

ART in CONTEXT

Exploring the Art of
Jaune Quick-to-See Smith



UNM ART MUSEUM

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Jaune Quick-to-See Smith juxtaposes images and expressive styles from a variety of artists and art periods in her work. She pays homage to Plains Indian hide paintings, ledger drawings, geometric textile designs, and ancient petroglyphs while simultaneously appropriating the pop art styles of Jasper Johns and Roy Lichtenstein. She uses the collage techniques and drippy paint made famous by Robert Rauschenberg, but makes them her own.

In her art, past and present literally merge within collaged layers of petroglyphs, pictographs, Baroque etchings, historic photographs, cartoons, song sheets, newspaper clippings, and other text. Dripping paint and sheer veils of paint stains fuse these disparate elements into a unified whole.



Petroglyphs in the Southwest

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith uses pictographic symbols and Native American petroglyphs in much of her work. These symbols reference her own cultural identity—Native American from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Indian Reservation of the Flathead Nation in Montana.



Plate 23 Howling Wolf, Southern Cheyenne

Ink, pencil, watercolor, and crayon on paper, 8 x 12 1/4.in. page 20 of Oberlin Ledger. Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, gift of Mrs. Jacob D.Cox. "Howling Wolf and the History of Ledger Art," Joyce M. Szabo, 1994.

Southern Cheyenne warrior artists, like Howling Wolf, carefully recorded the details and historical events of life on the Great Plains in the ledger books introduced by trading post accountants. Quick-to-See Smith reproduces some of these images in her lithographs, and uses ledger artist's techniques— like repeated horseshoe prints to indicate movement, and comet-like shapes to represent bullets moving through the air— in her work.



Andy Warhol, *Reversal Series: Retrospective*, 1979
Acrylic and silverpoint on canvas, 80 3/4 x w. 90in.
Courtesy Galerie Bischoferger, Zurich
"Modern Masters Series Andy Warhol," Carter Ratcliff, 1983.

Pop art first emerged in Britain during the 1950s, and used images from the mass media, advertising, comic books and consumer products. Like acclaimed Pop artist Andy Warhol, Quick-to-See Smith takes images from mainstream American culture and incorporates them into her artwork. Through these Pop images, she explores the effect of media in our lives.



Roy Lichtenstein, *Masterpiece*, 1962

Oil on canvas, 54 x 45 in.

Private collection

“Image Duplicator: Roy Lichtenstein and the Emergence of Pop Art,”

Michael Lobel, 2002.

Another recognized Pop artist, Roy Lichtenstein utilized comic book imagery in his work. Quick-to-See Smith uses the Lone Ranger and Tonto, characters from the 1950s television series, to address concerns of cultural stereotyping.



Robert Rauschenberg, *Rebus*, 1955
Oil, graphite, and collage on canvas, 96 x 131 in.
Private collection.
“Rauschenberg/Art and Life,” Mary Lynn Kotz, 1990.

Robert Rauschenberg’s enthusiasm for popular culture led him to search for a new way of painting. He found his style by using materials outside the traditional artists reach— house paint, ink, collaged materials, photographs, and the technique of collage.



Robert Rauschenberg, *Earth Day*, 1970
Lithograph and collage (edition of 50, Gemini G.E.L.),
52 1/2 x 37 1/2 in.
“Rauschenberg/ Art and Life,” Mary Lynn Kotz, 1990.

Like Rauschenberg, Quick-to-See Smith integrates mixed mediums in her work. She layers printmaking techniques, paint, collage, and drawing to invite the viewers to dive below the work’s surface. There they will confront issues of racism, consumerism and class. If Quick-to-See Smith’s paintings were not transparent would her message be communicated as effectively?



Jasper Johns, *Flag*, 1954-55

Encaustic, oil, and collage on plywood mounted fabric, 42 1/4 x 60 5/8 in.

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

Gift of Philip Johnson

“Modern Masters Series Jasper Johns,” Richard Francis, 1984.

Jasper Johns, another one of the well known Pop artists of the period, combined intense deliberation and experimentation, cycles of revision and repetition. He used the American flag and map in much of his work. This again originated from the Pop art idea of borrowing imagery from everyday life and incorporating these images into a fine art.



Jasper Johns, *Map*, 1961
Oil on canvas, 78 x 123 1/8 in.
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Scull
“Modern Masters Series of Jasper Johns,” Richard Francis, 1984.

Quick-to-See Smith also uses the American flag and map of the United States in her work. The use of common American imagery, text and dripping paint are points of comparison for both artists. Jaune Quick-to-See Smith states, “I sometimes use maps as a point of departure for the political treatment of Native people.”