes. Struck by the asymmetric and dynamic forms of the organic baskets, Chihuly was inspired to mimic these shapes in glass, creating the Basket series. Chihuly says, "that was the first time I really used the fire and the heat and the gravity to make a form. And I let the forms wrinkle from the heat itself and made the glass very thin. This was, very much, a breakthrough for me."

Often, displays of old or antique objects alongside recent works are designed to highlight progress or innovation through contrast. Chihuly's innovation, however, lies in his ability to express with rigid glass the flexibility and movement seen in



Dale Chihuly, *Tabac Baskets* (detail), 2008
Chihuly Garden and Glass, Seattle, installed 2012
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objects made of fibers. In displaying these pieces together, Chihuly emphasizes the relationship of his own glass Basket series to baskets woven with fibers.

Chihuly's *Tabac Basket* series, on the table in the center of Chihuly's Inspirations, contains Baskets nestled together into sets. Chihuly arranged the pieces this way after seeing the Native American baskets at the Washington State Historical Society stacked on top of each other. Grouping multiple pieces of glass together in this way to create a larger work was another breakthrough for Chihuly. This ultimately led to works like his Chandeliers and Towers, composed of hundreds or even thousands of pieces of glass.



Top Shelf (from L to R)

1. Quileute Cylindrical Twined Basket, early 20th century
2. Tlingit Twined Flared-Wall Cylindrical Berry Basket, early 20th century
3. Klickitat Coiled Conical Pack Basket, 19th century
4. Upper Nisqually Coiled Burden Basket, 19th century
5. Nez Perce Twined Flexible Cylindrical Huckleberry Storage Basket, late 19th century/early 20th century
6. Tlingit Twined Flared-Wall Cylindrical Berry Basket, ca. 1910-1920
7. Wasco Or Wishram Twined Flexible Cylindrical "Sally Bag" Storage Basket, late 19th century
8. Yakama Twined Flexible Cylindrical "Sally Bag" Storage Basket, ca. 1890
9. Wasco Or Wishram Twined Flexible Cylindrical "Sally Bag" Storage Basket, late 19th century
10. Yakama Twined Flexible Cylindrical "Sally Bag" Storage Basket, late 19th century

11. Tlingit Twined Flared-Wall Cylindrical Basket, early 20th century
12. Klickitat Coiled Conical Pack Basket, 19th century
13. Suquamish Or Skokomish (Twana) Coiled Basket, early 20th century

Middle Shelf (from L to R)

14. Suquamish Or Skokomish (Twana) Coiled Storage Basket, 19th century
15. Tlingit Twined Flared-Wall Cylindrical Berry Basket, ca. 1910-1920
16. Tlingit Twined Flared-Wall Cylindrical Berry Basket, early 20th century
17. Salish Coiled Utilitarian Cooking Basket, 19th century
18. Cowlitz Cylindrical Coiled Basket, 19th century
19. Yakama Twined Flexible Cylindrical "Sally Bag" Storage Basket, late 19th century
20. Nisqually Or Upper Chehalis Coiled Storage Basket, 19th century
21. Suquamish Or Tulalip Coiled Storage Basket, early 20th century



22. Cowlitz Coiled Utilitarian Basket, mid - 19th century
23. Cowlitz Cylindrical Coiled Basket, 19th century
24. Quinault Or Quileute Twined Cylindrical Basket, 19th century
25. Hat Creek (Atsugewi Of Dixie Valley) Polychrome Soft-Twined Cylindrical Storage Basket, early 20th century

Bottom Shelf (from L to R)

26. Mid-Puget Sound Salish Coiled Cylindrical Huckleberry Storage Basket, late 19th century
27. Child's Klickitat Coiled Conical Berry Basket, 19th century
28. Upper Fraser (Stó:lō) Rectangular Flared Coiled Burden Basket, ca. 1910
29. Southern Puget Sound Salish Coiled Cylindrical Storage Basket, late 19th century
30. Cowlitz Cylindrical Coiled Basket, late 19th century
31. Siagut Cowlitz/Nisqually Coiled Burden Basket, ca. 1900
32. Tlingit Twined Basket, no date
33. Mid- Columbia River Twined Flexible Cylindrical "Sally Bag" Storage Basket, ca. 1920
34. Wasco Or Wishram Twined Flexible Cylindrical "Sally Bag" Storage Basket, ca. 1900
35. Klickitat Coarse-Weave Coiled Conical Pack Basket, ca. 1900
36. Nez Perce Twined Flexible Cylindrical Huckleberry Storage Basket, ca. 1900
37. Puget Sound Salish Coiled Basket, 19th century
38. Child's Wasco Twined Flexible Cylindrical "Sally Bag" Storage Basket, ca. 1890
39. Wasco Twined Flexible Cylindrical "Sally Bag" Storage Basket, late 19th century
40. Cowlitz Cylindrical Coiled Basket, late 19th century

TRADE BLANKETS

The colorful blankets displayed here are part of Chihuly's personal art collection. Known as trade blankets, these textiles were produced specifically for exchange with Indigenous tribes. Trade blankets were first produced in the late 1700s by English woolen mills for the Hudson Bay Company, which imported them into North America for the purpose of trading them for furs from Native tribes. Subsequently, they were produced by several wool mills throughout the United States to be traded with Native Americans for consumer goods. The blankets displayed here date primarily to the early 1900s.

Pendleton Woolen Mills is the most well-known manufacturer of trade blankets and is the only company still producing these styles of blankets. Pendleton was founded in Oregon in 1863, and in the 1890s the company began creating blankets to trade with local tribes, including the Nez Perce and Cayuse tribes. As the company expanded, it began trading further afield with tribes of the Southwest including the Diné (Navajo), Zuni, and Hopi tribes.

To appeal to members of different tribes, Pendleton produced blankets with various patterns, copying designs and motifs from hand loomed Native blankets, rugs, and other objects. Many of these designs were attributed to British textile designer,

Joe Rawnsley, who spent time living with Indigenous communities and adapted their iconography for Pendleton's looms. For many, trade blankets became emblematic of Native American visual culture in the United States, rather than works produced by Native artists. In the 1990s, Pendleton began to commission Native artists to design blankets with patterns that are informed by their own cultures and heritage.

Trade blankets were popular with Native Americans as ceremonial items or for gift giving, as well as for their functionality. Many of these blankets were intended to be worn, rather than used as bedding. The fringed blankets were intended as shawls for women, while the blankets without fringe were worn as robes by men. Trade blankets were also traded between Native Americans and used in ceremonies. Most of the blankets displayed here are true trade blankets – that is, made of 100% wool. Many have a double-faced weave that creates a reversed pattern on the back. A few of the blankets are made of cotton and are called camp blankets. Camp blankets were not made specifically for Native American customers, though they copied the popular designs of contemporary trade blankets but in cheaper material.

Trade blankets were popular among Native Americans and then non-Native buyers for many decades. Their popularity waned in the mid-20th century, and all companies but Pendleton ceased to produce these patterns. In recent decades, there has been renewed interest in antique trade blankets among collectors. Pendleton blankets continue to be popular gifts in many Native American and First Nations communities, particularly in the Southwest.

Chihuly began gathering his unparalleled collection of trade blankets in the 1960s. He collects these blankets because of his love of the vivid colors and patterns, and he

has chosen to display them together in this manner to highlight their vibrancy. Chihuly's interest in color is reflected in his works throughout the Exhibition, and the glass pieces in this room show his fascination with linear and abstract patterns. Like Pendleton, Chihuly has used Native designs in his own work. Tying together his interest in weaving and glassblowing are the two symmetrically cylindrical glass pieces on the middle shelf in this room. These are part of Chihuly's Navajo Blanket Cylinder series, in which Chihuly recreated the designs of Southwestern tribes, including designs from hand loomed blankets created by members of the Dine (Navajo) tribe.



Chihuly's Inspirations, Chihuly Garden and Glass

EDWARD S. CURTIS

Photogravure Collection



Edward Sherriff Curtis Self-Portrait, 1899

Edward S. Curtis was a well-known photographer who created the images seen here. He was born in 1868 in Wisconsin, and as a teenager he worked as an apprentice photographer. After his family moved to the state of Washington in 1887, he purchased a share in a Seattle photography studio in the Pioneer Square neighborhood. He worked out of four different Seattle photography studios during his life, ultimately opening his own studio at the corner of 4th Avenue and University Street. Curtis worked as a portrait photographer, and often photographed members of the wealthy settler families in the city.

Curtis soon gained a reputation for his photography of Native Americans

living in Seattle, including Kikisoblu (Princess Angeline), the daughter of Si'ahl (Chief Seattle). In 1898, his work was selected and subsequently given the grand prize for an exhibition by the National Photographic Society. The next year he traveled to Alaska with the Harriman expedition as the lead photographer, documenting the geology, plants, wildlife, and people of the Alaskan coast. A year later, he went to Montana to document the Sundance ceremony of the Blackfoot Nation.

These experiences inspired his largest work, *The North American Indian*, a 20-volume publication containing text and photogravures documenting over 80 Indigenous tribes. Photogravure is a process similar to photography in which the image is transferred from a film positive to a copper plate, and the copper plate is used to create prints of the image. The photogravure process makes it possible to produce high quality, detailed prints like the ones you see here.

Curtis was an incredibly skilled photographer with a mastery of composition and light. His photographs of Native objects and sites are both informational and aesthetically pleasing, and his portraits are particularly striking. Curtis highlights the subject by limiting the background to a shallow plane, and carefully directs the light

to create deep shadows. This draws the viewer in and creates a sense of intimacy with the subject.

The images on the walls come from *The North American Indian*. With the support and financial backing of President Theodore Roosevelt and banker J. Pierpont Morgan, Curtis spent more than 20 years on this project. Curtis's desire was to record cultural elements that he believed would disappear as Native populations were subsumed into the dominant Anglo-American culture. Curtis's work contributed to the perception that the disappearance of Native cultural traditions was inevitable: the very first plate of volume one of *The North American Indian* is titled "The Vanishing Race", summarizing Curtis's view on the expected fate of the tribes he documented. His views of Native Americans were certainly not unique for his time, and often reflected the perspectives of the federal government, including those of his patron, Theodore Roosevelt. However, despite efforts to eradicate Native American cultures from the colonial period through the early 20th century, indigenous peoples of North America have survived, and their tribal societies represent living, dynamic cultures.

Curtis did not simply document people and places as he encountered them, but often constructed the scenes that he wished to capture. Curtis aimed to record what he called "their primitive customs and traditions". To produce his images

for *The North American Indian*, Curtis would often have his subjects dress up in traditional clothing and regalia, wear wigs, and reenact ceremonies that were forbidden during the time. By the early 20th century when Curtis travelled the United States, many laws had been passed banning traditional Native American religious and cultural practices as well as traditional clothing. This desire to document Native traditions was a worthy endeavor. However, Curtis leaves behind a complicated legacy in that some of the staged scenes that he photographed mixed artifacts and regalia from different tribal cultures. This created a mistaken perception that all the Native peoples of North America shared the same culture. In fact, there were multiple cultures and languages in the Americas prior to European contact, many of which survive today.

Nevertheless, Curtis's project provides the most substantial and thorough visual documentation of Native American cultures from the early 20th century. Curtis published a vast quantity of images, texts, and even recordings of local languages that provide an invaluable record of the people he met.

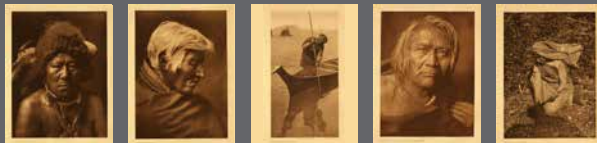
During his lifetime, Curtis worked for increased rights for Native tribes by co-organizing the Indian Welfare League, a group that fought for land and water rights, religious freedoms, and decreased federal interference for Native tribes.

CURTIS PRINT WALL

1-5



6-10



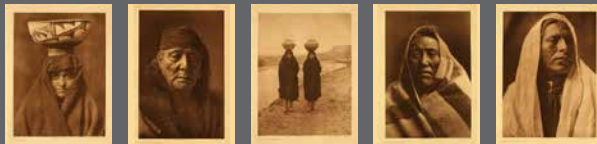
11-15



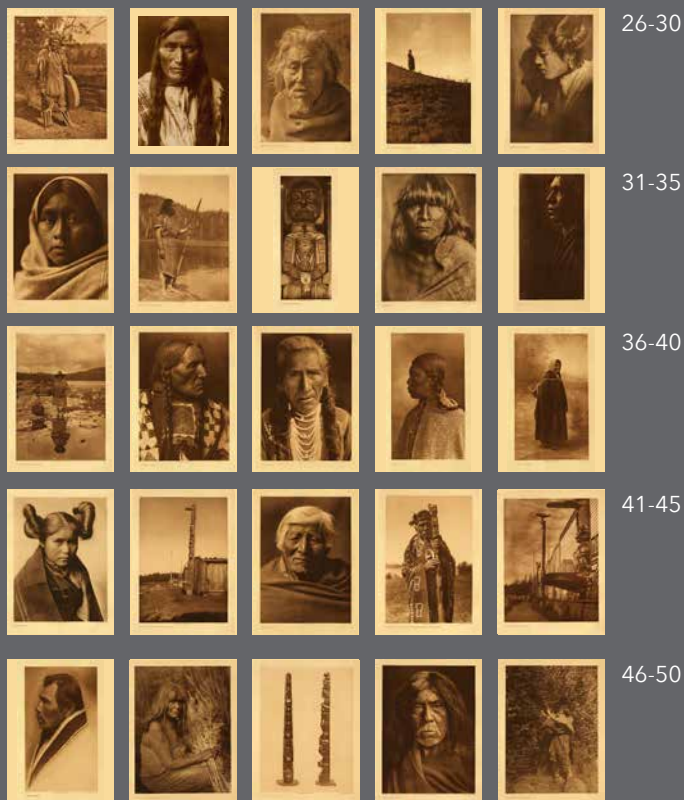
16-20



21-25



1. A Chief's Daughter - Nakoaktok, 1914
2. Passing a Dreaded Point, 1914
3. A Clayoquot Type, 1915
4. Quniaika - Mohave, 1903
5. Four Horns - Arikara, 1908
6. Bull Neck - Arikara, 1908, printed 1909
7. Klickitat Profile, 1910
8. Fish Spearing - Clayoquot, 1915
9. Oyi'-Tsa' ("Duck White"), Summer Cacique of Santa Clara, 1905
10. Hesquiat Root Digger, 1915
11. The Fruit Gatherer - San Ildefonso, 1905
12. Squaxon Matron, 1912
13. Clayoquot Girl, 1915
14. Double Runner - Piegan, 1900
15. Boarding the Canoe, 1915
16. Lone Tree - Apsaroke, 1908
17. Morning Eagle - Piegan, 1910
18. Mosquito Hawk - Assiniboin, 1908
19. The Middle Columbia, 1910
20. Wet - Apsaroke, 1908
21. A Zuni Woman, 1903
22. Bear's Teeth - Arikara, 1908
23. Zuni Girls at the River, 1903
24. Middle Calf - Piegan, 1900
25. Iahla ("Willow") - Taos, 1905



26. A Klamath, 1923
27. Head-Dress - Atsina, 1908, printed 1909
28. The Oldest Man of Nootka, 1915
29. The Announcement - Arikara, 1908, printed 1909
30. The Hopi Maiden, 1905
31. Papago Girl, 1907
32. The Whaler - Clayoquot, 1915
33. A Koskimo House-Post, 1914
34. A Hopi Man, 1921
35. The Yuma, 1907
36. On the Beach - Nakoaktok, 1914
37. No Bear - Atsina, 1908
38. Flathead Type, 1910
39. Lummi Woman, 1899
40. Basket Carrier, 1899
41. Chaiwa - Tewa, 1906
42. Qagyuhl Village at Fort Rupert, 1914
43. Klickitat Type, 1910
44. Hamasaka in Tlu'wulahu Costume with Speaker's Staff - Qagyuhl, 1914
45. Nimkish Village at Alert Bay, 1914
46. Snoqualmu Type, 1901
47. Hipah with Arrow Brush - Maricopa, 1907
48. Haida Slate Carvings, 1915
49. Siwit - Awaitlala, 1914
50. The Berry Picker - Clayoquot, 1915

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Dale Chihuly, *White Soft Cylinders* (detail), 2012
Chihuly Garden and Glass, Seattle, installed 2012
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CHIHULY
GARDEN AND GLASS