

# The Virtual Coe *Being together while being apart...*

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April 16, 2020

## From the Collection



This lovely little wallet by [Doreen Jensen](#) (Gitsxan), also known as Hahl Yee, was a gift from the artist, writer, scholar, activist, and Elder. The small pouch and chain were secreted away in the wallet, and only recently rediscovered by one of our [Hands-On curators](#). Jensen was a student of Tony and Henry Hunt at the [Gitanmaax School of Northwest Indian Art](#) and went on to have a wide-reaching career as a carver and leader in the field of Northwest Coast art and cultural studies. In 1983 she curated the important exhibition "Robes of Power" which focused on the significant role of robes and regalia in First Nations ceremonies, typically created by women makers. It was during this same year that [Ted Coe](#) became the recipient of this simple but meaningful gift while attending the National Native Art Symposium in Hazelton, B.C. Jensen made wallets like this one for her friends who attended the symposium. The layers of meaning are many—it is such a wonderful representation of the often under-appreciated art forms of women; in keeping with the intention of "Robes of Power" while also a deeply personal depiction of her own identity. Her name, Hahl Yee belongs to the Killerwhale family crest from

the House of Geel of the Fireweed Clan. This wallet is a perfect little reminder of the power of gifts which resonate far beyond their moment of giving.

Doreen Jensen (Gitsxan, 1933-2009), *Wallet*, 1983. Wool felt, red cotton, commercial button, and Velcro, 3.25 x 4.5 in. NA0734.

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## Spring is for the Birds

Our Santa Fe springtime snowstorm recently arrived and departed, leaving us with sunny skies, unknown fruit blossom outcomes, and birds! There are over 106 items that appear in a search for "birds" in the collection database!

The meaning of birds varies among different Indigenous communities—there is not one set knowledge and understanding of our aviary friends. Certainly, feathers are used in most cultures in ceremony, healing, and representing status and achievement. In addition, it not just "*birds*" but the



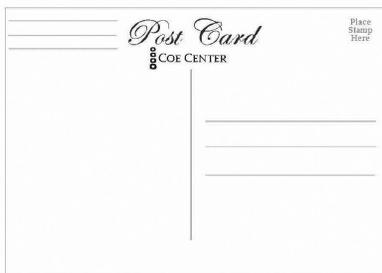
what birds do, what they look like, their seasonality, flight patterns and feeding habits.

To read the entire article, please [click here](#).

[Peter Jemison](#) (Seneca, b. 1945), *As the Crow Flies*, 1986. Handmade paper and acrylic paint, 15 x 10 x 8 in. (38.1 x 25.4 x 20.3 cm). NA1168

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## Postcards from the Coe



Art, as an act of gift giving, is central to history and the ongoing stories of creative making in communities around the globe. Making something and offering it freely to another is a profound act of generosity and even sacrifice. Gifts come in many forms: a tiny clay dish crafted by a child made for a parent treasured as a marker of love and time for decades after; a gift created for ceremony, celebration or transition.

To emphasize the significance of the gift of art the Coe, alongside our incredible artist friends, Board Directors, and volunteers are creating a small action of “gifting”. We are calling this *Postcards from the Coe*. We will be creating a postcard, inspired by a work or works from the Coe collection, that will be mailed to a random recipient from the Coe mailing list. We encourage you to forward this to friends and family so they might be chosen at random.

We hope that these small gifts of art will provide light and hope in our precarious moment and serve as lasting reminders of the resilience of art. Sharing art now is one of the most powerful tools that we have. And receiving mail creates connection and meaning. We can even add supporting the Postal Service to the list, while we're at it!

To sign up, please shoot an email to [info@coeartscenter.org](mailto:info@coeartscenter.org) with your contact information.

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**Please support the Coe and donate today.**

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The Ralph T. Coe Center for the Arts is a private operating 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent of the Internal Revenue Code. Please [donate online](#) or mail checks to the Ralph T. Coe Center for the Arts, 1590 B Pacheco Street, Santa Fe, NM 87505. Your support creates connection. Thank you.

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