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brooches to adorn leggings, breech cloths, charm bags, beaded necklaces and wearing blankets.

The women's artistic traditions leave visitors in awe of the elaborate, needlework done on early dress, Delaware and Potawatomi shoulder bags amaze with intricate "seed bead" embroidery.

"It's very representative of their techniques and mediums from those regions," Roberts said.

Penney, Roberts and Nancy Barr wrote the catalog essay for the accompanying exhibition, "Images of Identity: American Indians in Photography."

"Chandler and Pohrt provided museums and historians with a great oral history. This is a real opportunity for people to learn about the native people and that part of history, their culture and existence at that time. It speaks not only of the past, it speaks of the present and even to the future. The artistic traditions you see in the exhibit are still practiced."

Penney said the conversation proposing the exhibit occurred in 1987 when he visited Horse Capture, then curator of the Plains Indian Museum at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. They de-

cided to combine the best pieces of the Chandler-Pohrt collection and share them in a traveling exhibition.

During a preview of the exhibit, Horse Capture spoke of the collection's importance to his people.

"Nobody really knows how long Indian people have been here. Estimates range up to 50,000 years. Many years ago, they looked at these handcrafted objects and called it arts and crafts. These works by anonymous artists represent all of the Indian people. Shows like this are important to us. There's no curriculum in schools. This art was done 150 years ago in the middle of nowhere and it's all here."

Last spring in preparation for the exhibition coming to Detroit, Penney met with American Indian community leaders and social service organizations to get their input on displaying the art. A piece of dried sage placed inside each exhibit case is one of the elements to result from those meetings.

"We wanted to find a way to make the installation authentic, yet not to do anything that made them feel uncomfortable," Penney said.

"The sage in the cases functions as respect for the objects and their spiritual and sacredness. It was a consensus among people consulted in the Native American community to place the sage in the exhibit cases. It is a sacred plant used for purification in a variety of ritual ceremonies," added Roberts.

Barb Wilson of Birmingham, Pamela Conn of Plymouth and Sue Marx Films Inc., co-produced the 17-minute award-winning video, "The Journey of the Chandler-Pohrt Collection" accompanying the exhibition. Also being held in conjunction with the exhibit are several education programs, including children's hands-on art workshops. A full color, 368-page catalog by Penney is available in the museum shops.

Not to be missed when viewing the exhibit is a vibrant feather bonnet (c. 1890) from the Northwestern Plains featuring rust colored rooster feathers. Also, a Potawatomi horse effigy used in rituals intended to increase one's

herd, a Potawatomi turban of otter pelt, silk ribbons and glass beads on loan from Cranbrook Institute of Science; an Assiniboine's man's shirt; and Winter Count, a recorded history.

"Everyone will appreciate the beauty of the integral parts of the collection. It's a living type of art, the tools, the items that they had at that time. It offers a spiritual journey. You can bring yourself into yesterday," said Apache/Beneca Indian Edwin Poulin of Royal Oak. He served as one of the consultants for the Detroit exhibit.

"At its best, the collection dismantles stereotypes, dismantles racism. It's suggesting people might take a good look at Native American history. It may bring reconciliation if it brings people closer to making amends."

Unorganized American Indian protesters who picketed the opening of the exhibition troubled Poulin.

"There's some controversy over the exhibit. Some of the native people feel it shouldn't be displayed," said the Roman Catholic

Church deacon, who counsels native people with varying types of health and social problems through American Indian Health and Family Services of Southeastern Michigan in South-West Detroit.

"It's my feeling the Detroit exhibit opened the door for many things to come. It's the first time key players displaying the exhibit met with spiritual leaders. That has never been done before, confiding in spiritual leaders. I do feel, however, the exhibition

should be balanced with modern day artwork. The people who walked here are still here."

Admission to "Art of the American Indian Frontier: The Chandler-Pohrt Collection" is \$4, adults; \$1, children/students; members free. Free on Wednesday with museum admission. Hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday-Friday, and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday-Sunday. For information, call the DIA (313) 833-7800.

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