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Exemplary Arts: Section D — Subject: Contemporary Arts and Crafts

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SUBJECT: **Contemporary Arts and Crafts**

Edna Glenn

Sixteen examples are presented in this section. Other examples of painting, photography, and graphics are included throughout the book.

Ceramics

Figures 43-51

Basketry

Figures 52-55

Jewelry

Figure 56

Painting

Figures 57 and 58

Hopi people have always been very fine artists. In 1950 we developed the Hopi Arts and Crafts Cooperative Guild . . . The Hopi Co-op supports some four hundred artists and craftsmen . . . Basketry and pottery are the oldest of the art forms among our people.

Lomawywesa



The two photographs show the potter making the vessel: coil building techniques, and refinement processes to the completed work. The following comments about the processes are words from the potter:

I do not use a potter's wheel. I create the vessel through a coil method. When I begin the process, I first make a little bowl to support the bottom section of the pottery-piece while I am building it.

Coils are made of pieces of clay that I roll between my hands until they are snake-like forms. Winding the coils in a spiral-like manner, from bottom to top, constructs the clay walls. One row of clay coils adheres to the row below it, and in the process of building the wall I pinch together the rows of clay coils and smooth the wall with a piece of dried gourd or pumpkin shell. During the kachina festivals, gourds are used as rattles. When they are dropped they break, and there is no way to repair them. I pick up the pieces, cut them down, shape them, and use them to stretch the clay and to smooth the clay walls. I continue this coil-building process until the desired pottery form is complete.

The vessel is white and I paint the designs on the surface in black. The paint brush is made from the heart of a Yucca plant, the most tender part. The only way that this material becomes a brush is that I chew the fiber. A knife does not work, I simply have to chew the fiber until I am sure that the consistency is just right.

The black paint is made from a beeweed plant, which actually is an edible, spinach-type vegetable that we have on the Reservation. It takes much effort to gather the beeweed. It grows in the springtime, but seems to shrink in quantity rather than to grow abundantly. I boil the beeweed, and the juice then becomes the paint. The juice must dry and become a very hard, black substance. When I am ready to paint the designs on the bowl, I break off a small beeweed chunk, and dilute it until it is of the right consistency. The only way to tell if the paint-consistency is right is to taste it. That is the only way.

When I begin to design and paint the vessel surface, I first divide the top section into a six-part star form and then fill in the textured and spiral areas. I apply the paint from the top of the bowl to the bottom, never back and forth around the bowl-surface.

I do not make pottery for fame; I just enjoy the clay and the processes that are involved. I learned this from my mother.

(top) Figure 43. HOPI CERAMIC PROCESSES

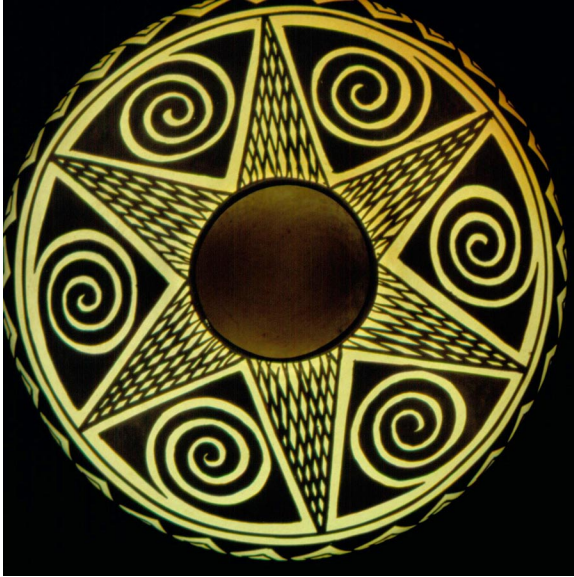
Sylvia Naha Talaswaima, potter

First Mesa, Arizona. 1981 (Courtesy of the potter and the Museum of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas)

(bottom) Figure 44. HOPI CERAMIC PROCESSES

Sylvia Naha Talaswaima, potter

First Mesa, Arizona. 1981 (Courtesy of the potter and the Museum of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas)



45. View One



46. View Two



47. View Three



48. View Four

Figures 45 – 48. ONE CERAMIC BOWL (four views)

Sylvia Naha Talaswaima, potter

diameter, 8 inches

First Mesa, Arizona. 1981 (Courtesy of the potter and the Museum of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas)

The hand built vessel, the symmetrically organized designs in patterns of black and white, and the symbolisms, all contribute to a splendidly conceived and executed form. Examining the vessel from the four given positions reveals that the ceramic bowl possesses a remarkable stylistic integrity.

Spiral motifs, as ancient as the Hopis themselves, dominate the rhythmic design-flow and integrate both upper and lower surfaces. A counter movement is established by a decorative band that both enhances and encircles the flange area. The band, with its diagonal, flowing patterns integrates the various motifs and provides a visual enclosure essential to the unity and strength of the entire vessel-form.

In observing the designs, a certain feeling of fluidity evolves as if all motifs relate to changing forms of nature. Concerning the spirals, the potter comments, "I see these patterns in the ruins where my mother lives. When it rains, the earth washes down the water and these patterns are everywhere on the ground." Perhaps the six-pointed star that restricts and measures the spiral-areas, top and bottom on the bowl, designates the six-part order of the Hopi universe. Or, it may represent the great star that appeared in the sky during the migration period, indicating the geographic location of the source of life, the sacred mesa lands where Hopis settled.

The potter's signature, "Featherwoman," centers the bottom of the vessel. It is a painted feather, representing a feather from the breast of an eagle, the most sacred of bird spirits to Hopis.



Figure 49. CERAMIC VESSEL (2 views)
Sylvia Naha Talaswaima, potter.
First Mesa, Arizona. 1981 (Courtesy of the potter, and
the Museum of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas)



Figure 50. THREE CERAMIC BOWLS
Sylvia Naha Talaswaima, potter
First Mesa, Arizona. 1981 (Courtesy of the potter, and the Museum of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas)



Figure 51. HOPI CERAMIC WEDDING JAR (2 views)

Fannie Nampeyo, potter

First Mesa, Arizona. 1960 (Courtesy of Charles Dailey, Director, the Institute of American Indian Art, Santa Fe, New Mexico)



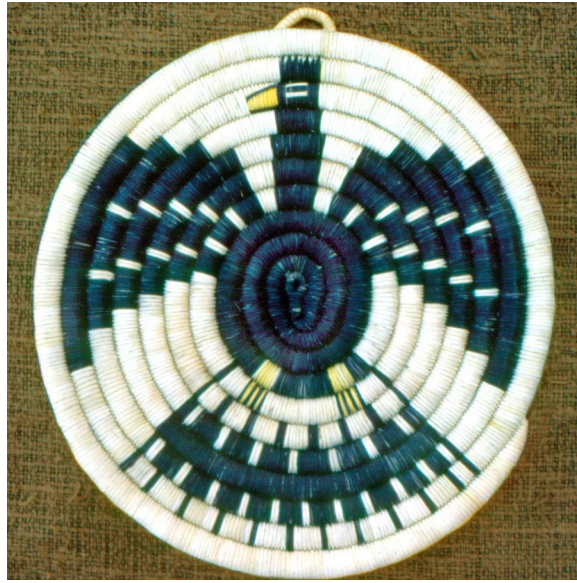
Figure 52. HOPI BASKETS,
various basket-makers
ONE CERAMIC SCULPTURE
Otolie Loloma
Collection of the Institute of
American Indian Art, Santa Fe,
New Mexico (loaned and ex-
hibited through the courtesy of
Charles Dailey, Director)



Figure 53. WICKER BASKET
(site view and detail)
Collection of the Institute of
American Indian Art, Santa
Fe, New Mexico (loaned and
exhibited through the courtesy
of Charles Dailey, Director)



54. Coiled plaque A



55. Coiled plaque B

Figures 54 – 55. HOPI COILED PLAQUES

Marla Tewaweira, Second Mesa, Arizona. 1980

(Courtesy of the Museum of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas)



Figure 56. JEWELRY (two belt buckles)

Lomawywesa (Michael Kabotie)

Hopi overlay, silver. 1981 (Courtesy of the jeweler, and the Museum of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas)



Figure 57. STORY WITH ROCKS
Coochsiwukioma (Delbridge Honanie)
painting, acrylic (Courtesy of Artist Hopid, Second Mesa, Arizona)



Figure 58. SIKYATKI HAND AND BEE

Lomawyesa (Michael Kabotie)

Mixed-media composition. 1973 (Courtesy of Maggie Kress Gallery, Taos, New Mexico)