Native American art and material culture has long held viewers captive. The objects created, used, and displayed by the hundreds of tribes throughout the Americas have made their way into homes, museums, and universities across the globe. But as the desire and demand for these objects have grown, so too has the availability of faked artworks. In *Not Native American Art: Fakes, Replicas, and Invented Traditions*, art historian Janet Catherine Berlo explores the different contexts, both social and historical, in which Native art and material culture have been imitated and reproduced, attempting to make sense of the murky world of Native art fakes.

Across five chapters that center on different themes, plus an introduction and conclusion, Berlo uses a variety of historical and modern case studies to examine how and why Native art has been faked and replicated. The author dissects these case studies using her decades of research on the indigenous art of pre-Columbian Central America and nineteenth-century northern plains of the United States, as well as interviews with scholars, Native elders and artists, and historical reenactors. Color photographs throughout the book serve as excellent examples of the pieces that Berlo discusses.

Berlo delves into the question of what can be considered “real” Native American art in her first and third chapters. She makes a clear delineation between what constitutes fakes, forgeries, and invented traditions, noting the murky circumstances surrounding them. For example, Northwest Coast-style masks made in Indonesia yet promoted as Native-made are clearly not an accurate representation of Native art; yet, as Berlo explains, the discussion among tribes is much more contested when determining whether slightly altered ceremonial items, such as katsinas, or invented traditions, like turquoise fetish pots, can be considered traditional Native art when they are created solely to be sold to collectors. Additionally, the extent to
which “the social relationships and obligations embodied by the original” can and should be replicated is also debated, though often with favor given to replicating items in a respectful manner (p. 31). A replica of a Tlingit clan crest hat, for example, sits in the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, having replaced the original when it was repatriated; the partnership between the Tlingit and Smithsonian allows the Tlingit to maintain ownership of their historic material culture while giving the Smithsonian a tangible object to use when teaching visitors.

Berlo also explores instances where Native art and material culture has been created by white artists and celebrated. White carvers Bill Holm and Steve Brown were commissioned by tribes along the Northwest Coast to recreate historic house posts and wooden statues. Costume designer Cathy Smith, who has worked on movies such as *Dances with Wolves* (1990), studied beadwork and quillwork under Darlene Young Bear, a Cheyenne River Sioux elder and medicine woman, after being adopted into the tribe and properly instructed on the fasts and vision quests required to partake in the traditional art forms. Instances like these allow for traditional Native art forms to continue to flourish thanks to the non-Native artists’ time spent learning from the tribes, their inclusion of the tribes in every step of their artistic endeavors, and their readiness to pass their knowledge along to future generations of tribal members.

The second chapter discusses what Berlo calls “cultural cross-dressing,” also referred to as “playing Indian.” A discussion of the historical middle ground that occurred between Euro-Americans and the indigenous groups of the Northeast and the Great Lakes area during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries begins the chapter. The middle ground sought to improve intercultural relationships and allowed for the swapping of such things as clothing and material culture, resulting in “a new hybrid identity in a complex changing world” (p. 64). This practice, ultimately grounded in respect, is juxtaposed with modern hobbyists, who often walk a fine line between respect and paternalism. While the “German Indians” groups who dress up as Natives often study indigenous history, their “playing Indian” can be viewed as a guilt-free way to play the victim, an identity that, when it “becomes inconvenient, can be tucked away in a suitcase” (p. 83). As Berlo notes, these and other hobbyists believe they are keeping Native art and material culture alive and harken back to a sanitized past, all while dismissing the actual indigenous people who are taking part in their very real past and bringing it into the future. Berlo suggests that these hobbyists are thus taking part in a cultural genocide of sorts, helping to perpetuate the myth that the “real Indian” is gone.

Chapter 4 studies the intricacies of Native art fakes and forgeries in closer detail. Berlo takes another look at intentional fakes, such as counterfeit Chumash material culture produced by Arthur Sanger, criticizing the deliberate selling of them as “legitimate” Native art by unsavory characters as a means to boost their reputation and line their pockets with money. However, she also examines what she terms “accidental fakes.” These items were “not intend[ed] to deceive when [the artist] made the object” (p. 138). Miguel Corvarrubias, for example, was a Mexican scholar and artist influenced heavily by historic Hidatsa art; despite showcasing a “twentieth-century urbanite’s ... humor, not a nineteenth-century warrior-artist’s,” his art was later inaccurately deemed as being Hidatsa, though that was never his intention (p. 141, emphasis added). Berlo also takes some time in this chapter to critique restorers working with Mimbres pottery for providing “fictions” in their restorations by extending drawings onto areas of broken pots where the drawing no longer exists. These fictions can be disruptive, Berlo notes, as they might not reflect actual Mimbres artistry and, on occasion, can even accelerate the deterioration of the object.
The final chapter takes a closer look at the replication and revitalization of traditional tribal artforms by Native peoples. Berlo provides a lengthy discussion on the replication of Navajo sand painting, a sacred art form used to heal ailing people. While some Navajo are uncomfortable with making copies of sacred images that were not always intended to be made permanent, they also recognize that these replicas can be of great use to modern ritual specialists. To respect this perspective, many museums have worked with the Navajo to restrict access to certain archival materials concerning sacred traditions, making them “open only to ritual specialists trying to verify certain protocols” (p. 184). Native Americans also have taken part in less contested art forms throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. During the Great Depression, Seneca women made wearable items such as intricately beaded dresses using techniques passed down to them by their foremothers. These items remain in museums to this day and inspire many modern Iroquois artists. Jamie Jacobs, one such modern Seneca artist inspired by his ancestors, has even won major awards for his quilled leather pouches. By using ancient indigenous art forms, he is helping to keep them alive and relevant in the twenty-first century.

A thoroughly researched and well-written book, *Not Native American Art* tackles a complex subject and breaks it down into more understandable terms while simultaneously not oversimplifying it. Berlo weaves in her own personal stories surrounding fakes and replicas of Native American art, discussing how her thoughts on the subject have changed over time after long hours of research and conversations with tribal elders, indigenous artists, and other experts. These stories add a more personal spin to the book, making it more relatable to the reader. A wonderful study on the multifaceted world of Native American art fakes, *Not Native American Art* is a must-read for anyone interested in Native history, art, and material culture.
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