



PRESS RELEASE
February 7, 2006

Institute of American Indian Arts
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**“CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN NATIVE AMERICAN ART”
EXHIBITION @ PRIMITIVE EDGE GALLERY**

who: More than a dozen IAIA artists

what: Paintings, sculpture, photography, ceramics

when: March 6 – 20. Opening Reception: 4 to 6pm, March 6

where: Primitive Edge Gallery, IAIA Campus, 83 Avan Nu Po Rd.

Revered for its beauty and technical integrity, art created by Native American hands is also imbued with intention. Sometimes that intent reflects the values and traditions underlying Native family structures and communities. Other times the intent carries a substantially harder edge.

As today’s generation of Native American artists comes to terms with the pressures of contemporary society and gains an understanding of the unique balance required of Native people who conduct their lives in ways that navigate the past, present and future, those artists gain a clear perspective on the world around them.

Those perspectives are expressed in the upcoming Primitive Edge Gallery exhibition “Contemporary Issues in Native American Art”. The show, which is part of a class of the same name taught by IAIA professor Steven Wall, is an unedited and unbounded look at the harder edge of Native American creative consciousness.

Typical of the artists whose work is included in this exhibition is IAIA junior Valentina Sireech (Northern Ute). Her painting, “The 490: Termination of the Utes” depicts the 1954 separation of many Ute

families from their Tribal rights. It's an issue whose injustice still burns in Sireech's psyche.

“My family was among the 490 Ute people who were terminated from Tribal status because we were not 100-percent Ute blood. It was an action that stripped people of their Ute membership and tribal rights for something they had no control over,” she says.

There are equally passionate background stories behind the other works of art included in this exhibition. All of the student artists are available for interviews, through the IAIA Communications Office.

(attached: “The 490: Termination of the Utes”, Valentina Sireech, 18” x 18”, acrylic on board, 2006)

The Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development (IAIA) is a Congressionally chartered, multi-Tribal center of higher education dedicated to the preservation, study, creative application and contemporary expression of American Indian and Alaska Native arts and cultures..IAIA aims to achieve its mission through a program of higher education and outreach to students, Tribal communities and the public. IAIA is committed to offering high quality education programs through an individual-centric approach designed to enrich the career opportunities enjoyed by all its students.