

## Allan Houser: A Centennial Exhibition

**HOOD**  
MUSEUM OF ART  
www.hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu

News Release | Contact: Nils Nadeau, Head of Publishing and Communications | (603) 646-2095 | nils.nadeau@dartmouth.edu

### Dartmouth College Celebrates Sculpture of Allan Houser



Hanover, N.H.—May 1, 2014— Allan Houser (1914–1994), one of the best-known Native American artists of the twentieth century, continues to be an influential figure in the field of Southwestern sculpture in the United States. This May, the Hood Museum of Art installs five sculptures by Houser in the Maffei Arts Plaza, adjacent to the museum and the Black Family Visual Arts Center. These works represent a cross-section of his large three-dimensional work from the years 1986 to 1992. There will also be two sculptures by Houser on view in the museum this spring—one in the downstairs galleries, and the other in the exhibition *In Residence: Contemporary Artists at Dartmouth*, which is devoted to the long and exemplary history of the Artist-in-Residence Program at the College. Houser was artist-in-residence in 1979, and the Hood collection includes several sculptures by him, one of which is permanently on view on the lawn of north campus’s Sherman House, home of the Native American Studies Department.

Additionally, in September of this year, the Studio Art Exhibition Program and the Hood will present an exhibition of Houser’s drawings and smaller sculpture in Strauss Gallery at the Hopkins Center, curated by Gerald Auten, senior lecturer and director of the exhibition program for the Studio Art Department. The outdoor sculpture and drawings from the artist’s estate are lent to the museum by the Houser Foundation, Inc., under the guidance of Dave Rettig, Class of 1975, who is the curator of collections at the foundation. Please join us for an opening event at 10:00 AM on Sunday, May 11, that will include a talk by Rettig and a light breakfast on the plaza amid the sculptures. The works will remain on view for a year.

“The Hood Museum of Art is delighted to join museums across the country in celebrating the work of Allan Houser. That his legacy includes his residency and work at Dartmouth is even more reason to mark the occasion with the presentation of these dynamic sculptures,” said Michael Taylor, Director of the Hood Museum of Art.

Houser was a member of the Chiricahua Apache, a group that was imprisoned for twenty-seven years after the surrender of Geronimo. Houser was the first child born out of captivity after they were released; his mother had been born while the group was still incarcerated. He enrolled in painting school at the Santa Fe Indian School as a young man and began his career as a mural painter at the end of the Depression. His first marble carving was a monument to the Native

## Allan Houser: A Centennial Exhibition

**HOOD**  
MUSEUM OF ART  
www.hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu

News Release | Contact: Nils Nadeau, Head of Publishing and Communications | (603) 646-2095 | nils.nadeau@dartmouth.edu

Americans from the Haskell School in Lawrence, Kansas, who died in World War II. In the early 1950s, he began teaching art at the Inter-Mountain Indian School in Brigham City, Utah. Eleven years later, he became a professor at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, where he primarily taught sculpture, finally retiring in 1975 to pursue his artistic career. As a sculptor, he worked in stone and bronze and, occasionally, wood.

The five sculptures in this exhibition demonstrate Houser's distinctive achievements in the genre. While he is well known for his Native American subjects, such as *Abstract Crown Dancer II* (1992) (see image) and *Morning Solitude* (1989), he is less associated with abstract modernism—this despite the fact that he was equally invested, particularly in his later career, in the creation of simpler forms. In both modes of expression, he sought a sense of the enduring spirit and centered being. He related his work to music: “I put this rhythm into it, the beautiful rhythms of song my dad used to sing and stories he told about. This way, the feelings I have are getting across, I hope—the sympathy I have for the Indians, and the dignity I see in them.” This is as true for his elegant abstractions as for his sculptures that depicted Native American subjects.

This presentation of Houser's sculpture in the Maffei Arts Plaza and the drawing show at the Hopkins Center are but two installations out of many that will be on view across the nation this year. It is fitting that Dartmouth College joins these tributes to a remarkable creative spirit who gave so much to the students he mentored and left behind an artistic legacy of work that is recognized internationally by art historians and museum curators of modern and contemporary American art.

*This exhibition was organized by the Hood Museum of Art and was generously supported by Mary Alice Kean Reynolds and David R. W. Reynolds, Dartmouth Class of 1949, Carol Fishberg and Franklin Z. Davidson, Dartmouth Class of 1955, in memory of Gerald D. Kleinman, Dartmouth Class of 1955, and Lewis R. Weintraub, Dartmouth Class of 1955, and the William B. Jaffe and Evelyn A. Hall Fund.*

### **About the Hood Museum of Art**

The mission of the Hood Museum of Art, as a teaching museum, is to create an ideal learning environment that fosters transformative encounters with works of art. This dynamic educational and cultural facility houses one of the oldest and largest college collections in the country, with more than 70,000 objects acquired since 1772. Among its most important works are six Assyrian stone reliefs that date from around 900 BCE. The collection also presents art from other ancient cultures, the Americas, Europe, Africa, Papua New Guinea, and many more regions of the world.

## Allan Houser: A Centennial Exhibition

**HOOD**  
MUSEUM OF ART  
www.hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu

News Release | Contact: Nils Nadeau, Head of Publishing and Communications | (603) 646-2095 | nils.nadeau@dartmouth.edu

The Hood seeks to inspire and educate through direct engagement with original works of art and offers access to the rich diversity of its collections through ongoing highlights displays, special exhibitions, an online collections database, and a wide array of programs and events.

### **About Dartmouth**

Founded in 1769, Dartmouth is a member of the Ivy League and consistently ranks among the world's greatest colleges and universities. Dartmouth has forged a singular identity for combining its deep commitment to outstanding undergraduate liberal arts and graduate and professional education with distinguished research and scholarship in the arts and sciences and its three leading professional schools—the Geisel School of Medicine, Thayer School of Engineering, and the Tuck School of Business.

### **Media Contacts:**

Hood Museum of Art

Nils Nadeau: (603) 646-2095 • nils.nadeau@dartmouth.edu

Dartmouth College Office of Public Affairs

(603) 646-3661 • office.of.public.affairs@dartmouth.edu

**Image caption:** Allan Houser, *Abstract Crown Dancer I*, 1992, bronze edition of 8. © Chiinde LLC, exhibition loan courtesy of Allan Houser, Inc.