The 16th biennial Native American Art Studies Association conference was held in Norman, Oklahoma in October 2009, hosted by the University of Oklahoma School of Art and Art History and the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History. Special thanks to members of the local organizing committee, who did a fantastic job of hosting: Christina Burke, Marla Redcorn-Miller, W. Jackson Rushing III, Daniel C. Swan and Mary Jo Watson.

The conference opened with a blessing by Gordon Yellowman, followed by the keynote address by artist Anita Fields (Osage/ Creek). The afternoon's plenary session, held on the University of Oklahoma campus, brought together five distinguished Oklahoma artists: traditional basket-maker Mary Aitson (Cherokee), sculptors Bill Glass (Cherokee) and Demos Glass (Cherokee), sculptor Nathan Hart (Cheyenne), and photographer and mixed media artist Richard Ray Whitman (Yuchi/Creek). The artists' panel was followed by a reception at "the Fred" (more formally known as the Fred Jones, Jr. Museum of Art), which provided a chance to enjoy their beautiful building and exhibits. Back at the hotel, an informal late night session capped the evening with a chance to share ongoing progress and projects with colleagues.

The conference schedule was packed with some 17 paper sessions, the business meeting, and two special early morning sessions highlighting projects of interest to NAASA members. Jolene Rickard hosted an information session on a new journal project sponsored by the Ford Foundation, while Shalimar White of ARTstor engaged members in a discussion of how to improve the image database's coverage of native art.
The conference concluded with a banquet in the impressive gallery space of the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History. Members enjoyed a chance to peruse the exhibits and mingle prior to a delicious buffet. The evening concluded with the presentation of the NAASA Honor Award to artist Benjamin Harjo, Jr. and with acknowledgment and a thank-you gift for outgoing President Candace Greene. Many hardy souls added to the whirlwind conference schedule with the pre- and post-trip tours, which highlighted the rich history of Native arts in Oklahoma.

Biennial Business Meeting

The Business Meeting was held on Friday evening, October 23. President Candace Greene opened with a huge thank you to the many individuals, organizations, and sponsors that helped make the conference a success. She noted that the electronic changes made to NAASA's communications, as reported in previous newsletters, have been a success.

Financial & Membership Report

Secretary-Treasurer Marit Munson provided an overview of NAASA's membership and finances. Of 181 current members, 157 attended the conference in Norman. This includes 58 new members who have joined since the 2007 conference in Fairbanks. NAASA's finances are still healthy, with a good cushion in the bank. The conference has had very generous support from our sponsors. However, conference costs are rising overall, so we will likely show a loss of about $3,000-$3,500 on this conference. Some of this loss is due to the difficulty of projecting numbers for conference attendance when people do not pre-register. We will need to continue to work on keeping conference costs balanced with conference income in the future.

Travel Awards

Jessie Ryker-Crawford announced the Travel Award winners and congratulated them (see below). Past awardees were also asked to stand and be recognized, highlighting the number of previous travel award recipients who are still active members of our organization.

Nominations Committee & Elections

Kate Morris reported on the activities of the Nominations Committee and proposed an amendment to the NAASA By-Laws. This amendment modifies the requirement that an individual be present at the Business Meeting in order to be elected, provided that the membership agrees to temporarily suspend the requirement for a specific candidate and a specific meeting, when that candidate is unable to attend due to medical condition, physical disability, or travel disruption. (The full text of the amendment is posted on the website in the By-Laws, section 5.01). The amendment passed unanimously and was temporarily applied to Karen Kramer Russell, candidate for President, who was temporarily unable to travel to Norman for medical reasons. Elections were held for officers and for four Board members. All of the nominees spoke briefly of their interest in the position, including Karen Kramer Russell (by video). Karen Kramer Russell and Kathleen Ash-Milby were elected as President and Vice-President, respectively, for a term of two years. Rebecca Dobkins, Emil Her Many Horses, Carolyn Kastner, and Michelle McGeough were elected as new Board Members, to serve four-year terms.

Venue for 2011 Conference

Finally, Norman Vorano presented an invitation on behalf of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the National Gallery of Canada, and Carleton University to hold the 2011 conference in Ottawa, Ontario. NAASA members whole-heartedly approved the invitation by acclamation. Details about this exciting venue are included below.
Travel Awards

Thanks to the continuing generosity of NAASA members and supporters, we were able to grant six travel awards this year. In particular, we thank the Oscar Howe Memorial Association for supporting the Howe Travel Award and the Douglas Society, Denver Art Museum and Thomas Towner for the Richard Conn Travel Award. The awards, of $500 each, covered a portion of the costs of conference attendance. The purpose of the awards is to encourage greater participation by students and Native people. The following individuals, all of whom presented papers, were honored with awards:

Kristi Scott (Oscar Howe Award)
Jessica Metcalfe (Allan Houser Award)
Kaitlin McCormick (Richard Conn Award)
Morgan Bell (Richard Conn Award)
Nicole Dawn Goude (General Travel Award)
Jessica Lee Horton (General Travel Award)

Honor Award

Benjamin Harjo, Jr. (Seminole/Shawnee) was honored at the Saturday evening banquet with the 2009 NAASA Lifetime Achievement Award for his distinguished artistic career and for his role as Native art advocate. The Lifetime Achievement Award is intended to honor a living individual who has made a lifetime contribution to the study of Native American art. Board member Linda Lomahaftewa gave a brief presentation recognizing Mr. Harjo's accomplishments, presenting him with a Pendleton blanket as a gift.

From Jessie Ryker-Crawford's nomination letter:
I would like to nominate the artist that was chosen as Oklahoma's 2009 Living Treasure: Benjamin Harjo, Jr. I feel that we could honor and acknowledge the state of Oklahoma, OU, OSU, and the Oklahoma tribes for allowing us to hold the 2009 NAASA Conference in Norman by honoring one of their own.

Benjamin Harjo, Jr. (Seminole/Shawnee) has been a renown artist and art supporter for over 30 years. Harjo graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Oklahoma State University in 1974 and has been the recipient of numerous prestigious honors and awards. His works are held in collections worldwide including the Fred E. Brown Collection at the Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, the Red Earth Center, the Gilcrease Museum, the Wheelwright Museum, the Institute of American Indian Arts' Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, and the National Museum of the American Indian.

Awards include the 2007 Best of Show in the Masters Show at Five Civilized Tribes Museum, the 2005 SWAIA Santa Fe Indian Market official poster artist, and the 2003 Honored One at the 17th Annual Red Earth Festival. His works have been featured in Native Peoples Magazine, Southwest Art Today, American Indian Art, and books such as Native American Painters of the 21st Century: The Works of 61 Artists and Changing Hands II: Art without Reservation.

In addition to Harjo's numerous laurels, he has been a strong supporter for new and upcoming Native American artists. He has freely donated his works to numerous scholarship and fundraising events, and has been a positive speaker on contemporary Native American art at colleges, museums and other institutions.
Message From the President
by Karen Kramer Russell

Many heartfelt thanks to the membership for electing me as President. I look forward to working with our Vice-President Kathleen Ash-Milby, Secretary/Treasurer Marit Munson, and our NAASA Board over the next two years to ensure a successful, exciting, and well-rounded conference in Ottawa, Ontario in 2011. I will continue to work very hard to encourage cross-disciplinary dialogue between museum professionals, art historians, anthropologists, artists, educators, collectors, scholars, and students. For those of you who experienced my film debut in Norman, it will be no surprise to you that Hollywood hasn't called yet. But I digress.

By all counts, the 2009 NAASA conference in Oklahoma was a great success. Nearly 100 papers were presented in 17 sessions over three days. We tried a few new formats, including a roundtable discussion, an evening panel on indigenous film, and lunch table topics. Much fun was had on both the pre- and post-conference trips, which furthered our understanding and appreciation of Oklahoma’s rich Native artistic output and legacies.

Since I was unable to do so in person in Oklahoma, I wish to thank our outgoing President Candace Greene for her tremendous input and energy as leader of this organization. During her term of office, she expanded member involvement with the organization by including non-Board members in all of the committees. As well, Candace gently brought NAASA into the 21st century, technologically speaking. With the able assistance of Marit Munson, she changed our newsletter format from a paper version into an electronic, paperless version and updated our website. In addition, Candace spent countless hours fundraising and effectively planning for the 2009 Norman, OK conference. Thank you, Candace!

Additional thanks go to retiring Board members Christina Burke, Jessie Ryker-Crawford, and Linda Lomahaftewa for their generous time and thoughtful input, and to Kate Duncan for her service in an advisory role as past President. A special thanks to Marla Redcorn-Miller for stepping up to fill a vacant board seat in 2008, especially in the capacity of pre- and post-conference trip planning and implementation. Welcome to our four new Board members, Rebecca Dobkins, Emil Her Many Horses, Carolyn Kastner, and Michelle McGeough. As well, Bill Anthes, Kate Morris, and Norman Vorano continue to serve their board terms. I look forward to working with all of them.

Pre- and Post-Conference Tours
by Norman Vorano

A light drizzle and early morning roll call did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of those who boarded the pre-conference tour bus to Anadarko, home to a rich artistic legacy including the Kiowa Five. After an hour’s drive west across the Oklahoma Plains, the first leg of the sold-out tour began with a warm welcome by Dorothy Whitehorse DeLaune at the National Hall of Fame for Famous American Indians. The rain subsided just in time to let visitors amble around the outdoor gardens where they could better appreciate the many bronze busts of famous American Indians.

After recharging on cookies and juice, the group zipped over to the Southern Plains Indian Museum, one of only three Indian Arts and Crafts Board (IACB) regional museums in the US for a guided tour by curator Eva Yago-Williams, who explained the history of the museum and its important role promoting authentic traditional and
contemporary Indian arts. The museum, which has been presenting solo exhibitions of contemporary Indian artists since the 1970s, treated guests to a rich sampling of silver-, bead- and hide-work by the contemporary Kiowa artist Katherine Dickerson. Of course the museum’s beeswax dioramas by Allan Houser, commissioned in 1950, were not to be missed.

With the assistance of Anadarko’s Chamber of Commerce, Vanessa Paukeigope Jennings (below) gave viewers a personal, moving and very memorable tour of the WPA-era murals gracing the interior lobby of Anadarko’s Post Office. Created by Vanessa’s grandfather, the renowned Kiowa Five painter Stephen Mopope, the treasured murals are eloquent expressions of Kiowa history and culture. Following this, visitors spent a few moments poking around McKees Indian Store and the McBride Gallery of Art along Main Street before settling into a delicious homemade lunch of Indian tacos catered by Bessie Ahahtitty and members of the JJ Methvin Memorial United Methodist church.

Then it was off to Oklahoma City to see the magnificent Oklahoma History Center, opened in 2005. Guided tours of the storage vaults gave viewers brief glimpses into the Oklahoma Historical Society’s stunning collections from the Southern Plains. Guides explained some of the many ways the Museum engages area communities through its repatriation program as well as its cultural advisory groups for the development of its impressive ONEOK Gallery, representing the 39 Oklahoma Tribes.

Eighteen lucky folks joined NAASA’s post-conference excursion, which departed for Tulsa on a crisp morning of October 25th. Anticipation grew when the bus carried visitors past the rows of stately oil-mansions in Tulsa’s Maple Ridge neighborhood towards the plush grounds of the Philbrook Museum of Art, housed in Waite and Genevieve Phillips’ elegant Italianate-style mansion built in 1927. And who better than NAASA’s very own Christina Burke (below), Curator of Native American and Non-Western Art at the Philbrook, to lead behind-the-scenes collection tours? A special thanks to Christina!

In addition to seeing works in the Philbrook’s vaunted long-term displays, visitors were offered a sneak peak at highlights of its recently acquired Adkins Collection of Native American and Southwestern Art, some 1200 pieces in total. But the Philbrook truly outdid itself in hospitality by offering the tour a complementary—and sumptuous—Sunday brunch, sponsored by the Philbrook’s Native American Art Circle.

The day culminated at the incomparable Gilcrease Museum of the Americas, where visitors were guided through its showcase exhibition, “Enduring Spirit: Native American Artistic Traditions,” followed by its Kravis Discovery Center, an innovative, interactive open storage space housed in the museum’s lower level. Exhausted but delighted, the tour returned to the Embassy Suites just in time for dinner.

I would like to extend NAASA's heartfelt thanks to those who gave so generously of their time and
resources to help make the tours a remarkable success. We greatly appreciate your hard work and dedication!

Introducing New Board Members

Rebecca Dobkins is Professor of Anthropology and Curator of Native American Art at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. She has organized 15 exhibitions of contemporary Native American art since the museum’s opening in 1998 including, most recently, Joe Fedderson: Vital Signs. Rebecca curates the museum’s collection of historical basketry and sculpture and works closely with traditional Native artists in the region. She has published on the work of artists Joe Fedderson, Rick Bartow, and Frank Day.

Emil Her Many Horses is an associate curator in the office of Museum Research at the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, specializing in Northern and Southern Plains culture. A member of the Oglala Lakota nation of South Dakota and an accomplished beadwork artist, he won the 2002 Best of Show category at the Northern Plains Tribal Art Show for his tribute to the Lakota Sioux Vietnam Veterans. Emil was lead curator for the NMAI inaugural permanent exhibition Our Universes: Traditional Knowledge Shapes Our World, and has served as co-curator for Identity by Design: Tradition, Change and Celebration in Native Women’s Dresses and curator for two of the Our Peoples community exhibitions.

Carolyn Kastner is an associate curator at the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe. Her research, writing, and curating is focused on the diversity of American art, particularly Native American art. She previously taught art history at the California College of the Arts and the College of Santa Fe, including courses on Native American art, the art of dissent, and contemporary art theory. As a curator, Carolyn organized numerous exhibitions, including: Fusing Traditions: Transformations in Glass by Native American Artists and Río Grande Traditions in Fiber and Clay. She has published exhibition catalogues, essays, and articles on Native American art. She is organizing an exhibition of the artwork of Jaune Quick-to-See Smith that will open at the O’Keeffe Museum in January 2012.

Michelle McGeough (Metis Nation) teaches in the Museum Studies Department of the Institute of American Indian Art in Santa Fe. Her research focuses on feminist theory, the application of Indigenous research methodologies, and their incorporation into the Museum Studies curriculum and the curation of contemporary Native American art. She has also studied Native American two-spirit identity, including an examination of the erotic paintings of Norval Morrisseau. Michelle recently completed a book on the role of the progressive education movement in providing a environment that enabled students attending the Santa Fe Indian School to express their identities as Native Americans. Her book Through Their Eyes: Indian Painting in the Southwest 1918-1945 was released in 2009, in conjunction with the exhibit of the same title.

New Board members Michelle McGeough, Emil Her Many Horses, and Rebecca Dobkins (not shown: Carolyn Kastner).

Committee Assignments

Program: Kathleen Ash-Milby (Chair), Michelle McGeough, & Kate Morris

Honor Award: Bill Anthes (Chair), Rebecca Dobkins, Emil Her Many Horses, & Carolyn Kastner

Scholarship: Rebecca Dobkins (Chair), Michelle McGeough, & Kate Morris

Nominations: Carolyn Kastner (Chair), Bill Anthes, & Emil Her Many Horses
Survey Results
Many thanks to the individuals who filled out the 2009 NAASA membership survey. Since many present at the business meeting did not fill out the survey, we encourage you to share your candid feedback with us by emailing naasamail@gmail.com.

Respondents seem pleased with the pre- and post-conference trip offerings, but because extra time or money to spend on these is often a challenge, perhaps we could consider hosting a performance (dance/music) at the hotel instead. Based on several comments, the Program Committee will work to ensure that the Plenary Session in Ottawa has a tight format and high-quality digital images, and adheres to a strict timeline.

Several members expressed a desire for more interaction with artists and tribal museums and groups -- artist demonstrations, performance (music, dance), a space for artists to present and/or sell their work, local galleries, etc. A collaborative event(s) with the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective was also suggested, as were more historic topics.

Regarding conference theme ideas for Ottawa 2011, one person expressed the desire to encourage more dialogue between theoretical contemporary art studies and material culture studies. New media, global understanding of Native American art, and museum and gallery display/design were also mentioned. While people seem generally supportive of the late-night sessions, they could be better publicized. On the other hand, folks are tired by the end of the day.

We take seriously your suggestions and comments, and will discuss them at our upcoming board meeting in the autumn of 2010.

Bring Your Passports!
2011 Conference in Ottawa, Ontario
A local organizing committee comprised of representatives of the Canadian Museum of Civilization (Norman Vorano), the National Gallery of Canada (Greg Hill), and Carleton University (Ruth Phillips and Allen Ryan) submitted a successful bid to host the 2011 NAASA conference in Ottawa—Canada’s capital city in southeastern Ontario. The committee presented a wealth of opportunities for the upcoming conference and surrounding events.

Don’t miss this conference: with four National museums in the city, the venerable art collection of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, a variety of municipal and university galleries, a stunning National library and a world-class preservation centre, Ottawa promises to be a once-in-a-lifetime chance to get behind the scenes and see national collections of Aboriginal Canadian art, archaeology and history.
Ottawa is also the institutional home for many Aboriginal cultural organizations from across the country; with its dynamic contemporary Aboriginal art and cultural scene, we look forward to the participation of many First Nations, Métis and Inuit artists and curators at this conference.

Situated at the intersection of the Ottawa, Rideau and Gatineau Rivers, for many centuries the area has been a natural crossroads of Algonquian and Iroquoian peoples. Today, short drives would take visitors to the Kitigan Zibi Cultural Centre in nearby Maniwaki or the Ronathohon:ni Cultural Centre in the Mohawk community of Akwesasne. With the city of Montreal just two hours away, the possibilities for pre- and post-conference tours are almost endless.

The local organizing committee is now working hard to offer visitors a chance to taste the local flavors of Ottawa, a beautiful city with a charming historical ambience (including the storied Rideau Canal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site), and to learn about the extraordinary traditions of Indigenous art and culture from the city and surrounding region. We’re looking forward to seeing you in Ottawa!
Anyone interested in Native North American art (north of the Rio Grande and including the First Nations of Canada) is invited to become a member of the Native American Art Studies Association (NAASA). The Association publishes a periodic newsletter, hosts national conferences, and serves as a clearinghouse for information relating to Native American art studies.

**Dues:** All amounts are for two years, from conference to conference

Enclosed is my check for:

- □ Regular Member.........$35
- □ Sustaining Member......$50
- □ Patron.........................$100

*Support beyond regular membership goes toward travel awards to increase student and artist attendance at the conference.*

**Checks payable to:** Native American Art Studies Association or NAASA

*U.S. currency only, please*

**Send dues and this form to:**

Native American Art Studies Association  
c/o Karen Kramer Russell  
Peabody Essex Museum  
East India Square  
Salem, MA 01970  

Date_____________________

Name _______________________________________________________________

Address _______________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip _________________________________________________________

E-mail ________________________________________________________________

*Please print clearly; email is our primary means of communication.*

□ New Member   □ Renewal