

T.C. Cannon

Who was T.C. Cannon and what art did he make?

Duration: 45 minutes

Grade Level: Grades 2 – 8

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about T.C. Cannon and contemporary Native American art
- Study what art movements of the 20th century influenced his art
- Learn how to compare and contrast artworks

Outcomes:

- Students will learn about Native American art and how it was affected by outside influences.
- Students will learn about different art movements and how they can affect an artist's artwork.
- Students will learn critical thinking and visual skills by comparing and contrasting artworks.

Associated Activities:

- Art and Coloring Pages, 30 minutes
- Beadwork, 30 minutes

Who was T.C. Cannon?

Tommy Wayne Cannon, better known as T.C. Cannon, was a Native American artist of the 20th century. He is most known for his paintings and prints.

T.C. Cannon was raised in Gracemont, Oklahoma. His family were the only Native Americans in the community. His father was Kiowa Native American, and his mother was Caddo Native American.

In 1964, T. C. Cannon enrolled in the Institute of American Indian Arts of Santa Fe. After graduating from IAIA, he enrolled in the San Francisco Art Institute but left after two months and enlisted in the army, where he was sent to Vietnam as a paratrooper. While in Vietnam, his art was featured in a travelling exhibition. This would be a major breakthrough for his career.



T.C. Cannon (Kiowa/Caddo)

Grandmother Gestating Father and the Washita River Runs Ribbon-Like (1975)

What art was he influenced by?

Growing up in Oklahoma, Cannon was influenced by the ‘flat’ Oklahoma style of painting. The ‘flat’ style of painting was taught in white-administered schools and featured ‘traditional’ Native American art using Western media.

When Cannon went onto the Institute of American Indian Arts of Santa Fe, his art was influenced by Native American art that was not whitewashed. Classes that focused on traditional Native American art helped students learn about their culture uninfluenced by non-Native Americans.

Activity: Learn about beadwork with our Beading activity.

He was also painting during the Pop Art movement. This movement focused on strong colors and usually featured commercial items or famous celebrities. Andy Warhol and his famous Campbell’s soup can artwork is an example of Pop Art. Cannon’s use of colors was likely influenced by this movement. However, his subject matter was strictly Native American.

Activity: T.C. Cannon used bold colors in his artworks. Create your own colorful art with our Art and Coloring Pages activity.

Comparing and Contrasting Art

Think of ways certain artworks look similar and different. T.C. Cannon was influenced by a couple different art movements. Because of this, his work looked like other artworks in color and/or style. See below for questions to ask yourself when your comparing or contrasting art.

Questions to ask yourself when looking at multiple artworks:

1. Do the colors or palette look similar?
2. Does the artists feature the same subject like a Native American man or a landscape with a waterfall?
3. Are there similar patterns?
4. Are the subjects holding something similar?
5. Are they made of similar material?

Think: Use these questions from now on to compare and contrast T.C. Cannon's work with other artwork.



T. C. Cannon (1946–1978, Caddo/Kiowa), *His Hair Flows Like a River*, 1973-77. Acrylic and oil on canvas. Anne Aberbach and Family, Paradise Valley, Arizona. © 2017 Estate of T. C. Cannon. Photo by Thosh Collins.



Jack Hokeah (1901-1969, Kiowa), *War Dance*. Watercolor on paper. Bequest of Marion Koogler McNay © McNay Art, 1950.722



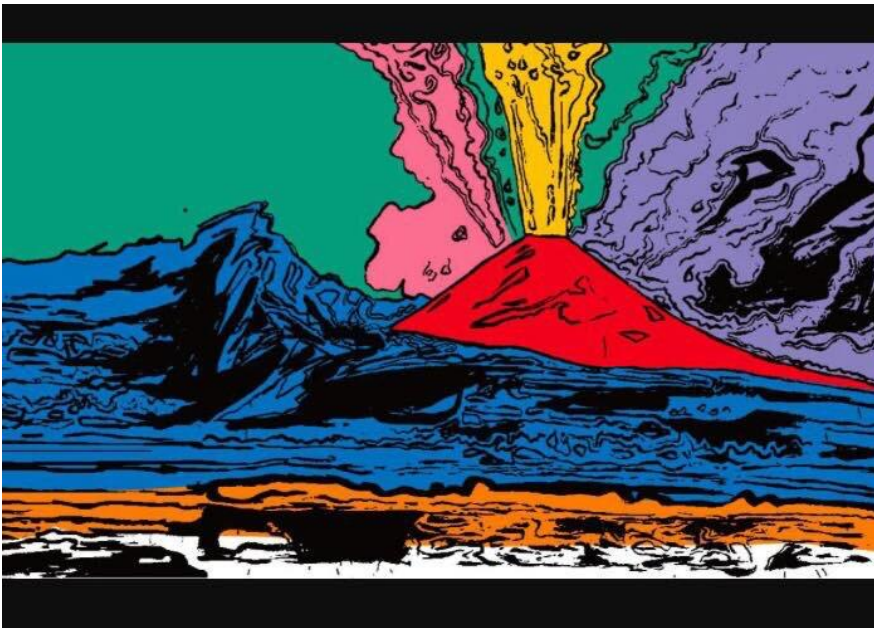
T. C. Cannon (1946–1978, Caddo/Kiowa), *Two Guns Arikara*, 1974–77. Acrylic and oil on canvas. Anne Aberbach and Family, Paradise Valley, Arizona. © 2019 Estate of T. C. Cannon. Photo by Thosh Collins



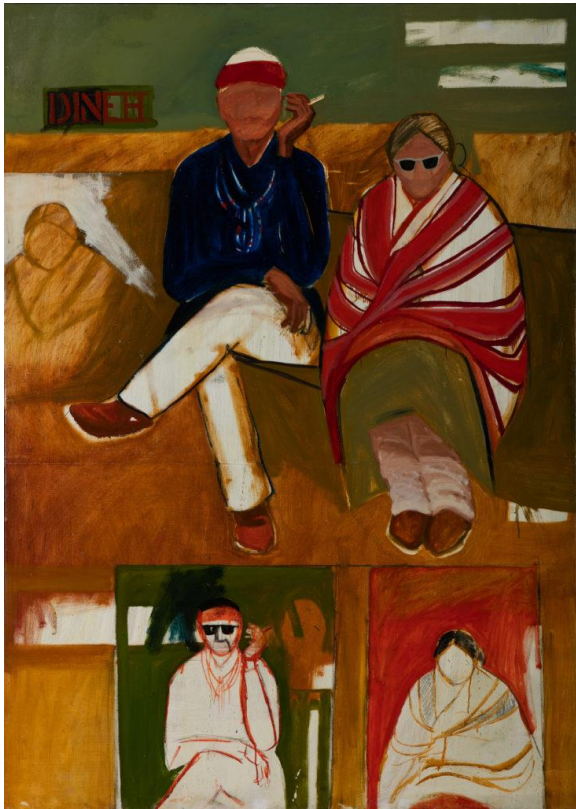
Stephen Mopope (1898-1974, Kiowa), *Sign in the Fall*, 1933. Watercolor on paper. Bequest of Marion Koogler McNay. © McNay Art, 1950.725



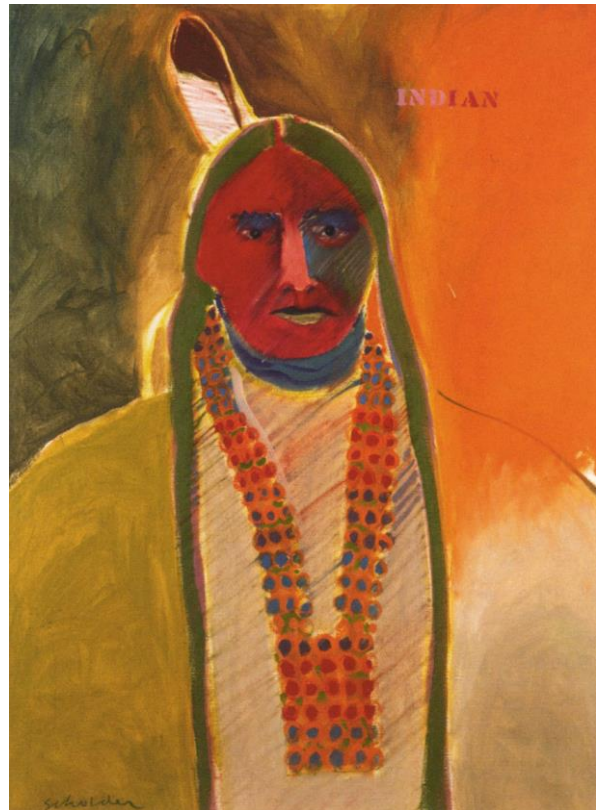
T.C. Cannon (1946–1978, Caddo/Kiowa), *Three Ghost Figures*, 1970. Oil on canvas. Private Collection. © 2019 Estate of T.C. Cannon. Photo by Addison Doty.



Andy Warhol (1928–1987), *Mount Vesuvius*, 1985, © Museo Capodimonte



T.C. Cannon (1946–1978, Caddo/Kiowa), *Mama and Papa Have the Going Home to Shiprock Blues*, 1966. Oil on canvas. © Museum of Contemporary Native Arts Collections Department, Institute of American Indian Arts. Photo by Walter BigBee.



Fritz Scholder, *Indian No. 1*, 1967. Oil paint on canvas. Collection of Anne and Loren Kieve. © Estate of Fritz Scholder.