



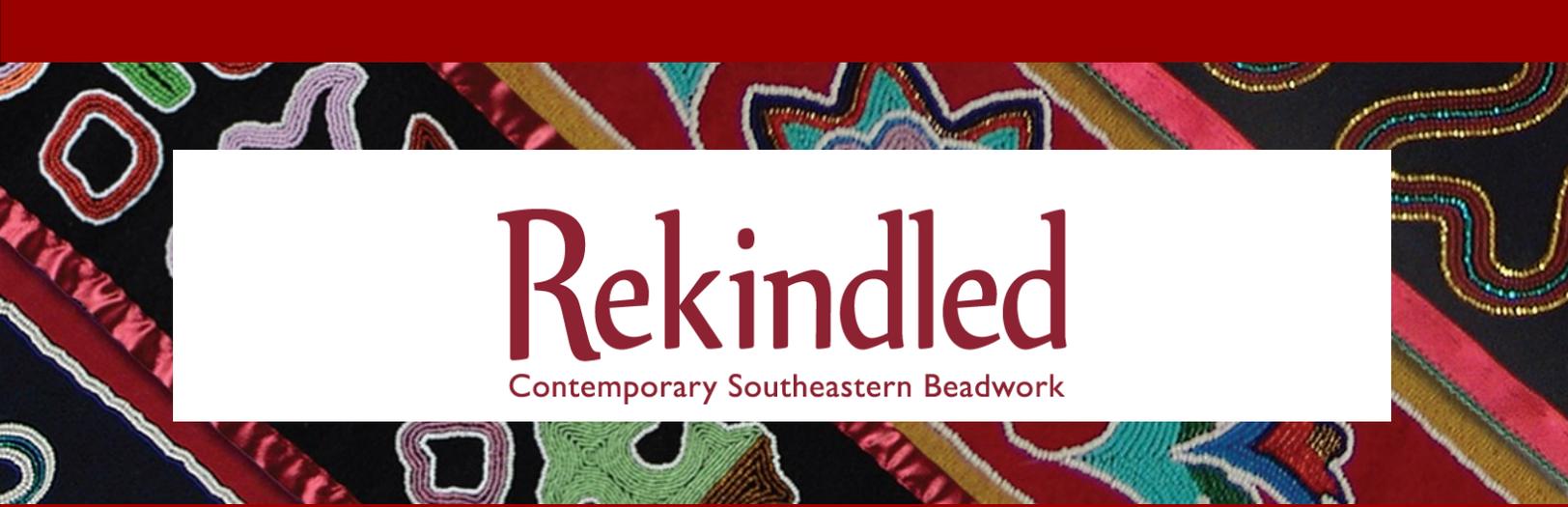
Rekindled

Contemporary Southeastern Beadwork

High School Curriculum, 2017

SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA
AH-TAH-THI-KI
M U S E U M
A PLACE TO LEARN. A PLACE TO REMEMBER.





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Contemporary Southeastern Beadwork

Description

During this program students will discover how Seminoles maintain beadwork traditions today that connect them to their past by investigating a variety of sources. Students will get to see both historic and modern objects, read quotes from contemporary beadwork artists, and view excerpts from exhibit panels.

Audience

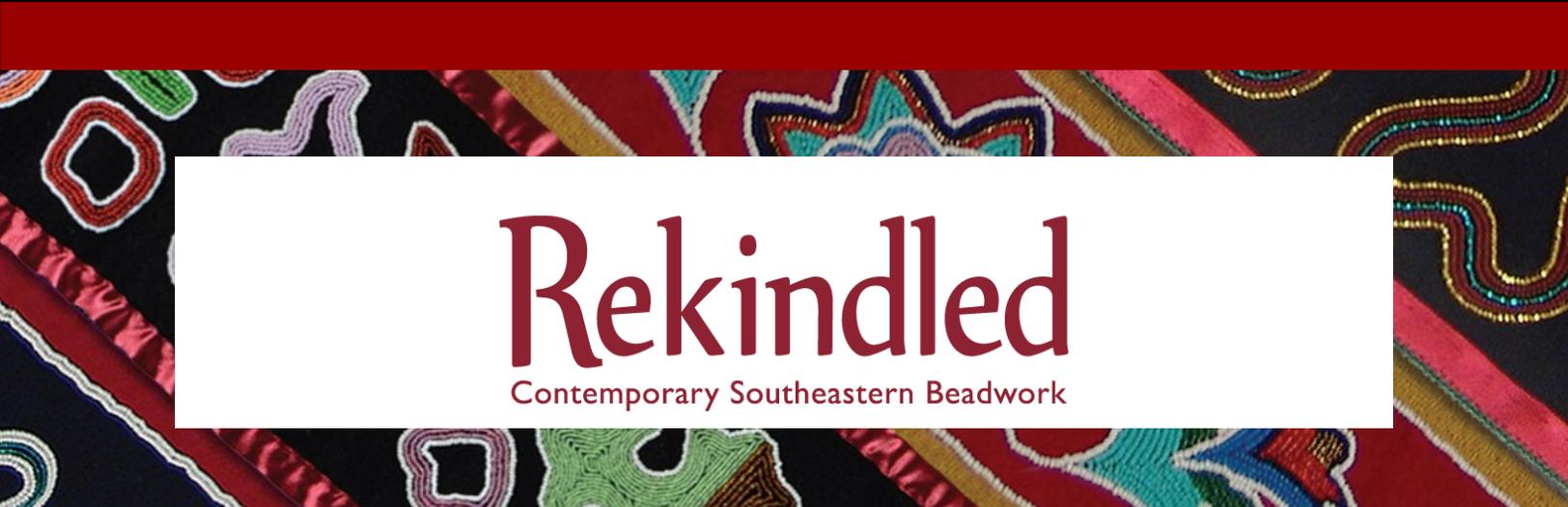
This activity is geared towards high school students.

Group Size

This activity is ideal for 20 participants.

Time

60 Minutes



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Goal

- Students will understand that Seminole people today continue traditions and maintain connections to their past through creating beaded bandolier bags.
- Students will gain experience using multiple sources to learn about the past.

Activity

0-5 minutes: Introduction

Explain that students will be using different types of sources to discover Seminole beadwork traditions.

5-30 minutes: Object Analysis

Pass out page 8 to all students in the class. Select one student to read the text. Ask students what this object tells them about Seminole beadwork.

- How old do they think Seminole beadwork traditions might be?
- Where did Seminoles get their beads?
- How did they get beads?

Next pass out pages 9 and 10. Again ask students to read the text on the pages. Ask students to look carefully at the objects. Record their group observations.

- What type of objects are shown on these pages?
- What materials are the bags made from?
- How were these bags constructed?
- How would students describe the designs?
- What is the condition of each bag?

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Activity

After students have answered these questions, ask them what these observations can tell them about the bags.

- How old do they think the bags are and why?
- What do they think the bags were used for and why?
- Who do they think made these objects and why?
- Who do they think used these objects?

Repeat this activity with pages 11 and 12. Ask students to read the text along with each object. Ask students to look carefully at the objects.

- What do they observe?
- What type of objects are shown on these pages?
- What materials are the objects made from?
- How were these bags constructed?
- How would students describe the designs on these objects?
- What type of condition are the bags in?

Next ask them what these observations tell them.

- How old do they think the bags are and why?
- What do they think the bags were for and why?
- Who do they think made these objects and why?
- Who do they think used these objects?

Now have students compare the first set of bandolier bags and the second set.

- How are they similar?
- How are they different?
- What does this tell them about the bags?

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Activity

30-40 minutes: Oral History Analysis

Explain that students are now going to look at a different type of source— oral histories. Explain that many people across the world share their stories by passing them on through word of mouth and not through written records. Today many museums, like the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, record and preserve stories about different topics or events from knowledgeable people. Seminole Tribal Members, Carol Cypress and Brian Zepeda, were interviewed about bandolier bag traditions. Show students the photo of Carol Cypress and Brian Zepeda on page 15.

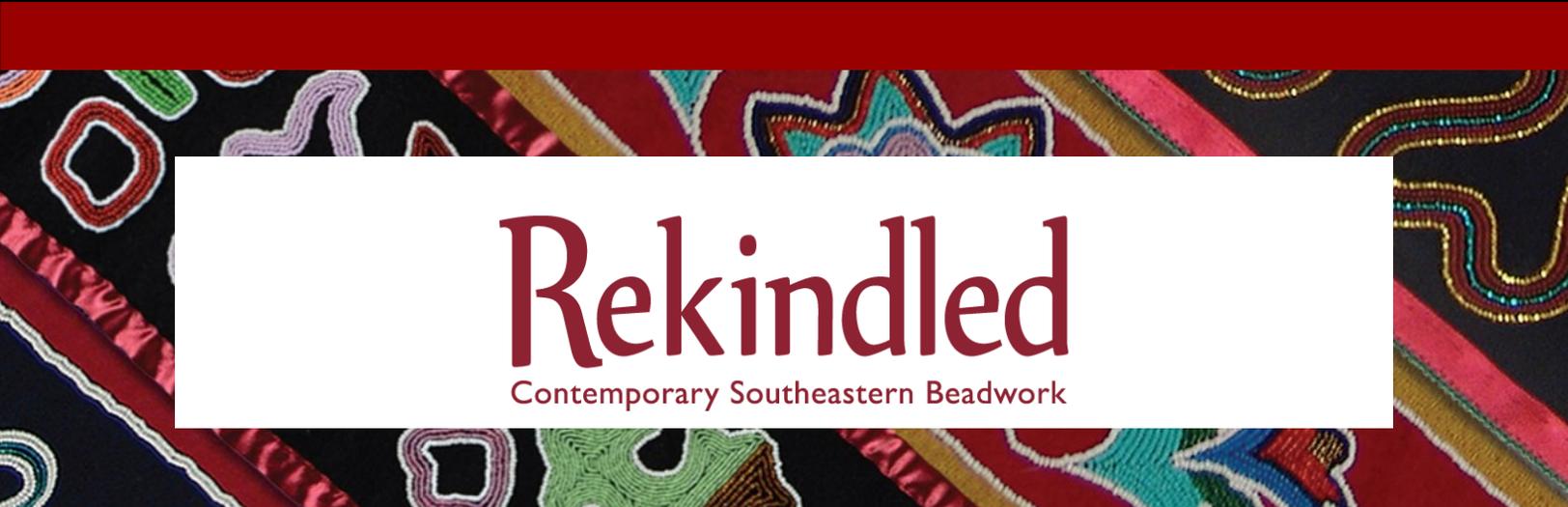
Ask students to read the oral history selections from page 16 aloud. What they have learned from this source.

- Who created these bags?
- What were these objects used for in the past?
- What are they used for in the present?
- Why are these bags important?

40-50 minutes: Exhibit Text Analysis

Explain that another source students can use is exhibit text. Museum staff members conduct research by learning more about artifacts, speaking to subject experts, and by reading archival materials and books. They use this information to write exhibit panels.

Pass out pages 16 and 17 which feature exhibit text from the *Rekindled: Contemporary Southeastern Beadwork exhibit*. Have students read it on their own. After a couple of minutes ask students what new information they have learned about bandolier bags.



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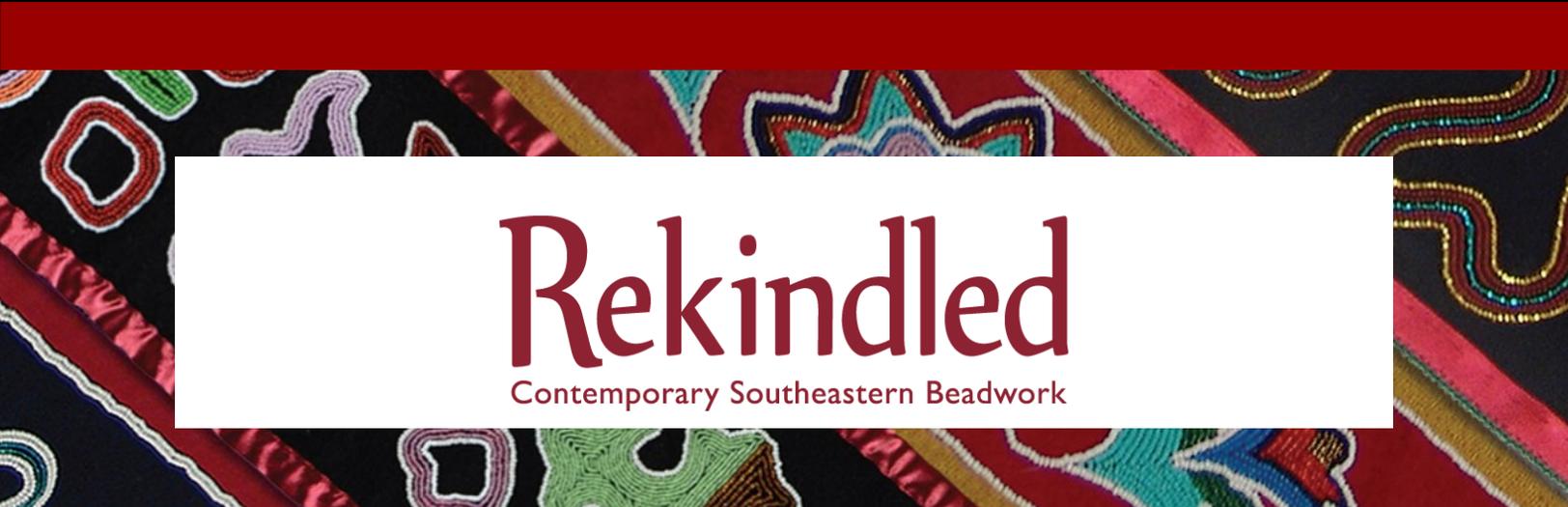
Activity

50-60 minutes: Conclusion

Students have now learned about bandolier bags from many different sources.

- What types of information did they get from different sources?
- What types of different perspectives were represented in those different sources?

Given all that they have learned, what story would they tell someone about bandolier bags? Students should understand that people like Carol Cypress and Brian Zepeda have revived beadwork traditions which connect them to a long history of Seminole beadwork.



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Materials

- Images and quotes (see pages 7- 14)

Florida State

Standards

SS.912.A.2.7: Review the Native American experience.

SS.912.P.10.2: Identify how cultures change over time and vary within nations and internationally.

SS.912.A.1.2: Utilize a variety of primary and secondary sources to identify author, historical significance, audience, and authenticity to understand a historical period.

LAFS.1112.RH.1.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

LAFS.1112.RH.1.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.



Artifact

OF THE MONTH

TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



MARCH 2014



Photo Credit: Brian Tietz



Russian Blue Bead
1800-1900
2011.12.219

Found during the 2011 Field School held at the Waxy Hadjo's Landing site on Big Cypress, this tiny glass bead (known as a Russian Blue) tells an epic tale of transatlantic trade. Though called Russian Blues, these beads actually originated in Bohemia, a historic country now located in the western half of today's Czechoslovakia.

Designed by Bohemians for use as inexpensive trade beads, they came in a variety of colors, though most commonly a "deep ultramarine" blue. The bead's most defining characteristic is its smooth facets that were created by harnessing the power of the fast mountain streams. By the mid-19th century, Bohemia was flooding the market with so many of these low-cost beads that they replaced Venetians as the trade beads of choice. Although they are most commonly found in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska where Russian fur traders traded them to local tribes, these beads also made their way to Florida where the Seminoles used them to create their beautiful beaded necklaces.

Our Tribal Historic Preservation Office preserves, documents, and promotes Seminole cultural heritage, both on and off modern reservation boundaries. One way they do this is by conducting archaeological excavations and preserving the artifacts they uncover. They share some of these objects every month with an Artifact of the Month. Find out more here: <http://www.stofthpo.com/Artifact-of-the-Month.html>.

1994.10.1

The curvy and abstract designs of flowers on this bag are often used in Southeastern-style bandolier bags. This bag is from the early 1800s. It is made of dark blue wool, red satin, and brown velvet and has both glass and metal beads.



1997.30.1

This bandolier bag from the early 1800s is made from wool red cloth and printed cotton fabric. The symbolic designs which show the fabric beneath are typical of Southeastern beadwork.





Carol Cypress made this bandolier bag for her grandson!

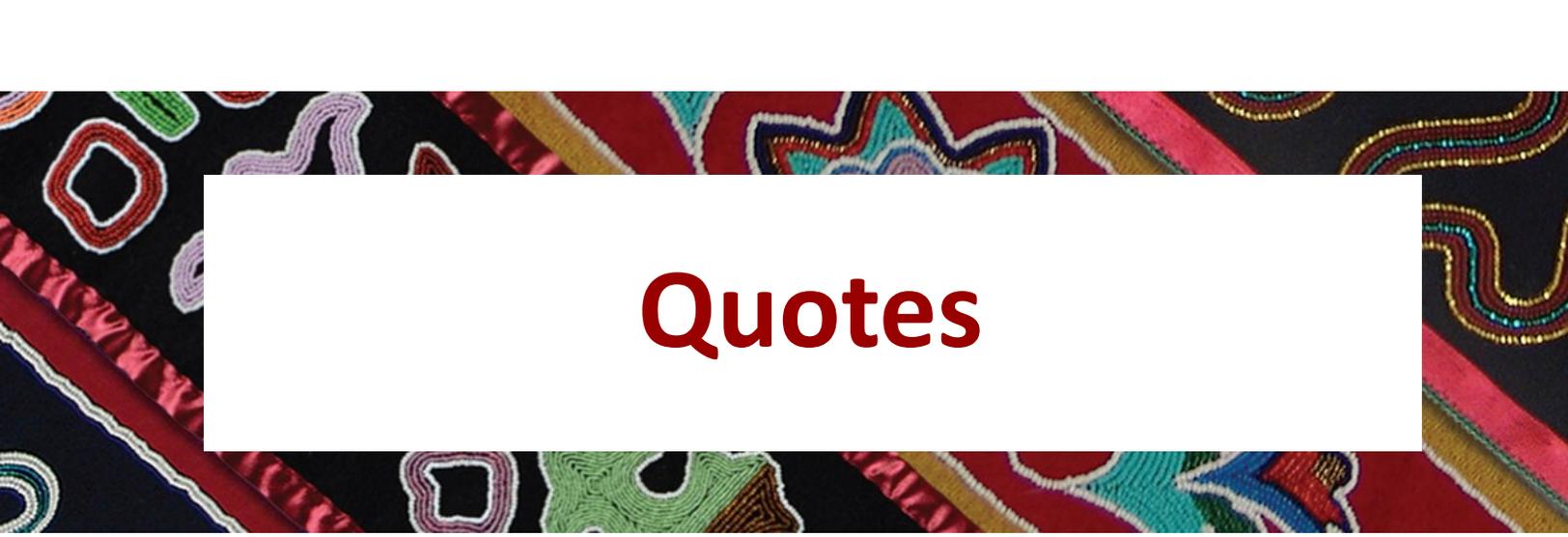




This bandolier bag was made by Carol Cypress and she was inspired by Weeden pottery. People from over 1500 years ago used this type of pottery for daily activities and possibly ceremonies on Weeden Island, along Florida's central gulf coast. The pottery was found under water which is why Carol made the bag blue.



Brian Zepeda made this bandolier bag for his son. He used his son's favorite designs and had fun making it.



Quotes

Seminole War Quotes

“During the war time, they said that if a man was wearing [a bandolier bag] and they came by you see how he looks in front, but if you turn around and look back it looks different from the back, so that was supposed to disguise that there were more people fighting.”

~Carol Cypress

“One of those things that was passed on to me was the usage of them during wars because the bandolier bags have designs on them that were sometimes specific to a clan or a family so when you were out on a battlefield or in a battle you could look around and see if you were in the right place at the right time. “

~Brian Zepeda

On the Importance of Bandolier Bags

“When my grandsons wear the bandolier and dance with it, the people that’s gone now, we don’t really know who they were, but they’re still alive with us... And it was to honor them.”

(This quote references the bandolier bag on page 11)

~Carol Cypress

“When it comes to the beadwork that I’m producing today, they tell a story really because it’s not just the beadwork... they tell a story of where we’ve come from, things we’ve done in the past.”

~Brian Zepeda



From Right to Left: Rebecca Fell (Curator of Exhibits), Carol Cypress, Brian Zepeda

Carol Cypress and Brian Zepeda shared stories about their bandolier bags at our Rekindled Contemporary Southeastern Beadwork Exhibit Reception in January, 2017.



Exhibit Text

Introduction

The pursuit of beauty in art is a storied and noble quest. Art has the power to bring ideas, feelings, and history to life. This exhibition brings together a collection of bandolier bags, sashes, baldrics, women's bags, moccasins, and a coat from some of the best current Southeastern native bead artists.

However, each piece in this exhibition is more than an artistic expression of beauty. These pieces are also utilitarian and an expression of culture. They are meant to be used, to be worn, often in important moments – like war or ceremonies – of the owner's life.

More importantly, this style of beading represents a rekindling of a tradition. These artists' journeys bear a striking resemblance to each other's. Whether stumbling upon 18th century Southeastern beadwork in a museum or hearing of their existence from their elders, these artists were pulled in by the desire to relearn the tradition of beadwork as their ancestors had done it.

Their works are the fruits of their journey. Reflect on their paths as well as the beautiful objects.

History

Up and until the 1990s, it was commonly believed there was no history of beadwork among the Southeastern tribes. The reason for this was a straightforward one: the forced removal of nearly all the Southeastern peoples from their homelands to the hostile Oklahoma lands throughout the 1830s to the 1850s. Called by the Cherokees the Trail of Tears, the resultant death, disease, and general hardship of these forced resettlements meant many tradition and customs were lost – irretrievably, in some cases.

The traditional eighteenth century beadwork style has been among the customs resurrected. Starting in the 1990s, artists like Martha Berry, Carol Cypress, and Brian Zepeda were searching in museum collections throughout the country as well as asking what their elders remembered about these old traditions. Some types of beading were happening in these Southeastern tribes but they represented the ways of other, distant Native American tribes. These Southeastern artists looked for the stories and ways of their own cultures.



Exhibit Text

As they taught themselves, they taught others. In some cases, they found like-minded Southeastern native artists taking the same journey to rediscovery. Slowly the old traditions have come alive again.

Learn from the artists' oral histories throughout the exhibit to learn how they rekindled their culture's traditions.

Conclusion

As early as the 16th century Europeans brought with them expensive, rare glass beads. Glass and bead making were jealously guarded secrets in just two places in Europe, Venice and Czechoslovakia. They were also valued by the Native American artists who received them. Pre-contact bead making – from quills, bones, and stones - was labor intensive work. Hence, this offer of colorful glass beads opened up a new palette and the time for creative license by these Native artists.

Generations of artists improved upon not only the complexity but the cultural importance of their pieces. A bandolier bag not only held powerful war medicine and shot for guns; it was a silent communication tool to fellow warriors of the wearer's identity. Thus, the value of the piece was its beauty, use, and culture.

Today, Indian Country displays a stunning array of beadwork – from traditional to the stunningly innovative. These artists – Roger Amerman, Karen Berry, Martha Berry, Carol Cypress, Jerry Ingram, Jay McGirt, and Brian Zepeda – have reformed the foundation of Southeastern traditional beadwork. As other Southeastern beadwork artists go forward, whether in the traditional approach or something uniquely their own, they do so because of this solid foundation.