

**Native American Style Art Show Rules** (adapted from PACIFIC NORTHWEST CARVERS ADVISORY COUNCIL - Judging Criteria for Categories within Divisions relating to " Northwest Coast Style "

### **What is Native American Style Art?**

The purpose of carving competitions is to recognize carving and artistry. Some attention must be given to the established traditions of the art. There is plenty of room for creativity in this particular art while remaining close to the established traditions.

### **CRAFTSMANSHIP:**

#### **Carving:**

Are the cuts in relief comparable to what is seen in chip carving? Are the angles joined at the bottom? Are there blemishes, i.e. cuts in the side walls? Is there continuity in the carving itself, does the piece have a consistent shape from one side compared with the other or is one side shaped differently? Carving cuts should be done cleanly at the top and the bottom without break out at the surface. Clarity of the carved detail!

#### **Textures:**

If any are used, textures should be consistent in the intended area of the piece, this is not to be confused with a lack of finish. Textures of a common nature are concave divets in negative space such as the eye sockets or consistent gouge marks of a similar size and technique in an area that represents a feature such as a whale skin or scales etc. Far too often a carver puts very little effort into texturing and will create a sporadic texture. Attention should be given to equal spacing and depth by consistently reproducing the feature over and over again, poor attention to detail wouldn't be accepted in wildlife or fish and should be evaluated in this division of judging.

#### **Sanding:**

Evaluate the degree of success in all areas of the carving, sanding should result in a highly beneficial appearance to the overall piece. An artist may choose not to sand the piece and choose instead to leave all the gouge or knife marks, ( similar to european flat plane carving ), this should not decrease the merits of craftsmanship. In fact, when it is done well it will have its own high degree of craftsmanship. Instead, it just places an additional burden on the judge to make an evaluation on the merits of the piece in other categories, but within the context of Craftsmanship. Carved design units are intended to have crisp edges, the over sanding is quite noticeable. The less experience a carver has the more they rely on sanding to create shapes, but this results in inconsistent and unequal design elements.

#### **Painting:**

Is there a consistent flow of the paint, that displays an even paint application throughout? Are the edges clean and concise or is there a build up of paint at the edges? Painting should be evaluated on the smoothness of the lines and whether painted edges are erotic or overlap into areas of opposing color or into the negative space that was intended to be left natural How color is used may be of interest here, and whether it adds or detracts from the piece.

**Note:** Skilled executions of all of the above and also the degree of difficulty should be considered.

### **ACCURACY**

**Form Line..... the fundamental element of the art.** In totally natural wood finished pieces form lines are always not carved and are outlined by carving. Form lines may be painted or left as negative space but must occupy the highest plane. It is the characteristic swelling and diminishing of this line like figure ( Form line ) that delineates design units and clarifies the anatomy. These form lines merge and divide, generally, they swell in the center of a given design unit and diminish at the ends establishing the principal forms of the design. Continuity is the goal, in a typical piece all primary units are connected with the exception of eye designs, and inner ovoids of joints. In essence, all the design units are connected via the form line. In a carved mask the eyes, eye brows, lips, nostrils, and other exceptions stand alone.

## **Color, Form, and Design fall into three categories:**

**Primary Form Line...** Black or occasionally Red is substituted, These colors occupy the highest plain on a carved piece, but they are never carved.

**Secondary Line or Design Unit...** Red is the foremost secondary color. Secondary designs are often enclosed by primary form lines and are always in contact with the adjacent units at one or more points. A secondary color is often located on the same plain as the primary color. If Red is substituted for Black as the primary form line color then black becomes the secondary form line color.

**Tertiary...** Blue, Green, Blue/Green, White, Yellow. These are the third tier of colors, they are never used as form line and in carved areas will frequently appear on a plane lower than the surface plane that is occupied by the primary colors. White can be used as a background color. Tertiary colors and design units are always enclosed by primary or secondary designs. Areas for tertiary design and color include eye-sockets, or space between the inner and outer ovoids of the eye, joint designs or some solid U's or split U's and certain spaces between primary or secondary designs in ears, feathers, teeth, mouth, fins, and other related fillers. A piece may have the use of one or possibly two tertiary colors but never any more. The color Red can appear as a third tier color in a tertiary design unit.

### **Add -Ons:**

Copper, Cedar Bark, Abalone, Operculum, Hair, Antler, Skins /Fur, Feathers, Horn & Leather.

Note: Remember this is a curvilinear art form and design units detracting from this feature should be noticed and not considered accurate. The use of add-ons should not be the single reason to judge one piece less worthy than another since they are accepted and effective in the art. Latitude is given to the shade of colors for red, blue, green, blue/green, yellow.