

student guide gave her a new sense of pride and self-confidence. "It has made me outspoken. Before, I couldn't talk to anybody."

In addition to the efforts of individual tribes, pan-Indian activities also contributed to the preservation and revival of Native American cultures. Especially popular were powwows—extended periods of intertribal singing, dancing, drumming, feasting, and socializing—that came into vogue in the mid-twentieth century. In earlier decades, tribal differences and rivalries had made such large gatherings impractical. But urbanization, intermarriage, and increased mobility led many Native people to seek out new ways to celebrate their pan-Indian identity. By the early 1970s, powwows were widely accepted as useful tools for building cultural awareness and political power. Twenty years later a published guide listed 930 major powwows and dozens of smaller get-togethers. One of the most popular intertribal gatherings was held each spring, since 1971, on the campus of Stanford University. "The main thrust for the powwow is the strengthening of our cultures and building solidarity between the tribes," explained Stanford coordinator Dennis Woodward (Mescalero Apache).

Non-Indian visitors at powwows sometimes were disappointed to see the dancers, arrayed in their feathers and beaded buckskins, using tape recorders and other items of modern technology. This somehow spoiled the illusion that the visitor was witnessing an untainted ancient ceremonial. Such was the experience of Michael Parfitt, a journalist who traveled the "powwow highway" doing research for an article for *National Geographic* in 1994. But at the great Crow Fair powwow, Parfitt came to understand what he was truly seeing. "I realize that these Indians are not playing games about how it was. They're trying to carry a long heritage right into the future. This is not how it *was*. This is how it *is*."

Attending powwows was just one of the many ways that Native people living in urban areas were able to maintain their sense of ethnic identity in an alien and often hostile environment. The nation's largest urban Indian community was in Los Angeles, home to nearly 75,000 Native Americans by 1990. Although there were no distinct Indian neighborhoods in the city, a network of social, educational, recreational, religious, political, and economic institutions provided the Native people of Los Angeles with feelings of tradition and community. The Concerned Community Indian Movement of Los Angeles supported weekly powwows that provided a regular venue for various drum and dance groups. The Iroquois Social Dance Group dedicated

its efforts to preserving elements of Iroquois culture, while the Native American Fine Arts Society encouraged traditional handicrafts. The most important Native institution in Los Angeles—as in most American cities—was the local Indian Center. It coordinated citywide events and published a monthly newspaper, *Talking Leaf*, that reported the institutional and ceremonial activities of the Indian community.

Schools also played a crucial role in helping young Native Americans in the city keep in touch with their traditional cultures. Encouraged by the passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, parents and educators developed dozens of innovative ways to teach traditional cultures. In St. Paul, Minnesota, the American Indian Magnet School offered a fully integrated curriculum of Native studies from kindergarten to the eighth grade. Elders were invited to share traditional stories, and local drum groups taught traditional songs and dances. The school succeeded in motivating hundreds of Native American children who had been "at risk" in their neighborhood schools. "Our students achieve because Native American sports, games, music, and crafts are incorporated across the curriculum," explained the magnet school's principal, Cornel Pewewardy (Comanche/Kiowa). Similar success was achieved at the American Indian Heritage School, founded in Seattle, Washington, in 1974.

In Berkeley, California, a local high school established an interdisciplinary student-exchange program with a school in the northern part of the state where 60 percent of the students were Yurok, Hupa, and Karuk Indians. While in Berkeley, the students studied Native American myths, analyzed tribal constitutions, and compared Yurok culture with urban life. Eighteen-year-old J. R. Bowen (Yurok) was revitalized by the experience. "I want to start doing our sweats," he said. "I want to go to more tribal meetings with my aunt." At a suburban school near Washington, D.C., Rose Ann Abrahamson (Shoshone-Bannock), introduced students to the realities of Indian life and culture as a way of dispelling common misconceptions and stereotypes. Although the students were primarily non-Indians, Abrahamson saw her work as part of the larger movement to preserve the traditional cultures of American Indians. "We're interested in cultural preservation," she explained. "Educating the larger culture is a way to do it."

Providing vital resources for the preservation and revival of Native American traditional cultures was a goal of the Smithsonian Institution's American Indian Program. Created in 1987, the program brought Native scholars to the Smithsonian to conduct research in

collections relevant to their tribal heritage. Surveying the many instances of cultural revival flourishing across the nation, program director JoAllyn Archambault (Standing Rock Sioux) offered an upbeat assessment in 1992:

To say that there has been an American Indian cultural renaissance over the last thirty years is a pale statement of the obvious. American Indians, young and old, are reinvesting their tribal cultures with a commitment and energy that is inspiring. Young people are flocking to cultural activities of all sorts, clamoring to participate, while in previous years older generations had despaired of being able to preserve certain traditions. Now, there is no need to worry about the future of Indian cultures.

THE NATIVE AMERICAN FINE ARTS MOVEMENT

One of the most promising signs of an Indian cultural renaissance was the flourishing of what came to be called the Native American fine arts movement. Contemporary Indian artists, sculptors, jewelers, and ceramists produced works of art in the late twentieth century that won worldwide acclaim for their technical excellence and artistic merit. At the heart of the movement was an attempt by Native American artists to maintain a balance between tradition and innovation. While many Indian artists were committed to remaining true to traditional values, they also were eager to experiment with new techniques and styles of expression. Their works often mirrored the evolution of twentieth-century Indian life, conveying a nostalgia for the old world of lost freedoms while commenting bitterly on the new world of dislocation and impoverishment. Native artists strove mightily to achieve an “authenticity” in their work, a true and honest expression of what it meant to be an Indian and an artist in contemporary American society.

The roots of the twentieth-century Native American fine arts movement lay deep in the cultural achievements and aesthetic values of earlier generations. In a time beyond memory, the “ancient ones” of the American Southwest—the so-called Anasazi and Hohokam people—created ceramics of incredible beauty and variety; woodcarvers in the forested Northeast fashioned ceremonial masks, adorned with natural pigments and festooned with strips of fur; and throughout prehistoric North America elaborate pictographs and petroglyphs were executed on rock outcroppings and the walls of caves. With the coming of Europeans, the evolution of Native arts and crafts accel-

ated. From the wool of sheep introduced by the Spanish, Navajo weavers produced blankets and rugs in a dazzling array of colors and styles. Navajo, Zuni, and Hopi craftsmen hammered silver coins into necklaces and bracelets, decorated with bits of turquoise, coral, and jet. Artisans everywhere ornamented clothing with woven, embroidered, or beaded patterns; they painted designs on ceremonial rattles, flutes, and drums; and they carved sacred objects such as stone fetishes, effigy jars, and *Kachina* dolls.

Yet the creators of such traditional Native American arts did not generally consider themselves “artists,” persons of special talents and status set apart from the rest of the community. Artistic creation was more often a communal activity, something shared by the people as a whole. This was one way in which the twentieth-century Native American fine arts movement diverged from earlier traditions. As Patricia Janis Broder, author of *American Indian Painting and Sculpture* (1981), observed, “Contemporary Indian painters and sculptors differ from their ancestors in that they recognize artistic creation as an independent activity and have a sense of individual identity as artists.”

One of the early centers of twentieth-century Native American art was San Ildefonso, a small Pueblo village just north of Santa Fe. The people of San Ildefonso were among the first to accept the benefits—commercial and otherwise—of producing works for the national art market. Encouraged by the staff of the San Ildefonso Day School, young Pueblo artists in the first decade of the twentieth century produced sketches and paintings that were exhibited internationally. Julian Martinez, one of the most talented of these young artists, was commissioned by local archaeologists to produce a series of paintings of ancient Pueblo ceremonies.

When Julian Martinez and his wife Maria showed a special interest in the pottery shards that were being uncovered near San Ildefonso, the archaeologists encouraged them to reproduce as precisely as they could the polychrome style of pottery made in the area centuries before. It soon became apparent that the vessels produced by Julian and Maria Martinez were more than mere reproductions, they were an exciting new art form. Maria went on to perfect her own unique matte-black-on-polished-black ware that won her recognition as the nation’s foremost ceramist. Her works were widely exhibited and sold throughout the 1920s; in 1934 Maria and Julian Martinez were invited to attend the Chicago World’s Fair where they were presented with several national commendations and awards.