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Review of *Art of the Cherokee: Prehistory to the Present* By Susan C. Power

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Art of the Cherokee: Prehistory to the Present. By Susan C. Power. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007. xii + 295 pp. Maps, photographs, figures, notes, works consulted, index. \$49.95 cloth, \$24.95 paper.

Native American art history concerning Southeastern and Oklahoma Indian art is enhanced by Susan Power's ambitious book on Cherokee art. Its wide historic and artistic focus spans from the sixteenth century through transitional phases including European contact, removal, revival, and contemporary art. Power locates the Cherokees within the older Mississippian mound culture throughout the Tennessee Valley and North Carolina and provides examples of early sites where surviving pottery, beads, gorgets, rattles, painting, weaving, and sculpture indicate an interest in both utility and aesthetics. Early Cherokee arts demonstrate concern with color, form, design, patterns, and symbolism; and there is evidence that Cherokees had a sustained interest in acquiring exotic materials from far distances

that became part of their artistic expressions, as did the introduction of European goods.

All Native history and art history is influenced by the arrival of Europeans, which Power covers in a chronological progression with period paintings, maps, and fine color plates. Contact meant an exchange of goods, including glass beads, which the Cherokees applied to animal and cloth clothing. Exquisite bead work applied to trade fabric on sashes includes older iconography such as the double scroll pattern. Power carefully explains the world view of the Cherokees, including sacred landscape, a relationship among humans, plants, and animals, and the mythical woman, Selu, who brought the people corn. Their entire way of life was interrupted by land reduction through treaties and, after a long struggle, the removal of a large number of Cherokees from Georgia into Indian Territory.

In rich detail, Power portrays the artistic history of the separated people: the Eastern Cherokees, who remained in North Carolina, and the Oklahoma Cherokees. These chapters are enhanced by color images, paintings, drawings, and photographs. Outstanding examples of Cherokee beading called the "Prairie Bead Style" occurred throughout Indian Territory because of encounters with Plains and Midwestern Indians, all removed into the Territory. The proximity of different tribal arts introduced the Cherokees to different types of beads, embroidery, and a range of new designs. A fine example is seen in an *Embroidered Buckskin Coat*, from 1865, made by Polly Webber of Cherokee, Oklahoma. Examples of brilliant Cherokee art from the east and west are presented in the final chapters on contemporary arts. Traditional art works such as bandolier bags and baskets are featured along with innovative sculptors, easel painters, and pottery makers. In addition to the text, extensive notes, a fine glossary, works consulted, and an index make this book a superb resource for Native American art historians, Indian history scholars, and interested readers.

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