

# Such a Big Dream: Edward S. Curtis at 150

Elmer L. Andersen Library Gallery  
October 8, 2018—January 18, 2019

## Exhibit Checklist

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“It’s such a big dream, I can’t see it all,” is what Edward S. Curtis said of his master work, *The North American Indian*, published between 1907 and 1930. Curated by Curtis expert Christopher Cardozo, Special Collections and Rare Books curator Timothy Johnson, Cardozo Fine Art’s studio manager, Peter Bernardy, and designed by Darren Terpstra, this exhibit highlights not only this work, but also examines Curtis’s life and the impact he had on photography.

# BEAUTY, HEART & SPIRIT

## The North American Indian Project

Two of the primary purposes of this exhibition are to honor and celebrate our Native peoples and their stories, their history, and their culture as well as the beauty, craftsmanship and power of Edward Curtis' photography. Over one hundred years ago, American photographer Edward Sheriff Curtis set out on a monumental quest to make an unprecedented, comprehensive record of the North American Indian. During a thirty-year period he produced 40,000-50,000 photographs of Native people from over eighty different tribal groups. Curtis' mission was to safeguard their 'sacred legacy' by preserving their way of life, their personal histories and their beliefs in photographs, film, sound, and text. This was a highly collaborative process and the Native people were active co-creators in preserving this record for future generations. It is estimated that 10,000 American Indians actively participated in this project. Today this work stands as a landmark in the history of photography, book publishing, ethnography, and the American West. These sets of rare books, *The North American Indian*, are now the most valuable sets of books published in the history of the United States.

Viewed in its entirety, Curtis' work presents an historical record of enormous importance. Edward S. Curtis and his Native co-creators preserved for future generations a valuable archive of a people whose way of life and their history was rapidly being lost. It is also a record of an important era in American history and provides us with a powerful opportunity to understand the American Indian experience. Perhaps the most important legacy of this work is the expression of an extraordinary and deeply felt empathy and understanding of the personal, emotional, and spiritual lives of the American Indian. The work's core message is one of beauty, heart, and spirit. In all these respects, this collaborative body of work is unique and unparalleled.

## EXHIBIT CHECKLIST

1. GALLERY PROCESS CAMERA, undated. A process camera is designed for copy work or mass reproduction. Negatives produced with this camera were used to create printing plates. The camera consists of two sections connected by bellows. The front section is the lens board (named because it contains the photographic lens). The rear section consists of three parts: a removable cover (with handle), a set of interlocking frames designed to accommodate photographic plates of different sizes, and a sliding metal shield. The back section would have been taken into a darkroom where the photographic plate was inserted, then reset into the camera and readied for use. The sliding metal shield was removed, exposing the plate, then reinserted to block any additional light from the lens. Back in the darkroom, the plate was removed, processed, and made ready for creating printing plates. This camera lacks a copyboard—a wooden board or panel used to hold the original document or image that was to be copied. UMN Libraries, Joseph S. Mertle Collection on the History of Photo-mechanics.
2. CURTIS FIELD CAMERA AND TRIPOD. A dry plate (glass plate) camera and tripod of the type used by Edward Curtis in the field. Curtis used a number of different still photography cameras during his career and often carried several with him. In 1883 the Rochester Optical Company was founded by W. F. Carlton. Carlton's company invented and produced the famous "Premo" view camera line. The reversible-back Premo was one Curtis used for many years. This camera shot dry plate glass negatives that Curtis then chemically developed in the field. Kodak took over the Rochester Optical Company in 1903 and continued to produce the Premo camera line. On loan from the private collection of Christopher Cardozo.
3. BEAR'S BELLY – ARIKARA, 1908. Large wall banner. The large banners are a dye-sublimation printing on heavyweight polyester fabric.
4. AN OASIS IN THE BADLANDS – SIOUX, 1905. Large wall banner.
5. LUMMI TYPE, 1899. Large wall banner.
6. WOMAN AND CHILD – NUNIVAK, 1928. Small window banner. The smaller images are printed on a "fabric-like" material that is adhesive backed and can then be mounted to a foam board for final presentation.
7. THE THREE CHIEFS – PIEGAN, 1900 (edited). Small window banner.
8. MOUNT RAINIER, ca. 1899 (edited). Small window banner.
9. PRINCESS ANGELINE – PUDGET SOUND, ca. 1898. Small window banner.

10. UNTITLED (GIRL ON CHAIR), ROTH & CURTIS STUDIO, ca. 1892. Small window banner.

### **CASE ONE**

11. PROSPECTUS, *THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN*, CHARLES E. LAURIAT COMPANY, BOSTON, 1935. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
12. PROSPECTUS, *THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN*, WITH EXEMPLARS FROM THE FIRST VOLUME, 1907. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
13. *THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN*, VOLUME VII. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
14. SPECIMEN ILLUSTRATION (REDUCED IN SIZE) FROM THE PORTFOLIOS ACCOMPANYING *THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN*. CHARLES E. LAURIAT COMPANY, 1935. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
15. SPECIMEN ILLUSTRATION (FULL SIZE) FROM THE TEXT OF *THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN*. CHARLES E. LAURIAT COMPANY, 1935. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
16. PLATE COVER, "WALLED GARDENS AT MIDDLE MESA." Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
17. PLATE COVER, "ACHOMAWI MATRON." Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
18. OUTLINE OF THE CURTIS PUBLICATION OF *THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN* AND SUBSCRIPTION AGREEMENT. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.

### **CASE TWO**

19. PLATE COVER, "WALTER ROSS – WICHITA." Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
20. PLATE COVER, "OLD BOB – KAROK." Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
21. PLATE COVER, "OTO PUBERTY LODGE." Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
22. PLATE COVER, "CROSSING THE STRAIT." Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
23. *THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN*, VOLUME XIII. Norwood, Massachusetts: Plimpton Press, 1907-30. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.

24. SPECIMEN ILLUSTRATION, "THE SUN DANCE VOTARY – APSAROKE." Photogravure. UMN Libraries. Edward S. Curtis Collection.
25. PLATE COVER, "RUINS ON THE MESA AT PUYE." Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
26. *THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN*. EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS OF THE BOOK, AND COMMENTS ON THE WORK OF ITS AUTHOR... UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.

### CASE THREE

27. SILVER GELATIN, BLUE-TONED PRINT. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection. Photograph taken by Curtis during the 1923 filming of Cecil B. DeMille's "The Ten Commandments." Curtis moved to Los Angeles in 1920, set up a new studio, and also worked as an assistant movie camera operator. Most of these photos show Theodore Roberts as Moses, and several show Charles de Rochefort (Charles de Roche) as Ramses. Filmed at Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes in Santa Barbara County, California. In 2014, archeologists uncovered a sphinx used during movie production.
28. CHEYENNE. Cyanotype print. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
29. SPECIMEN ILLUSTRATION, "GOOD DAY WOMAN – OGALALA." Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
30. THE VANISHING RACE – NAVAJO, 1904. Vintage goldtone print. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
31. SAN ANDRES CHICHAUXTLA, OAXACA. UMN Libraries, Christopher Cardozo Collection. This photograph was taken by Cardozo during a half-year sojourn in this small village high in the Sierra Madre mountains. It was on his return trip home that Cardozo discovered the photography of Edward Curtis.
32. SQUAXON MATRON, 1912. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.
33. CHEYENNE GIRL, 1905. UMN Libraries, Edward S. Curtis Collection.

### CASE FOUR

34. *THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN*, REPUBLICATION PROJECT, CUSTOM LIMITED EDITION. Minneapolis: Christopher Cardozo Fine Art, 2014. UMN Libraries, Rare Book Collection. The North American Indian Republication was created over a period of four years. It is the largest republication project in North American publishing history, requiring over 10,000 hours of research, typesetting, layout, prototyping, proofing, and over 40,000 hours of specialists across eight diverse fields. The limited edition is hand-bound in leather, with archival linen-finished paper, and

- gilded with the highest artisan bookmaking standards. The recreation of Edward Curtis original includes all twenty original volumes, over 5,000 pages with extensive transcripts of Native language and music. The twenty portfolios that accompanied the original set are recreated in five oversized portfolio volumes. Each set comprises all 2,234 photographs contained in the original.
35. SPECIMEN ILLUSTRATION, "HASCHOGAN – NAVAHO." Republication Project, Custom Limited Edition. Minneapolis: Christopher Cardozo Fine Art, 2014. UMN Libraries, Rare Book Collection.
  36. PUBLICITY PACKET, Republication Project, Custom Limited Edition. Minneapolis: Christopher Cardozo Fine Art, 2014. UMN Libraries, Rare Book Collection.
  37. PROSPECTUS, Republication Project, Custom Limited Edition. Minneapolis: Christopher Cardozo Fine Art, 2014. UMN Libraries, Rare Book Collection.
  38. SPECIMEN ILLUSTRATION, "SACRED BUCKSKIN – APACHE." Republication Project, Custom Limited Edition. Minneapolis: Christopher Cardozo Fine Art, 2014. UMN Libraries, Rare Book Collection.
  39. SPECIMEN ILLUSTRATION, "THE POOL – APACHE." Republication Project, Custom Limited Edition. Minneapolis: Christopher Cardozo Fine Art, 2014. UMN Libraries, Rare Book Collection.
  40. PAGE FROM EDWARD S. CURTIS INTRODUCTION, WITH SIGNATURE. Republication Project, Custom Limited Edition. Minneapolis: Christopher Cardozo Fine Art, 2014. UMN Libraries, Rare Book Collection.
  41. "EPIC UNDERTAKING: THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN," *AMERICAN FINE ART MAGAZINE*, July/August 2016, Issue 28. UMN Libraries, Christopher Cardozo Collection.
  42. MICHAEL CLAWSON, "LABOR OF LOVE," *WESTERN ART COLLECTOR*, July 2016. UMN Libraries, Christopher Cardozo Collection.
  43. SPECIMEN ILLUSTRATION, "A JICARILLA." Republication Project, Custom Limited Edition. Minneapolis: Christopher Cardozo Fine Art, 2014. UMN Libraries, Rare Book Collection.

#### CASE FIVE

44. ATSINA WARRIORS. Contemporary archival print. UMN Libraries, Michael and Anne Hall Collection.
45. SUNSET IN NAVAJO LAND, 1904. Vintage print. UMN Libraries, Christopher Cardozo Collection.
46. INTO THE DESERT – NAVAHO. Vintage print. UMN Libraries, Christopher Cardozo Collection.

## CASE SIX

47. CRATER LAKE – KLAMATH, 1923. Contemporary archival print. UMN Libraries, Michael and Anne Hall Collection.
48. PIEGAN ENCAMPMENT. Contemporary archival print. UMN Libraries, Michael and Anne Hall Collection.

## CASE SEVEN

49. A MONO HOME. Contemporary archival print. UMN Libraries, Michael and Anne Hall Collection.
50. AMONG THE OAKS – APACHE. Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Christopher Cardozo Collection.
51. APSAROKE WOMAN. Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Christopher Cardozo Collection.

## CASE EIGHT

52. BOW RIVER – BLACKFOOT, 1926. Contemporary archival print. UMN Libraries, Michael and Anne Hall Collection.
53. BEFORE THE STORM. Contemporary archival print. UMN Libraries, Michael and Anne Hall Collection.
54. COUNTRY OF THE KUTENAI – FLATHEAD LAKE, MONTANA, 1910. Contemporary archival print. UMN Libraries, Michael and Anne Hall Collection.

## CASE NINE

At the age of 24 Edward Curtis started working as a studio portrait photographer in Seattle. He also experimented with landscape and mountaineering photographs on extended trip to Washington, Oregon, and Alaska. By 1895, Curtis began photographing Native Americans. He took many pictures of the Alaskan/Yukon Gold Rush of 1897, and was the official expedition photographer on E.H. Harriman's Alaskan expedition of 1899. It was on this very expedition that Curtis discovered his passion for documenting Native peoples' ways of life. During this time he became involved with the Pictorialist movement, which increasingly influenced his work.

55. MALE PORTRAIT, CURTIS & GUPSTILL STUDIO, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON. Undated. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
56. FAMILY PORTRAIT, IMPERIAL STUDIO, ROTH AND CURTIS, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON. Undated. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.

57. E. S. CURTIS, "VANISHING INDIAN TYPES," *SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE*, VOL. XXXIX, NO. 5, MAY 1906. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
58. SELECTION OF POSTCARDS. ZUNI MAID, MOHAVE GIRL, ZUNI WATER CARRIERS, HOPI GIRL, ZUNI, BLACKFOOT ENCAMPMENT, CHIEF JOSEPH, CROW EAGLE BLACKFOOT, APACHES, APACHE GIRL, LESCHI A YAKIMA. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
59. FOREST OVERTURNED BY COLUMBIA GLACIER. Photogravure. Undated. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
60. CURTIS PAINTED LANDSCAPE, HARRIMAN ALASKA EXPEDITION. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
61. ESKIMO SETTLEMENT, PLOVER BAY, SIBERIA. Photogravure. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
62. MAP, "DIALECTS AND HUNTING TERRITORIES OF THE COAST ESKIMO OF ALASKA, 1929. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
63. ESKIMO TOPEK, PLOVER BAY, SIBERIA, JULY 1899. Photogravure. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
64. SAILBOAT "ELSIE ALLEN." Cyanotype print. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
65. UNIDENTIFIED VILLAGE SCENE, 1899. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.

#### **CASE TEN**

66. UNIDENTIFIED NATIVE WOMAN. UMN Libraries, Edward Curtis Collection.
67. A WASHO WOMAN. Portfolio plate 543. UMN Libraries, Edward Curtis Collection.
68. ON THE SHORES AT NOOTKA. Portfolio plate 366. UMN Libraries, Edward Curtis Collection.
69. ATSINA SCALP DANCE. Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Edward Curtis Collection.
70. THE BUFFALO PLAINS. Photogravure. UMN Libraries, Edward Curtis Collection.
71. GATHERING ABALONES – NAKOAKTOK, 1910. Portfolio plate 342. UMN Libraries, Edward Curtis Collection.

#### **CASE ELEVEN (THIRD FLOOR)**

72. PROTOTYPE VOLUMES FOR THE REFERENCE EDITION. Two of the slightly smaller hard-cover volumes and one of the portfolio volumes are displayed. The Reference Edition reproduces the original set in its entirety, but more accessibly produced. This is the first time in 100 years a modestly priced, high-quality republication has been available. The Reference Edition includes the



full set of 20 volumes, plus the 20 additional portfolios assembled into four additional, oversized books. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.

73. PRODUCTION VOLUME FOR THE REFERENCE EDITION. One of the slightly smaller hard-cover volumes is displayed. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
74. OUTLINE OF THE CURTIS PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN AND SUBSCRIPTION AGREEMENT. 1914. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
75. PLATE COVER, "CEREMONIAL HOUSE – WICHITA." 1927. Photogravure. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
76. PLATE COVER, "NASURETHUR – PROFILE – CHIPEWYAN." 1926. Photogravure. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.
77. CHARLES LAURIAT COMPANY BROCHURE. From the collection of Christopher Cardozo. In 1935 assets of the Curtis project were liquidated, and the remaining materials were sold to the Charles Lauriat Company, a rare book dealer in Boston. Lauriat acquired nineteen unsold sets of *The North American Indian*, thousands of individual prints, sheets of unbound paper, and the hand-made copper photogravure plates. The book dealer printed a sales brochure and sold nearly seventy more sets.
78. PLATE COVER, "ZUNI." 1903. Photogravure. From the Collection of Christopher Cardozo.

**THIRD FLOOR WINDOW ELEMENTS AND LARGE BANNERS/PANELS** (Left to right across the concourse gallery.)

79. KWAKIUTL HOUSE FRAME, 1914. Large banner photograph.
80. COUNTRY OF THE KUTENAI, 1910. Large banner photograph.
81. WAIHUSIWA, A ZUNI KYAQIMASSI, 1903. Window panel.
82. A NAKOAKTOK CHIEF'S DAUGHTER, 1914. Window panel.
83. SHOT IN THE HAND – APSAROKE, 1908. Window panel.
84. J. P. MORGAN QUOTATION, "I like a man who attempts the impossible." Window panel.
85. AN OASIS IN THE BADLANDS – SIOUX, 1905. Large banner photograph.
86. THE THREE CHIEFS – PIEGAN, 1900. Large banner photograph.
87. COUNTRY OF THE KUTENAI, 1910. Large banner photograph.
88. MIDDLE GUN, ca. 1901. Large banner photograph.

**SECOND FLOOR WINDOW ELEMENTS AND LARGE BANNERS/PANELS** (Left to right across the concourse gallery.)

89. PIEGAN ENCAMPMENT, 1900. Large banner photograph.

90. EVENING AT HOPI LAND, 1906. Large banner photograph.
91. A WALPI MAN, 1903. Window panel.
92. NEZ PERCE BABE, 1900. Window panel.
93. TWO BEAR WOMAN – PIEGAN, 1900. Window panel.
94. BLACK ELK – OGLALA LAKOTA SIOUX (1863-1950) QUOTATION, “The earth is your grandmother, and mother, and she is sacred. Every step that is taken upon her should be as a prayer.” Window panel.
95. CANYON DE CHELLY – NAVAHO, 1904. Large banner photograph.
96. THE BLANKET WEAVER – NAVAHO, 1904. Large banner photograph.
97. KUTENAI DUCK HUNTER, 1910. Large banner photograph.
98. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, ARIKARA, BEAR’S BELLY. Large banner photograph.

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