

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

May 14, 2021

"Spiraling Inward"





The Coe is incredibly honored to care for three pieces by artist **Steve Smith** (Kwakwaka'wakw). These pieces, including this painted maple wood bowl, are striking examples of Smith's early experiments in form and style.

Here, in "*Spiraling Inward*" we can trace how Smith's early works delve into the Kwakwaka'wakw **formline** style while allowing for space for creative inspiration and subtle shifts in design elements.

Learn more about this piece [here](#).

Steve Smith (Dla'kwagila) (Kwakwaka'wakw), "*Spiraling Inward*," c. 1990. Maple wood and pigment, 13.125 x 13.5 in. NA1223

According to Zulu storytellers....



What you see here is also known as the **Nguni** spoon, referring to the ancestors of the Zulu Peoples. According to Zulu storytellers, Nguni lands were originally the mystic lands **of the great lakes**, as the people journeyed southwards to find new fertile land, rivers and streams, and nutritious pastures for their livestock.

This piece was purchased in South Africa by an American in the 1990s and was later acquired by Ted Coe in 1997. Very little is known of the ladle, other than its Zulu aesthetic presence, and its likely use as a prized Nguni spoon for the preparation or serving of food.

Spoons such as this one, mainly made from **umcaka wood**, were specially carved and used on special occasions. They were considered to be heirlooms to be passed down to the next generation.

Learn more [here](#).

Did you miss it?



Experience artist G. Peter Jemison (Seneca, Heron Clan), as he hosts **COLLECTIONS SPOTLIGHT** on May 11, 2021. Jemison is a painter, mixed-media artist, and filmmaker who exhibits nationally and internationally. Based in Victor, New York, he manages the **Ganondagan State Historic Site**.

To watch this enriching experience, click [here](#).

COLLECTIONS SPOTLIGHT a program developed in partnership with First American Art Magazine is an interactive, online monthly experience that brings together diverse scholars and Native artists who select artworks from the Coe's collection to interpret and discuss. The virtual Zoom format also brings together attendees from diverse regions. Attendee questions are accepted throughout the experience via chat, and at the end opened to audio. These events are free and open to the general public.

Read more [here](#) as curator Bess Murphy reflects on the Coe Center's program **COLLECTIONS SPOTLIGHT**

To view past The Virtual Coe issues, please click [here](#).

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