

The Virtual Coe

Being together while being apart...

May 28, 2021

A million memories...





When it comes to pottery, as seen here with this beautifully painted feline vessel, the **Nazca culture** was known for their unique sundry colored **slip painting** techniques, being experimented with beginning around 200 BCE by their **Paracas ancestors**. It is no coincidence that in this particular vessel of chestnut-colored interiors, one can see a depiction of at least four different mineral-based pigments: black—like their deep ocean seas; brown—like their alluvial soils; red—like the blood that ran through their **ayllu** lineages; orange—like the reflection of their golden metal masks; and white—like the fog banks from the ocean that would warm their homes during long winter months.

A million memories stored in tombs, graves, and cemeteries, many of which have been raided and excavated over centuries, have been taken out of their homelands and sent to Europe and beyond. With so many lost ceramics and objects separated, we have a limited ability to understand such mysterious desert cultures and civilizations across the expansive sepia terrains of today's coastal Peru. It is no wonder that in subsequent years the emerging remnants of such vessels and precious objects such as this one are highly regarded and valued by hundreds of archeologists and anthropologists to compose the story we have of these civilizations today.

Learn more [here](#).

Artist Unknown (Huari or Nazca), *Feline Vessel*, c. 500-900 CE.
Clay and pigment, 3.5 x 5 x 4.75 in. PC0002

"She's All That".



Ken Williams, Jr. (Arapaho/Seneca, b. 1983) is widely recognized as a leading beadworker. His work merges earlier Seneca and Arapaho styles and techniques with his own new twist on pictorial imagery—drawing upon Indigenous history, popular culture, and high fashion.

“She’s All That” is one of Williams’ early forays into creating realistic portraits drawn from historic photographs. Williams recalled that this particular young woman stood out to him because he could instantly tell that she was a very important and a very loved little girl because of her full dentalium top. **Dentalium**, tusk shells of **scaphopod mollusks**, have been used in North America for jewelry and adornment for centuries. These shells originate along the Pacific Coast and were widely traded. They were, and

remain, particularly valued across the Plains. So, the fact that this girl was photographed wearing a shirt fully adorned with precious dentalium is a marker of her importance within her family and community.

Learn more [here](#).

Ken Williams, Jr. (Arapaho/Seneca), *She's All That*, 2007.
Cloth, beads, rawhide, ribbon, bells, and dentalium shell, 13 x 5 in. NA1353

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