

ARTS & CULTURE

Warhol's *Cowboys and Indians* Coming to the Briscoe in May



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COURTESY / BRISCOE WESTERN ART MUSEUM

(from left) Andy Warhol, *John Wayne*, 1986, Andy Warhol, *Annie Oakley*, 1986

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Andy Warhol's Pop Art visions of the mythical American West will be on view at the [Briscoe Western Art Museum](#), from May 25 through Sept. 3, the museum announced Wednesday.

The suite of 10 *Cowboys and Indians* prints from 1986, the last portfolio of screen prints the artist produced in his lifetime, will take its temporary place among the Briscoe's holdings of Western art and artifacts.

The *Cowboys and Indians* print series will be displayed alongside 26 works by artist [Billy Schenck](#), who was associated with Warhol's "Factory" days in 1970s New York City. Inspired by Warhol's images of Elvis Presley in cowboy gear, Schenck went on to popularize his own style of "Western Pop," said Michael Duchemin, the Briscoe's president and chief executive officer.



COURTESY / BRISCOE WESTERN ART MUSEUM
Billy Schenck, *Throwin' A Loop*, 2013



COURTESY / BRISCOE WESTERN ART MUSEUM
Billy Schenck, *The Last Sunset*, 2016

Warhol's *Cowboys and Indians* portfolio features popular "cowboy" icons Annie Oakley, John Wayne, President Theodore Roosevelt, and Gen. George Custer, illustrated in the artist's signature bright colors and gestural highlights.

Four rare additional "trial" prints that were rejected for inclusion in the final portfolio will also be on view at the Briscoe, Duchemin said. One of these, the "bison" verso of the Indian-head nickel represented in the official portfolio, aligns with the Briscoe's use of the image throughout the museum's interior, essentially the Briscoe's unofficial "logo," Duchemin said.

Among the 10 official prints is an anonymous postcard image of an unnamed Native American mother carrying a child on her back, the Indian-head nickel, a Crow war shield, a Northwestern coast tribal mask, and Hopi Kachina Dolls, authentic examples of which can be found within the museum's regular collection.

The objects depicted in the prints "hold great power and great symbolism within each of those tribal affiliations," Duchemin said, and overall, the images "bring forward other aspects of Native American culture into this larger conversation, the reinterpretation of the American West which was very prominent in the 1980s."

Warhol died in 1987, not long after producing the prints.

The Native American subjects that Warhol chose are not without controversy, as noted by the [Tamastlikt Cultural Institute](#)



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Andy Warhol, *Geronimo*, 1986

(<http://www.tamastslight.org/exhibits.cfm>) in Pendleton, Oregon, which hosted an exhibition of the prints in 2013.

Quoted in an Oregon Public Broadcasting online article about the show, the institute's curator Randall Melton said Warhol's choice of imagery was "a statement on the idea of the Old West, how that's more myth than fact."

Duchemin said of the forthcoming Briscoe installation, "Our interpretation in the gallery is not to tell people what to think or how to perceive these things. The goal is to create a conversation around them and learn from our audience what the meaning is today."

Those eager for a sneak peek of Schenck's work can see a painting on display in the Briscoe's permanent collection. The bright, orange-hued oil on canvas *Throwin' A Loop*, from 2013, hangs on the second floor.
