

**Painting Native America in Public: American Indian Artists and the New Deal  
[ABSTRACT]**

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The New Deal represents a critical period in the development of American Indian art. Shifts in policy created opportunities for American Indians to study art, and New Deal commissions for murals in post offices and other public spaces enabled artists to develop skills, establish their reputations, and make a living. American Indian artists also faced challenges in the form of dominant expectations for Native art and paternalism from officials and administrators. The benefits of New Deal commissions and the struggles with their limitations nonetheless formed a foundation for subsequent generations of Native artists who claimed more control over their art.

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