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Eric-Paul Riego: *ojo|-|óǫ́*



Seattle, WA [December 11, 2025] - The Henry Art Gallery at the University of Washington is pleased to present *ojo|-|óǫ́*, a major exhibition by Diné artist Eric-Paul Riego (b. 1994, Na'nízhoozhí [Gallup, New Mexico]), co-presented by The Bell Gallery at Brown University.

ojo|-|óǫ́ brings together Riego's textile, sculpture, video, and performance practices. A trained weaver, Riego combines customary Diné practices with contemporary cultural forms in works that evoke Diné mythology, the history of Euro-American trading posts in and adjacent to the Navajo Nation, and the notion of "authenticity" as a value marker of Indigenous art and craft. The exhibition, the artist's largest solo presentation to date, is based on Riego's material research and engagement with the Navajo collections held by Brown's Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology and the University of Washington's Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture. Unfolding within and across university campus museums, Riego's exhibition interrogates the histories of knowledge production embedded in these institutions.

"During my archive visit at Brown, I encountered a broken weaving comb that

revealed itself, and which has since become a kind of guide or mentor for developing the exhibition. One of the most exciting things about being a weaver and maker is getting to learn from these objects and the materiality of them. *ojo-/óló* is a celebration of their agency and their lives,” said Riege. Immersive collections research serves as the basis for a new body of work by Riege that celebrates the ancestral knowledge and traditions contained within Indigenous-made objects, while inviting challenging conversations about the dispossession and dissemination of Indigenous culture and knowledge by museums and other institutions. The bicoastal presentation is integral to the project, as it engages conditions of geographic dispersal and displacement that have impacted Diñe cultural production, kinship relations, and the circulation of objects and ancestors.

“Eric-Paul Riege’s work embodies a powerful intersection between inherited knowledges and contemporary artistic practice,” said Thea Quiray Tagle. “By playfully engaging objects now living within anthropological archives in his installations and performances, Riege invites us to question museum collections and the commercial trade in ‘authentic’ Native-made art and crafts.”



For *ojo/-lóló*, Riege studied the patterns and construction of Navajo weavings in the Haffenreffer and Burke collections to expand his own weaving repertoire and to develop multi-media and sculptural works made of unexpected materials and with an exaggerated scale. He also studied Navajo weaving combs, textiles, jewelry, and dolls created for the tourist market. The new sculptural works created by Riege in conversation with these archival objects embrace infidelity to the archive as a modality that troubles the authority of the colonial record.

“The modularity of Riege’s sculptures result in ever-evolving forms that embrace contingency and evade the desire for fixity embedded in the colonial gaze,” said Nina Bozicnik. “His work not only honors Diné weaving traditions but also tells a story of cultural continuity as a living and dynamic process.”

As an extension of Riege’s collage-based practice, the exhibition at the Henry will include Burke collection objects alongside assorted ephemera from Riege’s own archive, including a selection of his sketches and digital collages. The resulting non-hierarchical display blurs lines between past and present, private and public, and real and fake, animating a multi-vocal story of Diné art and culture that exceeds settler hierarchies of knowledge and value.



Performance is foundational to Riege’s work, centering embodied knowledge and asking questions about the (re)production of Indigeneity. Throughout the exhibition, Riege and invited practitioners will activate the installation through live, durational performances that invite caring and critical reflection about the

relationship between agency and objecthood, and the display of Native cultures and peoples within museums. In this way, Riege's exhibition is in dialogue with larger conversations about cultural production and consumption, and strategies of obfuscation practiced by minoritarian artists who take seriously the risk of visibility to their self-determination.

Henry Art Gallery

University of Washington

The Henry is a museum for contemporary art and ideas, rooted in the belief that art has the power to challenge norms, inspire change, and create a more equitable world. As Washington State's first art museum, the Henry is internationally recognized for groundbreaking exhibitions, dynamic programs, and a long-standing commitment to championing artists at every stage of their careers. With a collection of nearly 30,000 objects and a deep partnership with the University of Washington, the Henry serves as a welcoming cultural hub, amplifying a diverse range of artistic voices and offering transformative, first-hand experiences that spark curiosity and new perspectives. Visit henryart.org to learn more.