

Apsáalooke Women and Warriors



Exhibition Overview

The Apsáalooke [ap-SAH-loo-gah] people of the Northern plains are known for their bravery, artistry, and extravagance. It's a legacy of daring feats in battle, unparalleled horsemanship, reverence for women, and innovative beadwork. Alongside historic war shields and regalia, contemporary Native American art highlights how this bravery and artistry is alive today.



1

Origin

Experience the Apsáalooke creation story and get acquainted to the essential belief systems and stories reflected in objects and artworks throughout the exhibition.



2

Introduction

Who are the Apsáalooke? Where do they live? How many Apsáalooke people are there? A full-scale tipi, still used today, continues the immersion in Apsáalooke life. See shirts, bags, moccasins, and other objects adorned with flat-stitch beadwork, an Apsáalooke technique.

3

Women

Women in the matriarchal Apsáalooke society are sources of power. They are artists, warriors, sources of clan lineage, and bearers of honor. Their signature elk tooth dresses symbolize status, abundance, and skill, and their meticulous beadwork is a tradition that lives on today. Explore individual stories of women and two-spirits, which highlight their importance in society.

4

Warriors

Bravery is a central facet of Apsáalooke identity for both men and women. Traditionally, men showed bravery for the honor and favor of women, and as representatives of their mothers' clans. Women crafted shirts, coup sticks, and ornamentation to help men appear fierce, and sometimes joined them on the battlefield. Men created war shields from imagery given in divine visions, to symbolically carry spiritual and familial protection into battle.

5

Counting Coup

"Counting coup" means winning prestige, displaying exceptional bravery to gain honor. The best-known act of counting coup is a male warrior approaching an enemy during battle, getting close enough to kill them, but merely touching them instead with a hand or specially decorated coup stick. Historic objects help illustrate legendary coup stories, while contemporary work by Native artists shows how Apsáalooke count coup today. Both men and women now count coup, through acts like participating in the military, getting an education, and fearlessly indigenizing colonized spaces.



6

Celebration

A bold showcase of contemporary Apsáalooke music and design is itself an act of counting coup.

Exhibition Specifications

Size

6,000 ft² (550 m²)

Ceiling height

12 ft (3.66 m)

Security

Exhibition requires a limited-access, lockable space with security staff during public hours

Shipping

One-way, inbound, paid by host venue

Language

All text in English and Spanish; language may be converted by host venues

Rental fee

Please inquire

Features

- 39 historic objects from the Field Museum's collection, including 7 war shields
- 22 works by contemporary Apsáalooke artists, including Elias Not Afraid, Ben Pease, Birdie Red Bird, Kevin Red Star, Adam Sings In The Timber, Bethany Yellowtail, and others
- Full-size modern tipi
- Digital interactives
- Large media elements and videos
- Gallery-wide soundscape
- Exhibition catalogue published by Neubauer Collegium

Contact

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www.fieldmuseum.org/about/traveling-exhibitions