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a breakthrough and doing paintings that are just unbelievable. This is why the Jamison Show, for instance, and
crazy collectors around for Indian art now who are ready to, you know, snatch up anything, hoping that this
sidewalks in California when I was starting out. Anywhere, to get it out. To get it exposed. And this is so

know, show it, I wouldn't show it anywhere except just the right place. Well, I've shown in art fairs, on the

If you think somebody's going to, if you're going to wait for that collector to drop out of the sky, you might wait
much from anybody with a couple of canvases. Plus, Blanche's George 0' Keefe who one afternoon we were

who works and produces and when I walk into a studio, I'd better see work or I'm not going to take that person

say, how, what should I do? I want to be an artist. First of all, I don't encourage anyone because I think the

ord very much. In fact, it's a real sacrifice. And, it's nice to see if I bend over

important. Anything original, because people are reacting against the computer, and realizing that an original

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transcend as far as the critics, the subject, because my New York dealer had told me, the subject would actually

about, you know. In fact one critic said he thought the Indians were too romantic. Well, it showed he had no

from the beginning I realized that I was really painting the subject more realistic than those before me. And of

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hair. It was pretty abstract, and then I stenciled in, just to make sure people

behind that painting and say, I did this. I did it with my hands and with my mind and I'm proud, of it and then

subject. And let's face it, this is what painters have to do. Cezanne did. it; everyone did it. As an artist, as a

historians. And so it became, I realized, it was a great challenge to set up this problem and to transcend the

night in I967, when I decided In the studio, and here, you see, I had to work at an eight-hour day at the Institute

for a professional to work with students, because students are only that, students. And so, even though I realized

scene really and so I may hope to look at all of this, I think in maybe a more, how should I say, objective way.

And it started; the bureaucracy and the old BIA attitudes. Of course, even from the beginning, the Institute was

interested in who I was, which is part of what an artist or anyone needs to be if one is to make a statement. I

became very interested in the southwest certainly, and in Indian objects because I had started to collect primitive

worst histories of any government agency ever, mainly because no one has ever had any continuous thought.

changes its attitude with every administration and this is part of the whole problem of. The history is one of the

erent people at

continue when The Institute started. The project, like all projects ended when the funds ran out and so

immediately tremendous in-fighting happened, which of course, was mainly detrimental to students. This was to


look at so-called traditional Indian rugs. Well, there's nothing traditionally Indian about them. They happen to

medias were available. I learned Jewelry making. In fact, while I was at the Rockefeller Foundation. But, at

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never been to Tucson, so I accepted and went there and they had their, the Rockefeller Foundation spent a great

deal of money on this project. It lasted for several years in the summer, because we had special banquets in the

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couldn't understand how somebody could think they could own the land. It's like owning the sky. So, the Indian
denomenators were highly refined and many of these groups were ter-

Just look. The Sioux painted their tepees, -the Klinkits carved the utensils, Hopis painted their pottery. But it was

even today they are very reticent to talk about their Indianess or their tribal heri¬tage or whatever, because they

that around the floor and banged it around for a good part of my crayon period. And it was only years later as an

with the so-called "noble savage" and tried in fact even identify. And it's happened several times; the hippie

best very, very strange. Because on one hand what you have is people that came over and took over and they

denominators, and the government would think it was fine to work with individuals, but it was only that; I

rug, baskets, so forth, pottery, and my father gave it all away, because there was a real stigma with Indian

because in the Indian service at that time, people were transferred almost every two years at least, and he was

I grew up in the midwest. I was born in Minnesota and my father was, his career was in the Bureau of Indian

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This is a good observation. It’s very true that here new, what I call the new Indian, really it’s the new grown up
generation of, Indian people today are caught in a dichotomy, and it’s just not in their art, if they’re artists. It’s in
the way they function, because there has been now, a tremendous interest in American Indian by non-Indians.
Finally they’ve come around and realized that they could in fact learn quite a bit. And so the Indian person is
captured at one point he thought, well maybe I should be a non-Indian type, but now he realizes that his heritage
is important and he’s very proud of who he is. But he is caught because he’s living in 1976. He digs, you know,
the latest music, the cars, whatever. And the older people, traditional people, still look, frown upon this. And I
know many people caught like this. Many

Indian people. All I can say is that a person must be true to himself and if they are in this dichotomy, some way
they must make this work for them. Say, if they are artists. And I have seen it work where one can merge
traditional with contemporary and it can be their strength. You see, weaknesses can really, I truly believe that
weaknesses can be your strengths. All you have to do is, it’s your attitude. If you’re going to be, feel sorry for
yourself, then you’re going to be a loser. And I know many Indian, people who are losers because they are sorry
for themselves. They have chips on their shoulder, they’re paranoid about who they are. And that’s why many of
them are having problems and go start drinking or whatever. On the other hand, I know many young Indian
artists now who are taking a tremendously positive attitude about who they are. Turning this around and using it
as a strength, and because of it, they are producing unique expressions that no one else could because no one
else is caught in this kind of. Let’s face it. First of all, if you do relate me to, you know, the Indian thing, it’s very
true that I’m terribly lucky in that I don’t have that kind of crisis, a duality thing. I’ve always known who I am and,
as I said, I don’t identify really. I’m very proud of my Indian heritage. I’m very proud that I have been, probably
the influence for young Indian painters to break out of that type of cliche that they had been caught in. You
know, but, you can only be what you are. But with so many Indian people, the whole conflict is this duality of,
because they’re not interested, you see, in joining the mainstream. Unlike the blacks who really wanted to be
accepted, the Indian people have never thought that the non-Indian society was good enough to ever want.
Most Indians marry Indians. And they are still very suspicious of non-Indians. And of course, this is natural
because of what has happened. But the main, the key word I guess, for the whole Indian situation, the whole
Indian problem as it’s called, is paradox.