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The Booth Sitters of Santa Fe's Indian Market: Making and Maintaining Authenticity

BRUCE BERNSTEIN

INTRODUCTION

Each August, tens of thousands of people make their annual pilgrimage to Santa Fe's Indian Market (fig. 1), a two-day event held on the city's historic downtown plaza and surrounding streets.¹ The eighty-six-year-old market attracts buyers and artists for unarguably the most important Indian art event of the calendar year. Artists spend months preparing, often producing or saving their best pieces to enter in the judging and to sell. Buyers plan their year around the market, making hotel reservations a year or more in advance, while others have second homes that are used sparingly except during the Santa Fe summer. The market transforms New Mexico's state capitol.² The plaza area is closed to all traffic, and the streets are lined with 635 artist booths, food stands, information tables, tee shirt and book sales tents, and portable outhouses. The Native art world—artists, curators, and collectors—also descends on Santa Fe not as entrants but to be there for the multitude of meetings, conferences, and gallery and museum openings. Just outside the traffic barriers and banners that denote the official space of the Indian Market are hundreds of vendors selling their own Indian art in organized shows or simply by placing their wares on a blanket or low wall. Other vendors sell every type of ethnic clothing and bauble as part of Santa Fe and Native chic.

In recent years, a new participant has entered the Indian Market: the booth sitter. These booth sitters are the art buyers who form the lines at some booths twenty-four or more hours before the artist arrives on Saturday

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FIGURE 1. *Indian Market 2006. Photo by BonanoPhoto.com and courtesy of SWAIA.*

morning to ensure that they will be first in line or among the first to buy an artist's work. There are relatively few artists at the Indian Market whose work is so desirable and/or production is so low that it is necessary to arrive at their booths long before the Saturday morning opening of the market in order to acquire their work at the Indian Market. Booth sitters occupy these booths because these few artists are considered to be among the best that show at the Indian Market and, not inconsequently, are those who often win significant awards. There is widespread acceptance and acknowledgment by artists and other marketgoers of the role booth sitters play in helping to discern the market's best artists and distinguishing the booth sitters' own refined taste and abilities, fortitude, and dedication as a collector of Native art. People recognize the booth sitters' persistence

and correctly assume that their art collections are enviable and that they possess the funds to purchase the best Native art. However, in recent years, art dealers have increasingly encroached on what had been solely a collectors' purview and hired surrogates to hold their place in often not just one but many booths in order to ensure their purchase of prizewinning and other top art. Collectors have loudly protested against these surrogates and also those hired by collectors who desire an artist's work but are unwilling to sit in a booth overnight.

Above all else booth sitting privileges the artist-patron relationship, ensuring the authenticity of the art and the experience of buying the art. A winning piece purchased from the artist after waiting all night engenders more value and importance for the collector than those purchased during the market's regular hours. Arriving the day before and sitting in a booth demonstrates a knowledge and appreciation of Indian art beyond that of other buyers. Moreover, an artwork purchased from a dealer or gallery does not have the same meaning for the collector. The act of sitting and waiting and then purchasing directly from the artist generates increased authenticity in the piece for the collector and allows one collector to better another in a competitive art market.

There is more at stake here than a collector taking home a prizewinning piece. Certainly, booth sitting is about acquiring art; however, these people

also play a role in the designation of authenticity, a critical commodity at Santa Fe's Indian Market. The purpose of the first Indian fairs and markets was to support Native arts as an ethnically and ideologically bounded category of art. Today, the Indian Market continues to promote authentic art made by Indian people; for example, entrants must demonstrate that they are members of federally recognized tribes. *Authenticity* is a deeply meaningful word. At the market, it denotes a continuous use of time-honored—traditional—materials, techniques, and forms in the production of art by Indian people; buying directly from the artist ensures authenticity of the art and artist. The longevity and art forms are glossed by the interchangeable use of the words *traditional* and *authentic*. Booth sitting is a selective act. Only the widely acknowledged best artists have lines form at their booths. Booth sitters construct authenticity by forming lines and waiting all night for the better market artists. This certainly creates excitement, but it also serves as a symbolic and vocal envoy for authentic Indian art and artists.

On the Friday before the market, the plaza is bustling with activity as the artist's booths are erected along ten city blocks. The town is filled to capacity. The market's aura permeates Santa Fe and the Southwest during the weeks leading up to the two-day weekend event. People use the market to tell time: "Let's get together after the market," or "I won't be available before the market." On the Friday before the market opens there is a palpable crescendo of activity as judging concludes for best of show and the clanging of tent poles resonates throughout the downtown area.³

Finally, at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday morning the market opens, and there is a flurry of people and artwork on the plaza. Within the hour the top twenty-five to thirty artists sell out. Individual pieces sell from several thousand to tens of thousands of dollars. Saturday morning buying continues apace, and by noontime the biggest spenders—and most influential art patrons—have removed themselves from the market. The market continues through Sunday afternoon at a noticeably less frenzied pace.

INDIAN MARKET AND THE SEARCH FOR THE AUTHENTIC

When people think of the Indian Market they associate it with authentically handmade Indian art. Even those who make or collect contemporary art denote this work as nontraditional or creating new boundaries. The market is juried to ensure authenticity, judges provide prize ribbons and cash awards to signify authenticity, and artists and buyers profess authenticity in the art and the event. Buyers covet tradition and come to the market to buy directly from the artist, often quizzing them about whether or not traditional techniques and materials were used and, like an ethnographer, discussing an artist's lineage and relations. All of this is to ascertain the level of tradition an artist's work represents. The artists provide their own critiques and that of others but none as loud as those from their fellow artists who might, for example, suggest a pottery piece was fired in an electric kiln, therefore nontraditionally. Talk of tradition swirls around Indian Market and provides authentication for some, but for others it fuels rumors about who might be deceiving their customers by not using

traditional techniques and criticizes buyers who are fooled because they are not knowledgeable enough. Indian Market is also romanticized and ageless, with most people believing it has not changed since its inception. “Our family has been participating in the market for generations,” is often heard; non-Indians might suggest that they come to Indian Market “because they can buy from the artists and know that the piece is made traditionally by hand.”

The market welcomes everyone; for two days ethnic and economic distinctions dissipate, as everyone—artist, customer, appreciator, family, and friend—becomes an Indian Market participant. It is a unique event, but it is similar to other large gatherings where the commonality of purpose focuses people to transform themselves through dress, attitude, and action to be part of the crowd. However, this crowd is more akin to a culture, reconstituted each year, with complex rules dictating behavior.⁴

The number of booths and the associated application procedures limits the number of participating artists. There is a jurying system to ensure that the standards for art are met before an artist’s work can be included in the Indian Market. The buyers are as important as the artists. Although the art and artists are the foundation or heart of Indian Market, non-Indians far outnumber them. Importantly, these marketgoers support the artists and tribal cultures through attendance, educate themselves about the art and culture, befriend the artists and their families, and become vocal proponents and advocates for Indian cultures. The alliance of non-Indian and Indian at the Indian Market is very much “conscious culture” or the utilization of cultural heritage as a self-conscious traditional practice.⁵ This culture is performed in old and new contexts, both in private and public, and is inserted as protection against further Native cultural loss and change. It responds to demands that originate inside and outside of indigenous communities.

Moreover, there would be no Indian Market without the customers and the estimated \$18 million spent to purchase art; in addition to another \$100 million put into the Santa Fe and New Mexico economies for other services (for example, hotels and restaurants). Prices vary widely from a few dollars for corn necklaces, several hundred for pedestrian but nonetheless widely collected and admired silver jewelry and pottery, to tens of thousands of dollars for the singular pieces made by the market’s best artists. Finally, the fame and size of Indian Market has created a class of tourists who arrive at the market to witness its activities, rather than participate as buyers. As a result, the art patrons and biggest buyers now find themselves jostling one another as well as the spectators.

There are several ways to ensure that your experience with the market is authentic—ranging from looking at the art, talking to the artists, or having a piece of fry bread. But what about those market devotees who wish to demonstrate or differentiate themselves from others? Individuals who collect are naturally more invested in the evaluation and continuance of the Indian Market as a home for authentic and handmade Indian art. On the Friday night before the market, a wealthy collector bristling with Native-made jewelry told me with considerable relish how he calls artists on the phone and buys directly and would never participate in the crush of an outdoor Indian

Market. But the first person I saw on the plaza at 5:00 a.m. the next morning was this chagrined man who now admitted that buying at the market was as authentic an experience as the jewelry.

Booth sitting is a relatively new way better artists are recognized at Indian Market. All of the most devoted and important buyers begin arriving at about 4:00 a.m. on the opening morning of the market, while others have been waiting for twenty-four hours or more on the city streets or sidewalks for the artist to arrive with his or her work at 7:00 a.m. Consequently, the last decade's escalating and somewhat frenzied booth sitting emerged as a new way to identify the most successful market artists. The buyers sit in these outdoor booths all night in hopes of securing a chance to purchase a prizewinning piece. In response to my questions about why they are planning to spend all night in a well-known potter's booth I am told that "it wouldn't be as rewarding [to buy another way]; and it adds value by waiting all night."

Not inconsequently, the booth sitters are also engaged in the discursive elements of the market, voicing their opinions about the best and most authentic art by camping out in a particular artist's booth; marking the constructed and temporary space that the Indian Market will occupy for two days; and talking to the multitude of people out on the Friday night before the market who are meeting friends and going to gallery openings and restaurants. Because booth sitters are annual marketgoers they have opinions, which they share broadly and freely about every aspect of Indian art, artists, and the Indian Market. As dawn breaks on the market's first day, the mania reaches its peak as up to fifty people crowd an artist's ten-by-five-foot booth, creating enormous excitement and celebrity. The booth sitters and crowd are markers of a successful and good Indian Market artist (fig. 2).



FIGURE 2. *The Fender family booth selling San Ildefonso pottery, 2003.*

Tradition and the Construction of Authenticity

Since its inception, Indian Market has been a means to construct and share the authenticity that is maintained through a system of jurying and evaluating Native art. This panel of experts (artists, curators, and collectors who are Native and non-Native) creates an atmosphere in which authenticity is rarely, if ever, questioned. The standards on which artists are judged are largely traditional Native art classifications, such as pottery or jewelry, that are described as “in the style of,” rather than possessing an objectively or overtly aesthetic criteria. Authentic art represents a long, unbroken chain of Native cultural and art history on which each year’s artistic production is gauged. Traditional categories emphasize a consistent use of materials, designs, and techniques that are tied to a system of cultural values that most artists and buyers can recite. As a result, the artists are understood as carriers and brokers of tradition.⁶

The handmade artwork serves as repose from industrial life; it represents a return to a time of individuality when things were skillfully handmade using a carefully articulated set of values and practices that are a part of culture. There is a certain primitivism that continues to pervade traditional Indian art because it is perceived to have come from a society that is unaffected by the materialized, consumer-oriented world of goods we live in each day.⁷

The Santa Fe Indian Market application signature box asks artists to sign if they have “read and understood and will comply with 2007 Indian Market Standards” and agreed that “this artwork is original and handcrafted by me [the artist].”⁸ In the production of Native arts for the non-Indian market today, we understand and gloss this complex set of rules, values, and interpretations as “tradition.” *Tradition* is a tricky word, filled with intentional and unintentional ambiguities. Although not a topic for further discussion here, tradition is also essential to Native cultures because it works by directly maintaining order and providing insights into philosophical understandings of Native life. The dichotomous chasm that once existed between Indian and non-Indian people about the longing and sentimentality of tradition, nonetheless, is closing as more Native people are caught in the consumer traps of being Indian and making art; what cultural critic Paul Chaat Smith calls “an elixir that Indian people ourselves find irresistible.”⁹

Indian Market is a historically situated art world, namely, the contemporary, Western-centered tradition of Indian arts that began with the birth of modernism and its ascendant contemplation of objects as art removed from cultural contexts. In the words of one Pueblo consultant, “tradition has come to be a recipe, rather than an ongoing, dynamic set of circumstances.” She continues, “These self-assigned tradition bearers don’t even understand our traditions, but make up a past that fits what they do now.” The following essay works to find the relationships between art and the institutions on which art production depends. In the situation described here there are multiple cultures, which are glossed as Indian and non-Indian—an inside and outside distinction.

The experiences of buying directly from artists at Indian Market are best described as Nativistic because the market is a distinctive and bounded

community that is neither Indian nor non-Indian but is a decidedly unique occurrence where all participants are part of a single cultural production and experience.¹⁰ The experience is not unmediated but, as detailed below, is filled with real and imaginary rules that construct Indian art, Indian art collectors, the Indian Market, and so forth. As a result, authenticity is heightened and brokered by the Indian Market, most particularly through the direct purchase from artists. Again, Indian Market rules are clear that artists are to remain in their booths and sell their artwork; further, non-Indians (spouses included) are not to sell an artist's work. MacCannell's distinctions of touristic front and backstage are not as useful here because Indian Market is, if you will, a "transcultural" experience in which everyone is a performer.¹¹ Stretching the performance analogy further (and for clarity), some of the players seek starring roles rather than be a part of the ensemble. Booth sitters are some of the market's self-appointed lead actors because by their actions they overtly express their opinion and, in doing so, create a more convivial event. They become market ambassadors and critics, sitting on the streets in the middle of Indian Market, available to all.

The single stage of Indian Market would be disorienting if it were not for the Santa Fe and Pueblo cultures that provide the contexts for interpreting and understanding the interactions. Coming full circle, it is the authenticity of the two that dissipates and creates one arena and one experience. Simplistically stated, Santa Fe represents an ancient city, steeped in its own age and multiculturalism—the local Puebloan cultures are truly ancient in their Southwest roots, with their villages and long histories as evidence. Unfortunately, the interpretation of Pueblo cultures has most often been left to outsiders who have romantically described that "the Indian is by nature an artist." In addition, although Pueblo societies had survived intact, these sentimentalists have written how Pueblo societies embody an ancient wisdom of tribal man and living within the ideal of submergence of individual ego-identity to communal identity. The city and region of Santa Fe, through its resident and tourist boosterism, has long sought to be a tricultural, Ancient City possessed of great spiritual qualities set within the pristine insights of New Mexico's aboriginal cultural and natural landscapes. As a result, Indian Market has a long romantic oral tradition that pays little attention to the contexts of its primitivistic and touristic roots.¹²

In many ways the story of booth sitters that follows is not unlike other stories we know about voracious museum collecting and American Indian people. It exemplifies the well-established early-twentieth-century practices and assumptions of American ethnographers in the collecting of Indian-made objects and the search for authenticity.¹³ Many market buyers are looking for objects that represent unique cultural forms or racially "pure" styles, while others seek out contemporary objects that are also racially defined because they overtly are intended to defy and confound preconceived notions of Indianness.¹⁴ The most authentic and traditional imbued objects are sought out as part of the personal quest that leads people to reside outdoors for one night. As one booth sitter told me, "I never have slept outside—ever—but for a chance to buy one of her pieces, I will this once."

Roxanne Swentzell's Booth, Friday, 17 August 2001

As I cross the Santa Fe Plaza on my way to the 8:00 a.m. start of Indian Market judging, the booth sitters are already out (fig. 3). They are sitting on chairs and cots near the site where a particular artist's booth will be constructed later in the afternoon. The Southwestern Association for Indian Art (SWAIA), which organizes and runs the Indian Market, has made all of the booth assignments already. Each booth sitter stakes out his or her place hoping to be first in line so that they will have the opportunity to purchase a piece from the artist when he or she arrives Saturday morning. There are already nine people waiting at Roxanne Swentzell's (Santa Clara) booth (fig. 4).¹⁵ David arrived at 3:00 a.m., but he is second because Susan showed up at 1:00 a.m.—a full twenty-nine hours before Roxanne will arrive and set up her booth to make available her splendid figurative pottery.

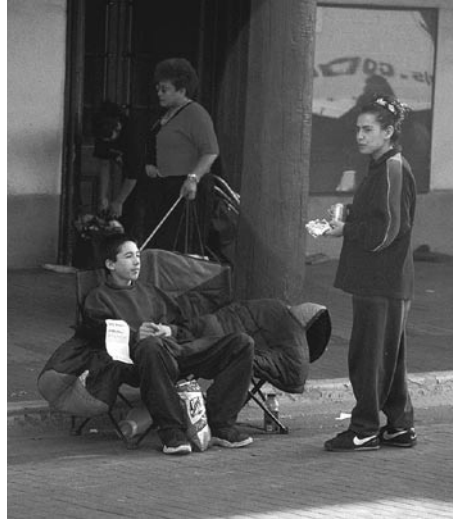


FIGURE 3. *Friday morning, 8:00 a.m., 17 August 2001. A full twenty-four hours before the artists arrive some diligent buyers begin their vigils. This young man is a surrogate booth sitter and is sitting in the street because the booths are not yet set up. The Indian artists who sell under the Palace of the Governors portal are setting up behind him.*



FIGURE 4. *Friday morning, 8:00 a.m., 17 August 2001. At what will be Roxanne Swentzell's booth location, her booth sitters begin their wait.*

If you are intent on waiting, the first thing you do when you arrive is place your name on the list. The list is a rather innocuous sheet of lined five-by-seven-inch paper that each potential buyer signs as they arrive at the booth. You cannot sign and then leave. If you do, your name is crossed out. People bring cots and chairs, and there are sleeping bags, coolers of food, and pizza and restaurant deliveries. Individuals are allowed to leave but only “momentarily,” for example for a restroom break. There are no official or written rules governing booth sitting, only an informal code of honor that has in recent years become increasingly formalized. When I ask about removing a name, everyone recites the same code of ethics.

In Roxanne’s booth the list states that “you must spend the night.” These booth sitters will kick out the surrogates, people paid by collectors to do the waiting for them. If you want Roxanne’s work, you need to wait all night. The rules are simple: you sit yourself; and the order in which you arrive is the order maintained and that will be used on Saturday morning to purchase a piece of Roxanne’s work directly from Roxanne. In jeweler Perry Shorty’s booth, there is an explicit set of rules but only at the instigation and enforcement of one booth sitter (fig. 5). He carries a clipboard as he patrols the booth, hands on his hips. He tells me, “The person who makes the rule is the first person here [at the booth]. . . . You can’t go home and back; you need to be on the list and stay all night.” The next morning, this self-appointed majordomo of Shorty’s booth loudly explains to numbers nine and ten on the waiting list why he crossed out their names: “You didn’t stay all night.” They put their names at twenty-one and twenty-two, and the majordomo tells me, “People who don’t wait aren’t going to buy.”¹⁶

Roxanne knows many of her booth sitters. Some of them already own several of her pieces; a few individuals have been collecting her work for more than ten years. “Why don’t you just call her on the telephone?” I ask one booth sitter. “I just couldn’t do that; she wouldn’t talk to me . . . would she?”¹⁷ Although her production of original clay figures is limited, Roxanne’s work is available all year-round. It is clear that the experience of waiting all night and buying directly from her at Indian Market exponentially amplifies authenticity of the art, of buying at Indian Market, and of Roxanne’s artistry.

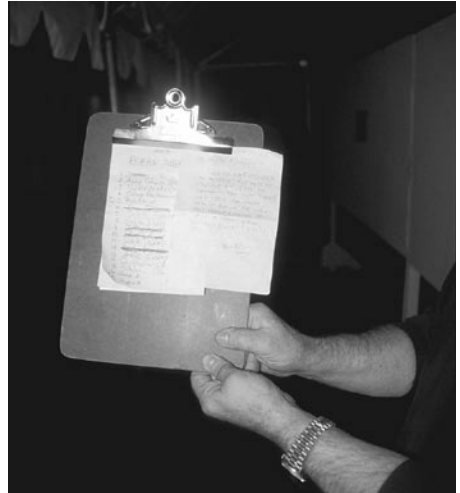


FIGURE 5. *There are no official rules for booth sitting, only ad hoc and informal rules. To avoid misunderstanding, rules are sometimes written down by the booth sitters. The waiting list and rules for Perry Shorty’s booth reads: “Rules 5:15 p.m. 8/22/2003. Signees may register at anytime. But must be present by 9 p.m. to remain on the list. Signees may leave for short periods during the night and early morning to take a short walk, obtains snacks & coffee, etc. [signed].”*

Roxanne appears embarrassed by all of the attention. A few days before the market at Santa Fe's Museum of Indian Arts and Culture I had the opportunity to introduce Roxanne as part of an event at which she provided a wonderful and allegorical autobiographical slide presentation. In order to introduce her, I also showed slides of her booth and the sitters before she arrived and of Roxanne as she set up her booth to illustrate the power of her artistry. She was bemused by the attention of the booth sitters but genuinely embarrassed that her work could generate such frenzy. She also worried for them. In her estimation, "People could better use their time than sleeping all night on the street."

INDIAN MARKET: A BRIEF HISTORY



FIGURE 6. *Lu Ann Tafoya booth, 2003, including her best-of-show shouldered jar. Artists bring a variety of tables and showcases to display their artwork. Tafoya prefers the tradition of showing her work on a blanket as her family has practiced for many generations.*

The market is also the biggest event of the year in the city of Santa Fe and takes over the entire downtown. The SWAIA sponsors the annual event, selects and vets the twelve hundred participating artists, and judges and awards prize money of \$83,000 for nearly three hundred entry categories. Organized and managed by SWAIA, the two-day event attracts an estimated one hundred thousand people and brings more than \$130 million in revenue to the artists, the city, and its businesses. Indian Market is not just the two-day event; it now starts two weeks before with antique Indian art shows and auctions, gallery and museum openings, and two weeks of 100 percent bookings at local hotels and restaurants. Indian Market artists come to Santa Fe from throughout the United States (fig. 6), but the overwhelming proportion is Southwest Indian people. Although there is an emphasis on traditional arts in the jewelry, pottery, diversified arts, and textiles classifications, there are also painting and sculpture entries, incorporating many styles and techniques.¹⁸

Receiving an Indian Market award can permanently signify an artist's ability and standing. Arguably, it can be said that the winning of prizes at Indian Market has become the most important measure of an artist's success. It is not the prize money per se that an artist desires, as it represents but a

fraction of the value of the award-winning piece, but rather it is the fact that winning prizes brings an enhanced reputation. Winning the highest awards virtually assures an artist of long-term financial success because many buyers collect art based on the Indian Market awards (fig. 7).¹⁹

Indian Market organizers use extensive formal and informal sets of rules to select and vet participating artists and provide the judges' guidelines. Until the 1980s these rules were largely informal, but as Indian Market enjoyed exponential growth, a cadre of close friends with fierce loyalties to the artists and principles of Indian Market began recording and refining what are now known as the Indian Market Standards. The standards exist for all of the classifications, and they are used in judging and in evaluating each booth at the market to ensure that only authentically made Indian art is being offered for sale. Indian Market Standards are primarily based on materials and techniques. SWAIA did not make up these conventions but rather sought to clarify the types of criteria that judges and collectors had long used to judge good art from bad art. These principles are part of the Native arts revitalization and improvement projects generated by well-meaning curators, anthropologists, and advocates in the first thirty years of the twentieth century.²⁰

Today's Santa Fe Indian Market has two direct lines of ancestry, both of them rather modest.²¹ First, in 1922, the Museum of New Mexico introduced an indoor Indian fair as much as a means of self-promotion as to encourage tourism in the Santa Fe area. The fair was part of the larger Santa Fe Fiesta, developed as a community celebration in 1912 and then revived following World War I.

Admission was charged at the Indian fair, except for Indian people in their Native dress. All entries were juried, and the displays included historic and contemporary pottery, baskets, textiles, and paintings. There were also demonstrations of Navajo sandpainting, Pueblo cooking, house and fireplace construction techniques, and baby contests. Through the fiesta and the fair, Museum Director Edgar Lee Hewett sought to establish public education in the form of regional historical pageantry and, eventually, a permanent



FIGURE 7. *Sarah Paul Begay, 7:00 a.m., Saturday, 19 August 2006. Sarah won best of show for her autobiographical weaving masterpiece, Navajo Universe. The 10-by-13-foot textile was too big to display in her 5-by-10-foot booth. In its place she displayed her ribbons and a photograph.*

Southwest Chautauqua.²² In particular, he was interested in the promotion of archaeology and Native cultures. The historical pageantry was punctuated with Pueblo dances. The dance performances were fifteen minutes in length for a public audience, necessitating adjustments in the songs and other ceremonial elements. In addition, to illustrate his archaeology, Hewett organized the dance order—also directing Pueblo people to revive and, most likely, invent certain dances.

The Museum of New Mexico's first Indian fair was a conscious attempt to encourage and publicly define good from bad pottery. Good pottery was defined as made with traditional techniques and materials, often with prehistoric/ancestral designs, while bad pottery was mass-produced for the curio market. As a result, pottery was inextricably linked with Southwest tourism, the success of local museums, and the survival of Pueblo life and culture. At these fairs, it was expected that Native people would learn through having a chance "to see the exhibits, to watch the judging, and to . . . experience what the buying public appreciated."²³

The second genesis of the Indian Market occurred in 1936, three years after the end of the Indian fairs.²⁴ The New Mexico Association for Indian Affairs (NMAIA) secretary, Maria Cabot, developed and implemented a summer Saturday series of Pueblo art fairs under the Palace of the Governors portal that forms the north side of Santa Fe Plaza. Her inspiration was Mexican Saturday markets. The NMAIA was an Indian advocacy organization that had successfully fought for Pueblo land and water rights. The organization now sought ways to better the Pueblo condition through education, health care, and economics. The NMAIA was not interested in promoting art for art's sake (although there were certainly members who did) but rather as an economic vehicle to bring much-needed cash into the communities. Through the establishment of Saturday markets, the NMAIA provided a means of earning this cash and entering the broader economy of the region. Importantly, this could all be accomplished without abandoning the Pueblo villages and Puebloan culture.

The NMAIA bussed the potters and their families on Saturday morning to the Santa Fe Plaza from their villages. Each participant was allowed to sell whatever he or she brought; however, the NMAIA placed stickers on the bottoms of the pots judged to be of better quality, awarding prize money to the "best." In a further effort to promote improvement in Native arts, buses would take the week's participants to the Laboratory of Anthropology where they were encouraged to study the ancestral and historic objects in the museum's collections. Santa Feans were mixed about the benefits of Saturday markets and whether they contributed to downtown businesses. Many business owners complained about the "Indians sitting on the ground and blocking their doors." There was only one restroom facility in the entire downtown that Indian people were allowed to use. A few welcomed the influx of cash in their stores, which followed immediately after sales were made and prizes awarded. These Saturday markets continued during the war and eventually were held again at the same time as Santa Fe fiestas. In the 1950s, as the original organizers grew too old to continue to promote and organize it,

Indian Market almost died. A group of local traders and Indian art collectors saved the market by becoming the principal local proponents. They instituted a series of innovative ideas, including individually inviting participants instead of going through each village's governor and council. If you had attended the market in the 1930s, and happened on it again in the early 1960s, the size and artists would be largely identical. But the 1960s and coinciding interest in ethnic and Native arts would soon change everything.²⁵

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, as buyers began coming to the Southwest to meet Indian people firsthand, they discovered an August art market of about one hundred artists, staged under the Palace of the Governors portal and on the adjoining portion of Palace Avenue. Buyers could purchase directly from the artists. There was no filter or middleman, and therefore collectors began flocking to Santa Fe for the more "authentic" experience of buying directly from artists. It was also deemed imminently fairer to purchase directly from an Indian artist rather than a middleman. A buyer could also create a personal relationship with the artist. Over the past few decades the market has grown exponentially in size and stature.

BOOTH SITTING: A HISTORY

The phenomena of booth sitting seems to have had its origins in 1984, resulting from a restless evening and subsequent late-night stroll to the plaza by Indian art collectors Bob and Joanne Balzer. Although the Balzers had wanted to purchase that year's best-of-show pottery jar for their collection, they were not planning to wait all night in Lois Gutierrez de la Cruz's booth. Rather, they had desired, reasonably enough, to arrive early in the morning on the first day of the market or, perhaps, to try and find Lois at the La Fonda Hotel where the judging had taken place and approach her as she exited the hotel after picking up her pot. Unwilling to go back home only to return to the market a short time later, the Balzers simply waited around the prizewinner's booth until she appeared very early that morning.

Lois, although pleased and amused by this "origin story," is rather reluctant to claim her role in it. Lois is a highly regarded and respected Pueblo person and potter and has not participated in Indian Market for more than a decade. Certainly winning the best-of-show award was an important milestone in her career, and she continues to create wonderfully formed Tewa vessels with lyrical narrative stories. Her legacy is secured by her heritage and art instead of by the market. Although they are outstanding and important collectors of contemporary art, the Balzers might be invisible in the throngs of buyers at Indian Market. There are no prizes for collectors and no listing of past buyers; buyers don't have booths on the plaza that thousands of visitors flock to and gawk at (and also ask oftentimes embarrassingly direct questions about Puebloan life and families). The Balzers, however, might find the story more functional because booth sitting can distinguish the sitter and the artist.²⁶

Today, arriving at an artist's booth at 6:00 a.m. Saturday morning with the intention of purchasing the best of show, best of classification, and first-place ribbon winners is not early enough (fig. 8). Judging provides the offi-



FIGURE 8. *Indian Market, 1999. On Friday afternoon, Roxanne's arrival might seem to be long way off. But booth-sitter Jeff persevered and did purchase an original piece.*

cial recognition at Indian Market. There are thirty-six judges, selected for their expertise in Native arts; the judges are Native and non-Native artists, curators, academics, collectors, and dealers. The emergence of booth sitting in recent years is a resounding way for Indian art appreciators and collectors to involve themselves in these discussions and tell people who they think are the best artists. Booth sitters are about evenly divided between those who wish to remain anonymous and those who enjoy the notoriety.

Regardless, spending all night waiting in a booth is a badge of honor, distinction, and Indian Market savvy. Once put this way, all collectors have something to say about their collections and why they are booth sitting. The importance of booth sitting is belied by the fact that some collectors now hire surrogates to spend the arduous night on the Santa Fe Plaza.

Many believe that SWAIA has a set of official rules that governs booth sitting, but there are none. Rather, market officials distance themselves from the practice, and when there has been controversy, as unwritten policy, they try to keep some distance from the complaint. There are few other formal rules; nonetheless, there is an emergent etiquette and behavior everyone respects and follows. Each booth with sitters has a list that chronologically records the order of arrival at the booth. As stated previously, it is expected that the named person will stay in the booth. Surrogates placing their name instead of their patron's name on a list are normally run out of a booth. Some collectors might suggest that they have an infirmity or injury that will not allow them to stay all night on the plaza, but they too are widely criticized and removed from the lists. The only surrogates that seem to be sanctioned within this unwritten set of rules are children of the collector—the younger and cuter the better.

Artists appreciate the booth sitters (fig. 9) and acknowledge them as a sign of success. Most artists respect the booth sitters' self-imposed regulation as they also desire an orderly morning of sales. The order of the list is followed; when there are questions or complaints about an individual's absenteeism, usually the artist will decide quietly and without the input of the booth sitters. The usual resolution is to retain the order of the list. The artist in most cases allows each person to purchase one piece only in deference to the other waiting customers. I am aware of one instance when the artist sold everything to the first name on the list, and the next person on the list verbally lashed the artist—after all, he had waited all night, only to be beat by a booth-sitter surrogate.

Finally, these are not insignificant sales; some of these successful artists can make six-figure amounts in the first hour of the market. Generally, the artists, although excited about the market, are exhausted by the months of hard work, getting up early that morning, and hauling and setting up their art and showcase

apparatus. Seeing a teeming group of potential buyers is a welcome sight but not one that permits a leisurely pace. In more than one case, booth sitters are repeat customers, and these include some with earned bad reputations. To the artists' credit, they never turn anyone away and equitably work with each customer.

Clearly, the rules are based on peoples' judgment of fairness and common sense. The negative attitude toward the use of booth-sitting surrogates can be largely attributed to the notion that the collector who hires a stand-in (instead of waiting in the booth him- or herself) lacks the passion for the art required of those who wait themselves. Time and again it is said that "a person who uses the surrogate doesn't deserve a prized work of art." Indian Market is about passion for Indian art, the Southwest, and Indian Market. The person who does not wait him- or herself is not benefiting from a full and authentic Indian art experience (fig. 10a and b).

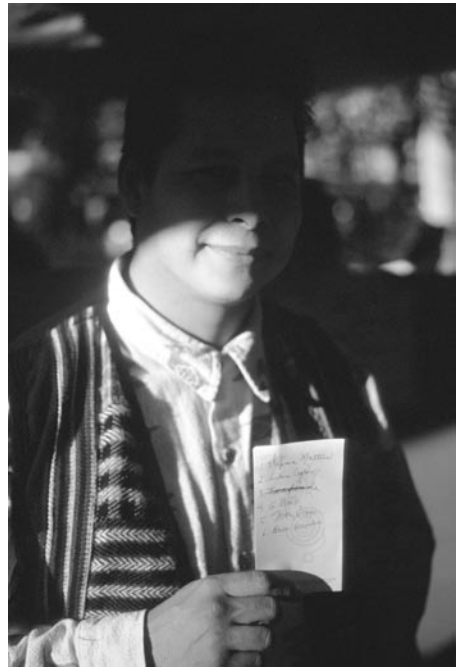


FIGURE 9. *Diego Romero, Indian Market, 2003. Artists regard booth sitters as a positive sign of accomplishment and acclaim for their work. Diego holds the list of the booth sitters who, in less than two hours, purchased all of the work he had spent months making for Indian Market.*



FIGURE 10. *(a) Jamie Okuma at the 2006 awards announcement and preview with her prize-winning piece; (b) meanwhile, booth-sitter Randy waits on the street to be first in line at her booth the next morning. Randy was successful.*



FIGURE 11. *The Saturday morning crowds at jeweler Cippy Crazy Horse's booth are deep year after year and do not subside until almost noon. Indian Market, 1991.*

At one well-known Cochiti jeweler's booth, it takes three people more than three hours to work through the line of waiting customers (fig. 11). Saturday morning crowds gather at probably 10 to 15 percent of the 635 Indian Market booths. Although these booths are filled with customers throughout Saturday morning, other artists might be left to sit and watch from their own quiet booth. Crowds serve to distinguish the more successful and important artists of Indian Market. Even without having spent the night, potential customers rush from booth to booth to make sure that they have the opportunity to purchase new and/or unique work. Indian Market spectators tend to gravitate to the booths in which there are booth sitters. Each booth can be compared to an individual ball field with the game already in progress, the roving crowd absorbing what it can. The market used to open at 8:00 a.m., but in the mid-1990s the opening time was moved to 7:00 a.m. in recognition of the exponentially increasing early-Saturday-morning activities of buyers.

In addition, SWAIA has helped propagate booth sitters through events like the Friday evening preview show, at which marketgoers can see all the prizewinners before they are returned to artists on Saturday morning beginning at 5:00 a.m. It is the only time all the prizewinners are in the same place. In recent years, increasing numbers of the artists are also in attendance. The first preview was held in 1985, helping to create an excitement about the awards. Some buyers come to preview to find the as-yet-undiscovered or next great artist. Although others use the preview to decide what to buy, some might use it to learn which artists have won awards; multitudes of people

annotate their copy of the artist list and booth locator. These are highly detailed notes that include the order in which the buyer will visit booths. As the only official overture to Indian Market weekend, preview creates an indomitable excitement about the art and artists of Indian Market and sends reverberating crescendos of anticipation around Santa Fe and the Indian Art world. On Saturday morning the streets are literally jammed with people, five to ten deep at most booths; the best artists' booths effectively unreachable through the seas of people. By about 10:00 a.m., the initial buying frenzy has subsided.

Roxanne's Again, Early Saturday, 18 August 2001

When I arrive on the plaza at 5:00 a.m., I go directly to Roxanne Swentzell's booth to check on the booth sitters and find out how their night went (fig. 12). They tell me about a local merchant near Roxanne's booth who called the city police to complain that the booth sitters' cots were blocking the sidewalk. All of this reminds me of the stories of the cold reception that Indian people received downtown during Indian Market through the 1950s. Today, there is still a lively discussion about the value of the Indian Market to the city. Other potential buyers arrive in the grey early morning dawn and dutifully place their name on the list.



FIGURE 12. *Roxanne Swentzell's booth, midnight, 17 August 2001.*

I return to Roxanne's booth at 6:00 a.m. after a quick walk around the plaza to see the progress of other booths. Roxanne has arrived and completely set up her booth. Each piece is carefully placed on a pedestal, with a card stating the piece's title and price. Given the waiting crowd of buyers, it would seem unnecessary that she needs to build a display of her art; or is it important? There is clearly more to this, but, pragmatically speaking, Roxanne could just take them out of a box and put them on the ground and sell them in the time it has taken her to set up her booth. Perhaps she does not want to shortchange her customers by not setting up a full display, or perhaps the pieces are not completed and ready to be sold until they are displayed. Her attention to displaying her work properly contributes to the fairness and camaraderie that governs booth sitting. The booth sitters have a good intelligence network; they have known for at least twenty-four hours that Roxanne would be bringing only six original pieces for sale, along with limited-edition bronze sculptures. There is three times the number of names on the list as there are original pieces. At Roxanne's booth, the sitters all appear to be acquaintances,

and, in a few cases, friends, bonded by their twenty-four hours of sitting together as much as through their shared admiration of Roxanne's art.

I also note that Roxanne, after setting up her booth, has left to park her car, which gives all of the booth sitters and other admirers the opportunity to look over the pieces carefully. Some of the booth sitters use flashlights to examine the pieces in the early morning dusk. Importantly, the trust between Roxanne and her patrons allows her to leave her booth. It is clear that Roxanne's booth sitters keep watch over her pieces for her while she is gone. The first year I started making inquiries of Roxanne's booth sitters during this brief interlude of time, I was pretty much "policed" away by some of the sitters. As I stand there watching, I hear someone come up to the booth and say, "look, there's a big crowd, there must be someone important over there."

With Roxanne parking her car, the sitters talk to me about who will choose which piece. They quickly huddle together, gesturing and indicating who will select which piece, taking care of any negotiations among themselves now, rather than when Roxanne returns. Once Roxanne returns, this respectful interaction is pretty much repeated throughout the early Saturday-morning frenzy, with each buyer now allowed to have their time with Roxanne and purchase one piece, while the next buyer waits quietly and patiently outside of the booth. The crowd is loud and expresses its delight at each selection. After waiting all night, if the piece the booth sitter desires is gone, he or she might just walk away rather than take second best.

The Entrepreneur, Friday, 17 August 2001

Best-of-show winner Lonnie Vigil's (Nambe) booth is populated by a crew of surrogate booth sitters all working for a local entrepreneur who hires other, primarily local, Hispanics (many of them close relatives). The Entrepreneur is delivering dinners and checking on his charges. This year, as he has for the past several years, he is working for one New York City-based collector/dealer. When I arrive at Lonnie's booth, an Indian Market neophyte is talking to the Entrepreneur, and seems to be inquiring as to how she can contact him to sit in booths for him the next year. Listening to their conversation, I am struck by its illicit undertones (fig. 13).²⁷

I had befriended the Entrepreneur the year before, and he was forthcoming about his work again. In addition, I had been talking with his sitters all day and evening, asking them questions and taking their picture, all the time telling them of my interest and that I knew their boss. Being surrogates could, after all, be the only plausible explanation for local teenagers sitting in one place on the sidewalk all of Friday waiting for the booths to go up; and then, on completion of the construction of the booths, moving their chairs into the booths. Once in the booths, the waiting lists that had been taped to their chairs—all apparently written in the same hand and on the same type of paper—are posted in the booth.

The Entrepreneur ensures that his workers are sitting in the proper booth, which is a little tricky on Friday morning because nothing is yet marked or numbered. The sitters are well trained. In response to my incessant questions

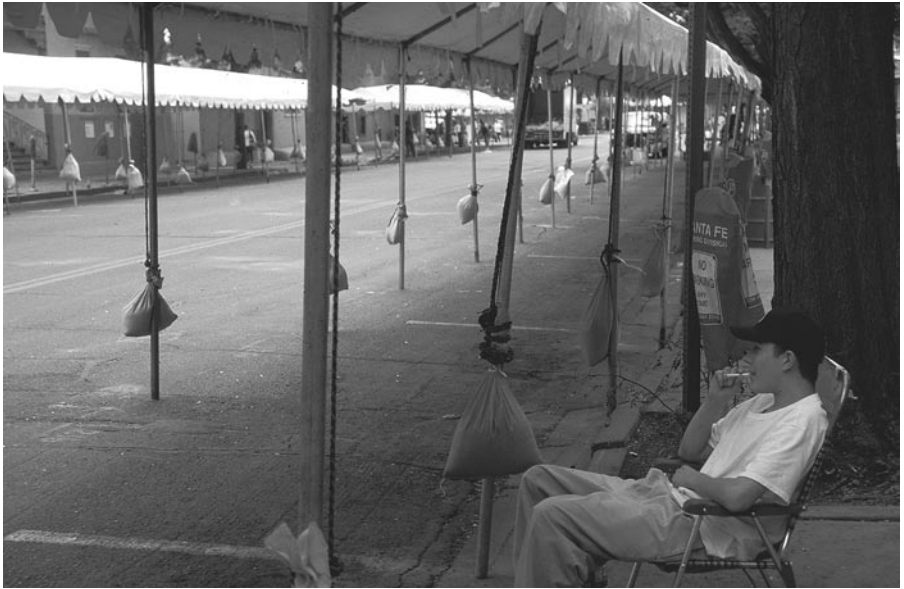


FIGURE 13. *A surrogate booth sitter on the Friday afternoon before Indian Market, 2003.*

they all reply, “I’m just sitting here.” Later, once the Entrepreneur tells them it is okay to talk with me, I meet his mother, brothers, cousins, and their friends. I also learn they each make about \$100 for sitting, plus a steak dinner brought to them by the Entrepreneur. The Entrepreneur will receive about 10 percent of the value of the best-of-show piece for his setting up and monitoring the booth sitters. In addition, he will be trusted with delivery of some checks to artists by his patron. This evening, the Entrepreneur tells me about the electric excitement on the plaza and the wonderful prayer that best-of-show winner Lonnie Vigil said when he came by his booth earlier in the evening. There seems to be more at stake for the Entrepreneur than just money.

The Patron, Saturday, 18 August 2001

Over the past few years, the Patron has hired the Entrepreneur to hold his place in several booths. I don’t know how the two men met, nor have they ever been forthcoming with that information. The Patron is originally from the Connecticut area and presently lives in New York City. He told me that he collects Indian art and owns and operates an Indian art gallery near Times Square. Although I frequent Indian art gallery openings, museums, and work in an Eastern museum, I have never seen the Patron at any other event than Indian Market (fig. 14).

This year, the Entrepreneur’s sitters are in twenty-two booths, including Lonnie Vigil, Harrison Begay, Rodina Huma, Nancy Youngblood, Steve Lucas, Yvonne Lucas, Autumn Borts, and Luanne Tafoya—all immensely talented potters and artists. By pursuing only prizewinning pieces, the Patron seems

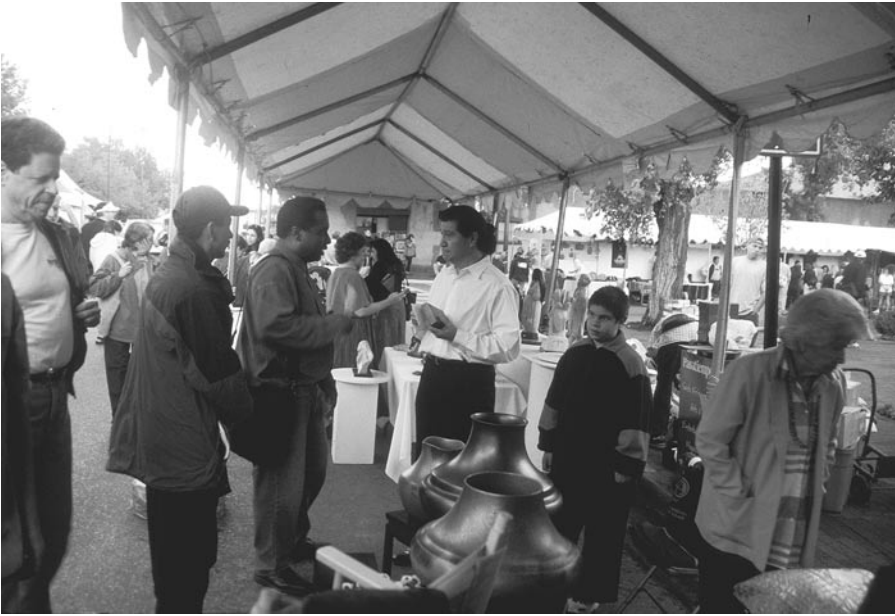


FIGURE 14. *The Entrepreneur and the Patron close a purchase with Lonnie Vigil in 2002.*

to rely as much on SWAIA judges as his own aesthetic judgment and personal appreciation as to which pots to buy. On the Friday morning before Saturday's opening of Indian Market, the Patron situates his surrogate booth sitters through the Entrepreneur. The best potters win awards year after year, so he has already targeted these booths. Following judging and Friday evening's public Indian Market preview when all of the prizewinners (including best of show) become publicly known, the Patron rearranges his network of surrogates communicating his wishes to the Entrepreneur using a cell phone. The Entrepreneur is sensitive to his Patron's needs and has stationed his most reliable person in best-of-show winner Lonnie Vigil's booth. Other collectors and sitters carefully explain to me that it takes the most passionate art lover to sit all night for the chance to purchase a prizewinner the next morning. Like religious zealots they describe the exhilarating out-of-body experience of spending the night on the Santa Fe Plaza and having an opportunity to buy an artist's work. It is in the liminal night before the opening of the market a *communitas* forms.

It can be said that art acquired through booth sitting has added significance. Booth sitters and other Indian marketgoers tell me that the people who hire the surrogates are "rich" and are not really interested in the art except as an investment—the implied meaning of this is that the people who hire the surrogates do not truly appreciate Indian art or cultures. The booth sitters, as well as other Indian art collectors and Indian Market aficionados, all suggest that the Patron and his surrogate booth sitters break all the rules.

Early Saturday Morning, 17 August 2001

Early Saturday morning I spot the Patron—the first time I have seen him this year, although his presence on the plaza has been felt over the past day and a half. Everyone refers to him as the New York City dealer. The Patron has achieved some notoriety. I know most people have never seen him in person; what they say and know of him is from gossip. He remembers me from previous years and stops to talk about his appreciation of pottery and this year's market. He is much different than anyone would suspect given all the chatter about him and his controversial tactic of using surrogates.

He tells me about the attitudes he experiences, toward himself and his sitters. He is subject to the hostility of other dealers and collectors, as well as the general early morning crowd because of his use of what is perceived to be an "illegal" or unorthodox strategy to get what he wants—if you will, a breaking of the unwritten Indian Market booth-sitting rules. Many individuals quote these rules as if they've been codified. People are also offended by the sheer numbers of surrogates he hires, laying claim to what they view as a disproportionate number of prizewinners. In addition, there might be an insidious side to the protests about the Entrepreneur and his Patron given that the Patron is of mixed Native American and African American heritage, and the Entrepreneur is a New Mexican Hispanic man. Some of the artists mention this to me as well. The Entrepreneur told me that as he waited in Nancy Youngblood's booth the year before, he endured the continuous harping of the next-in-line booth sitter who emphatically insisted that this young Hispanic man couldn't possibly have the funds to buy a Youngblood melon jar. The Entrepreneur told me it gave him great pleasure to be able to write the large check to purchase three of Youngblood's pottery jewels.

WOULDN'T IT BE EASIER TO GO TO A GALLERY?

There are easier ways to buy art than waiting all night on the street. There are many galleries that sell Native art, and most every artist has a business card that provides a contact address, phone number, and e-mail address. Maybe the booth-sitting buyers are too shy to call the artist, perhaps fearing the artist will refuse to take an order for a piece outside of the market. They might consider the market the only opportunity to buy directly from an artist, without the presence of a mediating middle person. Some booth sitters suggest that galleries favor certain collectors. Although gallery and Indian Market prices are comparable, one booth sitter claimed that once an artist's work is sold through a gallery, the artist is cowed by the higher prices, their work then tainted as they become formulaic, attracting uninformed buyers (that is, buying for the investment of Indian art rather than because it is art and the contingent appreciation of Native culture). Importantly, market purchases create an intimacy that is missing in gallery sales. Moreover, buying at the market requires some work including walking, finding the booth, getting to the head of the line, and negotiating with the artist. While booth sitting, these tasks are amplified by the added arduous nature of sleeping outdoors and

waiting all night for the artist. In these ways, booth sitting creates an otherwise unobtainable intimacy, imbuing the purchase with an immanent aura.²⁸ One could also say that sleeping out all night is an Indian Market initiation—it is a pronouncement of seriousness and true connoisseurship. Only the “real” Indian art lover will do so and, further, can survive the ordeal. Thus the booth sitters speak disparagingly about the “cheats,” the surrogates and those that pay them to do their work. These individuals are described as “taking away the spirit of Indian Market.” Surrogates represent the dispassionate (that is, art as an investment); the booth sitter stands for authenticity.

Ultimately, the decision as to whether or not the surrogates and their backers survive is in the artists’ hands. There is nothing in the Indian Market rules that addresses how an artist conducts business. Artists can refuse or accept the money and entrée of these individuals. It is the artist who arrives at her or his booth and decides whether or not to honor the list of people or even the order in which they claim to have arrived. The artists generally follow the same courtesies and common sense as the booth sitters. There is yet another phenomenon at work: As booth sitters entwine themselves with the selling of Indian art, the artists continue to lose control of the subject matter and meanings of their art as their personal aesthetic and worldview are deemphasized in favor of talk of sales. Pottery, as an example, was once owned, controlled, and interpreted only by the Pueblos. But that privacy was forever lost with the advent of tourism and the Pueblo art pottery. One can surmise that just as the first Indian fairs and markets surely increased the commercial possibilities of tourism and sales, booth sitting privileges the talk and excitement of the sale over the artwork.

Booth sitting is now an institutionalized part of Indian Market. The successful all-night waiting formula shows up at other Indian art venues. At Blue Rain Gallery in Taos, Leroy Garcia and his wife, Santa Clara potter Tammy Garcia, successfully re-created all of the frenzy that used to surround Tammy and her booth at Indian Market where she no longer participates.²⁹ The aura of Tammy’s Indian Market blue ribbons still envelops her. At their annual gallery opening on the Wednesday before Indian Market in 2000, eleven people waited all night for the opportunity to purchase one of Tammy’s exquisitely formed, polished, and finished vessels. The first people in line—well-known, respected, and knowledgeable Indian art collectors—are more than seventy years of age, so Leroy allowed them to use surrogates. The second person in line complained bitterly because he believed the use of surrogates to be unfair. Blue Rain has since opened a Santa Fe gallery, where the two weeks before Indian Market are filled with back-to-back openings, leading up to Tammy’s show on the Friday morning before the market. A few years ago Leroy instituted a drawing of names for a chance to buy one of the pots. People bring their families, putting even their ten-year-old grandchild’s name in the drawing in order to win the chance of spending more than \$20,000 for one of Tammy Garcia’s exquisite masterpieces.

Back on Santa Fe Plaza, there is resentment expressed by some booth sitters and Indian marketgoers of the perceived overcommercialization of Blue Rain Gallery and what they describe as its intrusion on Indian Market.

Jealousies run deep. Perhaps Leroy and Blue Rain Gallery are actually helping to build the crescendo over those few days, with the grand finale being the opening of the market. The naysayers might just be those who were unable to purchase a piece at the gallery. Regardless, none of this would be possible if Tammy was not a talented potter and Leroy an astute businessman.

Finally, Sunday, 19 August 2001

Sunday morning is more relaxed for both artists and patrons. The madness of Saturday morning is put away for the year, the big-ticket items all sold. Artists are attempting to make their last retail sales of the year; customers are trying to decide on purchases. The best twenty-five or so artists have been sold out for more than twenty-four hours and yesterday morning gave up their booths to artists on waiting lists hoping for their chance. There are no ribbon-winning pieces unsold. The best artists, the ones who bring the patrons and big money to Indian Market, are wandering around the market visiting friends and maybe making a purchase or trade.

Consistent prizewinners at Indian Market have at least one booth sitter waiting for them when they arrive at their booth. The more success—such as being a best-of-show winner or being a top prizewinner the previous year—ensures that there will be many booth sitters, marking that booth, and therefore the art, as highly desirable. The booth sitters provide clues as to where neophyte market attendees might find good art, and also where they can learn something about Indian art. People who sit all night are the stuff of market legends, talked about in hushed tones, never openly known by name, and, once they have their piece, never heard from again. It is as much a fraternity of collectors as it is a devout religious order of Indian marketgoers. It is Sunday now, and the booths and streets all fill more slowly; there is time to visit with friends.

2002 Coda

The following year an altercation on Friday night effectively ended the Patron's participation in Indian Market and people's taste for booth sitting. The Entrepreneur placed one of his people (actually his mother) at a well-regarded potter's booth. Mother and son were both in the booth at about 11:00 p.m. when the potter, walking around the plaza—and no doubt soaking in the excitement of the market—passed by her booth. She thanked the two people in her booth for their interest in her work and thought it was "great that you [the Entrepreneur] are sitting in my booth." A short time later the potter returned and told the Entrepreneur that "you work for that New York dealer; I won't sell to you or him." This potter had apparently sold to the Patron previously, who was slow to pay.

To guard against the Patron, the potter called her cousin, who quickly arrived, to sit in the booth. As it turns out his night on the folding chaise lounge was spent holding a place in line for one of the potter's principal collectors. Apparently, as the potter was standing at her booth, this customer

who was also walking around the plaza happened to walk by the booth. When the customer saw that someone, or, perhaps who, was sitting in the booth, it appeared that she pulled the potter aside to speak to her privately and suggested that she remove the Entrepreneur. The potter made a phone call to her mother and then to an important Indian Market supporter (but not a SWAIA official). The potter wanted to check whether or not the market's rules would support her dismissal of a booth sitter. The long-time marketgoer confirmed that booth sitting was only to be done by collectors and not a surrogate. Whether the potter or her customer objected to the surrogate's tactics or just conspired to make sure that pot went to her is unclear.³⁰

On Saturday morning, when I first see the Patron at 5:15 a.m. he is fuming because the potter rewrote her booth's waiting list and edited his name from it; he tells me, "She kicked me out of her booth." At about 6:45 a.m. again I meet up with the Patron and the Entrepreneur, this time just as they are finishing a purchase. The Patron is still highly agitated because of the potter's unwillingness to sell to him. The Patron says that he followed the rules of Indian Market and had done nothing wrong. Later that morning, the Patron confronted the potter and customer. In the ensuing argument, he claims that racial epithets were hurled at him—by all accounts the exchange became quickly heated. This was not the first confrontation the Patron had or would have with other market purchasers, but it was certainly the loudest and most public. His response was to tell me that he "loved the art, but the people were assholes." As we finished our brief conversation, I noticed the second person in line at Rodina Huma's booth approaching the Patron about buying the piece from him that he had just purchased from Rodina.

2005 Coda

The Patron's troubles were only beginning. In a widely reported incident, the Patron found himself in court for illegally selling a potter's personal collection of her family's heirloom pottery. In 1999, the potter loaned the Patron twenty-three pots from her family's collection for an exhibition, "with the understanding they would not be sold . . . the artist, who had had several shows at [the Patron's] gallery wanted New Yorkers to see the collection." The Patron claimed that he purchased the entire collection from the potter for an undisclosed amount of cash. He then sold nine pots for an unspecified amount of money and refused to give the potter the names of the buyers in order that she could retrieve her pottery collection. A jury awarded the potter more than \$1 million in compensatory and punitive damages.³¹

Roxanne no longer shows at the market. Like many other successful artists, she gave up her place in the market to make space for the next generation of artists. She does not need the market for its sales or recognition. Her work continues to be widely acclaimed. I don't see her booth sitters anymore; some do keep in contact with Roxanne, but not one another, and of course they have Roxanne's pottery in their homes. It is important to note that it is the power of Roxanne's work that brought together a Wisconsin restaurateur, a Minnesota doctor, and several retired businessmen and women from other parts of the

country. Roxanne's courage to tell her story, as well as her intelligence, droll wit, and artistic abilities generated the bonds of these diverse people.

Booth sitters were in only two, maybe four booths at the 2005 Indian Market. Whereas just two years before there were twenty-five different booths in which people sat all night. In 2006, I could only find three booths in which people stayed all night. Certainly people still routinely arrived at 3:00 or 4:00 a.m., but now absent is the camping gear or arriving the day before. Booth sitting apparently has run its course and has been rejected by the Indian Market populous as a distraction and debasement of the authenticity of Indian Market. This authenticity, although brokered through the artwork being sold, is truly more of an intangible cultural authenticity. Following 2001, there was a decidedly widespread outcry against using surrogates, who were criticized for tainting the authentic character of Indian Market with a crass commercialism. Not surprisingly, the Patron was singled out as an example of the damage he brought to Indian Market by his use of surrogate booth sitters in such brazen numbers and, obviously, purchase of artwork for financial gain and not his personal collection.

CONCLUSION

The emergence of booth sitting in recent years is a resounding way for Indian art appreciators and collectors to involve themselves in deliberations about Indian art and its quality and authenticity. Booth sitters delineate the booths of artists that create the best work at Indian Market thus heightening the visibility of these artists while also distancing them from the other several hundred Indian Market artists. "Best" is most certainly a value judgment; nonetheless, the presence—and therefore the authority—of booth sitters in distinguishing the best cannot be underestimated. Finally, these booths contain not only the best but also very often the most authentic art because of the emphasis on authenticity in the rules for entries at Indian Market. In turn, these rules are used to judge and give awards signifying one artist's work as better and more authentic than the next.

Authenticity is a vital currency of Indian Market, not only as criteria for the judging of art but also for the participation of buyers. Over the past few decades, discussions continued to describe the meanings of authenticity and whether—among many issues—authenticity is imposed or self-defined. Categories that dictate that something is "made in the style of" or that downgrades for use of electric kilns and commercial products do exist to maintain a baseline of what is today generously called traditional and, therefore, authentic. Finally, the determination of authenticity has wide use outside of Indian Market thus protecting Native artworks from encroachment from unscrupulous mechanical and overseas reproductions that undermine the art and its value.

Authenticity can thus be understood as something that stands as a remedy for commercialization. Certainly, during Indian Market's genesis in the 1920s and 1930s, organizers wanted to remove the influence of Indian arts and crafts shop owners and Indian traders, who they viewed as promoting a crass

commercialization of Indian art. The original Indian fair and market organizers perceived traders as only interested in making money and appealing to the lowest denominator of the marketplace, without any consideration of quality or aesthetics. When the market was moved to the Palace of the Governors portal in 1936, the organizers emphatically removed the middlemen. There were no curators vetting every entry or any of the traders who had sent some of the displays and entries for the first Indian fairs.³² Today's booth sitters continue the tradition of the production and consumption of authenticity being generated through purchasing directly from the artist.

Although booth sitting is for the moment waning in its use, it stands as testimony to the passion and dedication of Indian Market art buyers. The relationship of the artist and buyer resides at the apex of Indian Market's success. Recently I was reminded by an Indian Market faithful that "collectors wait in the booths, and they buy one piece from the artist—that is the tradition of Indian Market."

NOTES

The basis for this article is my continuing fieldwork and research on Santa Fe's Indian Market. Although there are numerous people who have shared their experiences and understandings of the Indian Market with me, I am fully responsible for their use and interpretation here. Where not attributed, quotations are anonymous to protect the confidentiality of friends and acquaintances. I have chosen to use no names rather than use pseudonyms.

1. The history of the Santa Fe Indian Market is detailed in Bruce Bernstein, "The Marketing of Culture: Pottery and Santa Fe's Indian Market," PhD diss., University of New Mexico, 1993; "Indian Fair to Indian Market," *El Palacio* 98 (Summer 1993): 14–20, 47–54; "Potters and Patrons: The Creation of Pueblo Art Pottery," *American Indian Art Magazine* 20 (Winter 1994): 70–80; "Pueblo Potters, Museum Curators, and Santa Fe's Indian Market," *Expedition* 36 (1994): 14–23; and Molly Mullin, *Culture in the Marketplace: Gender, Art and Value in the American Southwest* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001). There is also information at the SWAIA Web site, "Southwestern Association for Indian Art," <http://www.swaia.org> (accessed 27 April 2007).

2. Santa Fe's population is sixty-two thousand, with a full-time resident population of about forty-five thousand (Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce).

3. For further information about judging see Bernstein, "Potters and Patrons" and "Pueblo Potters, Museum Curators."

4. I use the term *culture* here to describe a system of shared knowledge and action. See Clifford Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973). Geertz's seminal work suggests that the concept of culture is an "interworked systems of construable signs . . . culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed; it is a context, something within which they can be intelligibly—that is, thickly, described" (14). See also George Marcus and Michael Fischer, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986) and Roy Wagner, *The Invention of Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

5. Ann Fienup-Riordin, *Hunting Tradition in a Changing World: Yup'ik Lives in Alaska Today* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press), 167, quoted in James Clifford, "Looking Several Ways: Anthropology and Native Heritage in Alaska," *Current Anthropology* 45, no. 1 (2004): 6.

6. There is a growing body of literature about the relations of art market and artist; a few examples are Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher B. Steiner, eds., *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Post Colonial Worlds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Margaret Dubin, *Native America Collected: The Culture of an Art World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); and James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).

7. The preoccupation with the antique, the pure, and the authentic appropriates non-Western objects into Western capitalist systems of values and ignores the values and voices of those it claims to celebrate (Clifford, *Predicament*, 202, 220–21). The concept of primitivism is used negatively to describe the treatment of non-Western artworks as anonymous, timeless, and without reference to context. By the repression of context, meaning, content, and intentions, primitivism treats artists as less than human, less than cultural, as shadows of a culture, their selfhood, their Otherness, wrung out of them (Thomas McEvelley, "Doctor Lawyer Indian Chief: 'Primitivism in 20th Century Art' at the Museum of Modern Art in 1984," *Artforum* 23, no. 3 [1984]: 59; Shelly Errington, *The Death of the Authentic Primitive Art and Other Tales of Progress* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999]).

8. 2007 Santa Fe Indian Market Application (Santa Fe, NM: Southwestern Association for Indian Arts).

9. Paul Chaat Smith, "Luna Remembers," in *Emendatio: James Luna* (Washington, DC: National Museum of the American Indian, 2005), 29.

10. George E. Marcus and Fred R. Myers, "The Traffic in Art and Culture: An Introduction," in *The Traffic in Culture: Refiguring Art and Anthropology*, eds. George Marcus and Fred Myers (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 1–51.

11. Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976).

12. Richard H. Frost, "The Romantic Inflation of Pueblo Culture," *American West* 17 (1980): 58–59. Santa Fe has long called itself the Ancient City and has used the surrounding Puebloan cultures as tourist destinations. See, e.g., Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997); Marta Weigle, "From Disneyland to Disney World: The Santa Fe Railway and the Fred Harvey Company Display of the Southwest," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 45, no. 1 (1989): 114–38.

13. Nancy Parezo, "Cushing as Part of the Team: The Collecting Activities of the Smithsonian Institution," *American Ethnologist* 29, no. 4 (1985): 763–74.

14. Dubin, *Native America*, 17.

15. For information about Swentzell see Gussie Fautleroy, *Roxanne Swentzell: Extraordinary People* (Santa Fe: New Mexico Magazine, 2002); Jonathan Batkin, ed., *Clay People: Pueblo Indian Figurative Traditions* (Santa Fe, NM: Wheelwright Museum, 1999); or her Web site, "Roxanne Swentzell," www.roxanne-swentzell.com (accessed 27 April 2007).

16. It has always been apparent to me that waiting lists are the invention of art buyers and not the artists. Evidence of this happened in 2006 when the people waiting

at one well-known jeweler's booth took matters into their own hands. For many years, this artist had refused to allow his customers to use a written waiting list; people jostled and pushed against one another to get to the front. Wary of the disorganization, the waiters wrote their own list and insisted that the artist, who then complied, use it.

17. This booth sitter did eventually call Roxanne but only after waiting another year. He was not shy around her in 2001 or any other year I visited with him.

18. There are nine classifications of art at Indian Market: jewelry; pottery; paintings, drawings, graphics, and photography; wooden pueblo figurative carvings and sculpture; sculpture; textiles and basketry; diverse art forms and fabric attire; beadwork and quillwork; and youth. Each is further broken down into divisions that, e.g., in jewelry include necklaces, bracelets, and traditional Zuni style. Traditional and nontraditional arts are not judged against one another (except for best of show). E.g., in pottery, there are six traditional and two nontraditional divisions.

19. The 2006 best-of-show winner was Navajo weaver, Sarah Paul Begay's autobiographical textile, *Navajo Universe*. She received \$2,000 for the best-of-show award and another \$1,500 in prize money for winning the best-of-classification and best-of-division awards in the textile and basket classification. Rumor suggests she received about \$200,000 for the 9' 9" × 12' 8" masterpiece. Uncountable is the automatic increase in her future base prices or marketability. For more about the 2006 winner, see "Garlands," http://www.garlandsrugs.com/html/navajouniverse_progress.html; see also <http://www.swaia.org> (both accessed 27 April 2007).

20. Art revivals were viewed as a means for economic growth and health for Native communities. Broadly speaking, there was a desire to return Native arts to its own dignified traditions in order to replace the mass production of the curio market. These 1920s Southwest Indian art revivals would provide the prototype for the Roosevelt administration's Bureau of Indian Affairs in the 1930s to establish the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, charged with enforcing that Indian-made arts and crafts were handmade of traditional materials and techniques and were signed by the artist. See Robert Fay Schraeder, *The Indian Arts and Crafts Board: An Aspect of the New Deal Indian Policy* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1983).

Revivals had many complexities; here is one extended example. Pottery had changed over the centuries as the culture evolved and borrowed and adapted elements of other Native and non-Native cultures. Changes in pottery brought on by the European settlement of New Mexico in 1598, can be seen as the potters modified forms for the storage of new crops and new markets, as well as new design motifs. Pueblo pottery was further changed in the 1800s by the introduction of manufactured wares such as enamelware, metal buckets, and porcelains that were used alongside, or in place of, ceramics. At the same time, a new market for inexpensive pottery souvenirs to sell to tourists offered much-needed cash. Pottery had, since the 1870s, been collected by visitors to the Southwest in hopes of bringing home some of the enchantment of New Mexico's vast landscape, vistas, mythic archaeological sites, and living Pueblos. The demand for these quickly made, ceramic souvenirs further undermined an almost two-thousand-year-old pottery-making tradition. Pottery continued to degenerate in the late nineteenth century as poverty and declining populations further ruptured Pueblo lives. The arrival of the railroad and the influx of settlers accelerated the stealing of Pueblo lands and water rights, further disrupting a centuries-old pattern of survival and life.

Well-intentioned curators and anthropologists sought to reverse the trends of the declining quality of pottery and numbers of Pueblo potters by removing the influences of four hundred years of Euro-American contact from pottery. Through a return to pre-1500 motifs, it was reasoned that Pueblo pottery could regain its aboriginal wholeness and purity. This "authentic" pottery, it was reasoned, would sell better because it was a pure Pueblo product, which would remove the debasing, intrusive, and unattractive elements of what Pueblo pottery had become throughout hundreds of years of contact. At the first Indian Fair, in order to impress this on potential buyers and the potters, organizers interspersed older pottery from the museum's collection with the juried pottery entries. The old pots would offer a standard against which current, but traditional, pottery would be measured. For more about Pueblo pottery revivals see Bruce Bernstein, "Potters and Patrons"; Henrietta Burton, *The Re-Establishment of the Indians in their Pueblo Life through the Revival of their Traditional Crafts* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1936); Margaret D. Jacobs, *Engendered Encounters: Feminism and Pueblo Cultures, 1879–1934* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 149–79; Richard Spivey, *The Legacy of Maria Poveka Martinez* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico, 2003).

21. The first fairs were largely for Pueblo people. Their inclusion fit well within the regional history and pageantry of the fiesta celebrations. Nonetheless, the first fairs also included displays of Navajo textiles, Tohono O'odham baskets, and Lakota beadwork. In addition, any speaking roles in the pageantry for a Native person were given to Cherokee-Creek songstress Tsianina Blackstone. For more about Blackstone see her autobiography, Tsianina Blackstone, *Where Trails Have Led Me* (privately published, 1968) and "Princess Tsianina: Famous American Indian Prima Donna," *El Palacio* 19, nos. 2–3 (1925): 55. For more about Edgar Lee Hewett see Beatrice Chauvenet, *Hewett and Friends: A Biography of Santa Fe's Vibrant Era* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico, 1983) and James Snead, *Ruins and Rivals: The Making of Southwest Archaeology* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001), 125–67. For more about the founding, development, history, and operation of Indian Market see Bernstein, "Marketing of Culture" and "Indian Fair to Indian Market." For more about Santa Fe Fiesta see Joseph Dispenza and Louise Turner, *Will Shuster: A Santa Fe Legend* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico, 1989); Ronald L. Grimes, *Symbol and Conquest: Public Ritual and Drama in Santa Fe, New Mexico* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1976); Dennis Trujillo, *The Commodification of Hispano Culture in New Mexico: Tourism, Mary Austin, and the Spanish Colonial Arts Society*, PhD diss., University of New Mexico, 2003; Wilson, *Myth of Santa Fe*, 201–31.

22. The American Chautauqua movement was founded in 1874 in western New York State on Lake Chautauqua. The programming first focused on training Sunday school teachers. Within a few years, the scope of the Chautauqua movement had broadened to include adult education of all kinds that was designed to bring college-level education to working- and middle-class people. They became known as high-minded activities aimed at intellectual, moral self-improvement and civic involvement. The movement was never able to dissociate itself fully from its religious or mass-appeal origins. The movement died out by the 1930s. Most historians cite the rise of car culture, radio, and movies as the cause. See "Chautauqua: Colorado Chautauqua Association," www.chautauqua.com/aboutus_movement.html; "What Was Chautauqua?" <http://sdrclib.uiowa.edu/traveling-culture/essay.htm> (both accessed

27 April 2007). For more about Santa Fe's Chautauqua see Oliver LaFarge, *Santa Fe: The Autobiography of a Southwestern Town* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press 1959), 287–97; Anonymous, "Cultural Center of the Southwest," *El Palacio* 20, no. 9 (1926): 171–81.

23. Burton, *Re-Establishment*, 61.

24. These markets were almost exclusively for Pueblo people. The first year through the beginning of the war were organized over eight weekends, with two pueblos per Saturday being brought to Santa Fe. This allowed the organizers to bring compatible groups. However, by the fourth weekend things were so successful for the artists and craftspeople many people were finding their own transportation to Santa Fe. Minutes of meeting, 11 June 1936, *New Mexico Association on Indian Affairs*, folder 38 (Santa Fe: New Mexico Records and Archives Center), 1932–40; "Indian Markets Schedule," *ibid.*; Maria Chabot, "Report on the Saturday Indian Markets Held under the Portal of the Old Governors' Palace during the Months of July and August, 1936," *ibid.*

25. Bruce Bernstein, "Contexts for the Growth and Development of the Indian Art World in the 1960s and 1970s," in *Native American Art in the Twentieth Century: Makers, Meanings, Histories*, ed. Jackson Rushing (New York: Routledge, 1999). See also Dubin, *Native America*, 2004; Edwin Wade, "The Ethnic Art Market in the American Southwest 1880–1980," in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, vol. 3 of *History of Anthropology*, ed. George Stocking Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 165–91.

26. Waiting in line all night is a well-known cultural phenomenon usually associated with concerts and the World Series, although the Internet has made physically waiting in line scarce. But people do camp out to be the first to buy electronic devices and to attend movie premiers; we hear and read about them on the Internet, in print media, and on television. Waiting in orderly lines is part of the daily life of many Americans, as well as punctuating our history as illustrated by the bread lines of the Great Depression or the land rush/steal of the Oklahoma Territory. According to MIT professor Richard C. Larsen, Americans spend two to three years of their life in lines, National Public Radio, <http://www.npr.org/templates/rundowns/rundown.php?prgId=11&prgDate=6-Jan-05> (accessed 27 April 2007).

27. Eavesdropping on their conversation allowed me to determine the woman was a newcomer to Indian Market and serious about buying art. She had observed the Patron and Entrepreneur and no doubt recognized the Entrepreneur's subordinate role vis-à-vis the Patron.

28. As Edward Said suggests, it is natural for the mind to resist the assault on it of untreated strangeness, and, as a result, cultures are inclined to impose complete transformation on other cultures (*Orientalism* [New York: Vintage Books/Random House, 1979], 7–17). For how objects are recontextualized and consumed by cultures see James Clifford, "Objects and Selves—An Afterword," in *Objects and Others*, ed. George W. Stocking (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 236–46. Also see Ruth B. Phillips, "Why Not Tourist Art? Significant Silences in Native American Museum Representations," in *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements*, ed. Gyan Prakash (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995), 95–128.

29. Blue Rain Gallery has for the past five years operated a successful Santa Fe gallery, now the site of all Indian Market shows and sales. In the year reported here

the gallery was only located in Taos. I am grateful to Leroy and Tammy Garcia for their discussion of this aspect of their gallery.

30. Many Indian Market consumers walk the market Friday night as a dry run, making sure of booth locations and checking on whether or not anyone is waiting for an artist. There is a bit of cat-and-mouse game to it all; buyers hide their interest to protect their chances of the piece being available for them, as well as what I can only term a capricious claim of patronage over artists.

31. Elizabeth Cook-Romero, "Judge Upholds \$1 Million Award for Lauded Potter," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 18 November 2005, sec. 1.

32. For more about authenticity and Native arts see Phillips and Steiner, *Unpacking Culture* and Helen Carr, *Inventing the American Primitive: Politics, Gender and the Representation of Native American Literary Traditions, 1789–1936* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 197–256.