



A Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890.

Appraisal #051717 - Wedge

May 17, 2017

Joshua Baer, Appraiser

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A Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890.

The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.

### *Condition and Dimensions*

Condition is excellent and original with less than 1% restoration. Corner tassels, side selvages and top and bottom edge cords are 99% original. Colors are 99% original on the side pictured and 95% original on the side not pictured. Less than 1% of the Navajo wedge-weave serapes in museum and private collections have survived in comparable condition.

Dimensions are large for a wedge-weave serape. See the Boulder Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1890, illustrated on Pages 32 through 34, herein, for a wedge-weave serape with comparable dimensions.

***Provenance***

The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, is ex- private collection, Dallas, Texas. The serape was acquired by the current owner in May, 2014. The serape has no exhibition history and has not been illustrated in any books or publications. The serape is currently in a private collection in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

***Yarns and Dyes***

All of the red, green, orange, dark purple, light purple, and yellow yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with synthetic dyes. The white yarns are un-dyed handspun Merino fleece.



### *Wedge-Weave Serapes*

Between 1800 and 1850, Navajo weavers saw classic Saltillo serapes and classic Rio Grande serapes in use as men's wearing garments throughout what is now northern Mexico and the American southwest. Saltillo serapes were woven by Tlascalan Indians in northern Mexico. Tlascalan weavers probably wove Saltillo serapes according to design templates provided by Spanish and Mexican patrons. Rio Grande serapes were woven by Spanish-American weavers throughout the Rio Abajo and Rio Arriba regions of the Rio Grande Valley.

The terraced diamonds that appear in the central panels of classic Navajo poncho serapes and bayeta serapes are Navajo versions of the large, serrated diamonds that appear at the centers of classic Saltillo serapes. The wedge-weave design is the Navajo version of a flat diagonal design, also known as the lightning pattern, that appears in classic Rio Grande serapes. See Pages 8 and 9 for a Classic Rio Grande Serape, circa 1850, with a lightning pattern.

The lightning pattern appears in horizontal sections of Navajo blankets woven as early as 1855. See the Carson Serape, Thaw Serape, Mulberger Serape, and Classic Serape with a White Field, illustrated on Pages 11 through 21. By 1870, the lightning pattern had enlarged and expanded from a sectional design to an overall design element. See Pages 22 through 24 for illustrations of a Late Classic Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1870, where the lightning pattern appears as the entire field of the serape.

Ninety-nine percent of the Navajo wedge-weave serapes in museum and private collections were woven between 1880 and 1900, during the so-called Transitional Period. "Transitional" refers to the transition from Navajo wearing blankets, which were worn as garments, to Navajo rugs, which were used to cover floors. 99% of the yarns used in transitional wedge-weave serapes are handspun Merino fleece, either dyed in the yarn with synthetic dyes, or, in the case of brown, grey, and white yarns, left un-dyed.

There are approximately fifty Navajo wedge-weave serapes in museum and private collections. Approximately twenty-five of those transitional wedge-weave serapes were woven in the pulled-warp style, where the warps were pulled in the process of weaving diagonal sections of tapestry. The pulled-warp technique created uneven tension along the left and right edges of these wedge-weave serapes, resulting in scalloped edges. The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, exhibits pulled warps and scalloped edges.

## Comparable Examples – The Meem Rio Grande Serape

The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, has lightning designs, proportions, and weaving techniques in common with a Classic Serape with Lightning Designs, Northern New Mexico, circa 1850, also known as the Meem Rio Grande Serape. The Meem Rio Grande Serape is ex- Mr. and Mrs. John Gaw Meem of Santa Fe, New Mexico. John Gaw Meem, IV (1893-1983) was the American architect credited with the introduction of the so-called “Santa Fe Style” of adobe architecture to the Southwest. The following biographical information was adapted from Wikipedia.

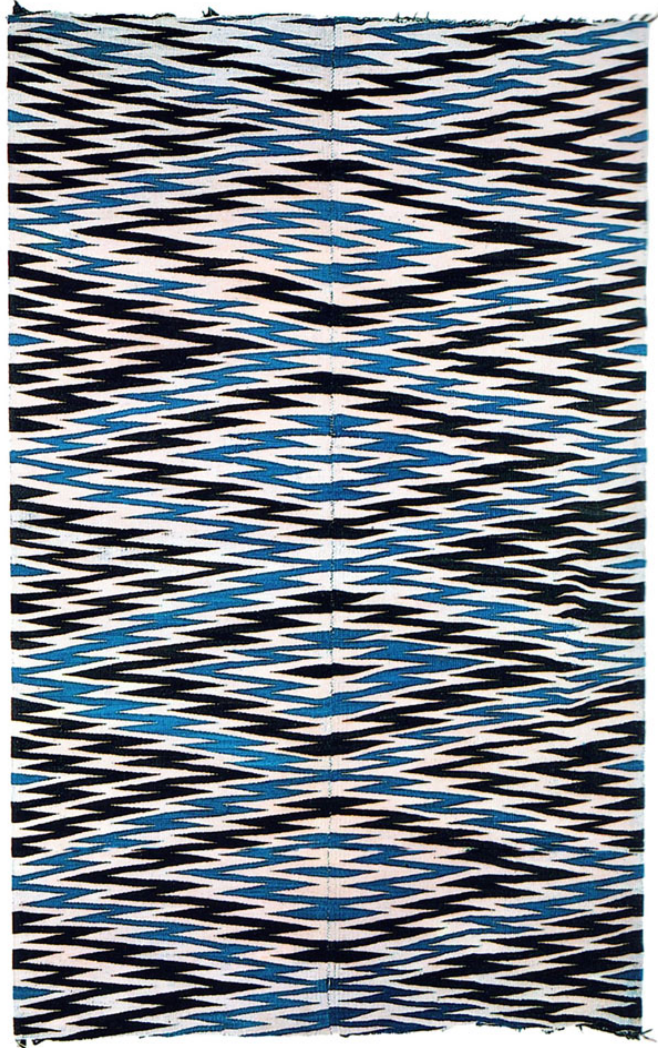
In 1930, Meem won a national competition to select a design for the Laboratory of Anthropology in Santa Fe. In 1933, Meem was selected as the official architect of the University of Mexico (UNM) in Albuquerque. Meem held the position until his retirement in 1956. Meem’s best-known work at UNM was the Zimmerman Library, completed in 1938. Later in 1938, Meem achieved international recognition for the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, in Colorado Springs, generally regarded as his masterpiece.

Notable Pueblo-style buildings either designed or remodeled by Meem include the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, 1929; the Laboratory of Anthropology in Santa Fe, 1930; Los Poblanos, Ranchos de Albuquerque, 1932; Christo Rey Church, Santa Fe, 1939; the Southern Union Gas Company Building, Albuquerque, 1951; and the Cathedral Church of Saint John, Albuquerque, 1952. In 1964, Meem was the consultant architect for the construction of Saint John’s College in Santa Fe.

The Meem Rio Grande Serape is illustrated as Plate 49 in Fisher and Bowen, *Rio Grande Textiles*, 1979. Bowen describes the serape as: “Rio Grande Blanket, pre-1860...” and refers to the serape’s design as the “lightning” pattern.

The Meem Rio Grande Serape is currently in the collection of the Museum of New Mexico at the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, by gift from Mr. and Mrs. John Gaw Meem. Catalog #L.5.62.97.

Illustrations of the Meem Rio Grande Serape appear on Pages 8 and 9 of this appraisal.



The Meem Rio Grande Serape, Northern Rio Grande Valley, circa 1850.

The serape measures 87 inches long by 55 inches wide, as woven in two vertical panels.

Condition is excellent with less than 1% restoration.

The blue yarns are handspun Churro fleece dyed in the yarn with indigo.

The brown yarns are un-dyed handspun Churro Fleece.

The white yarns are un-dyed handspun Churro fleece.

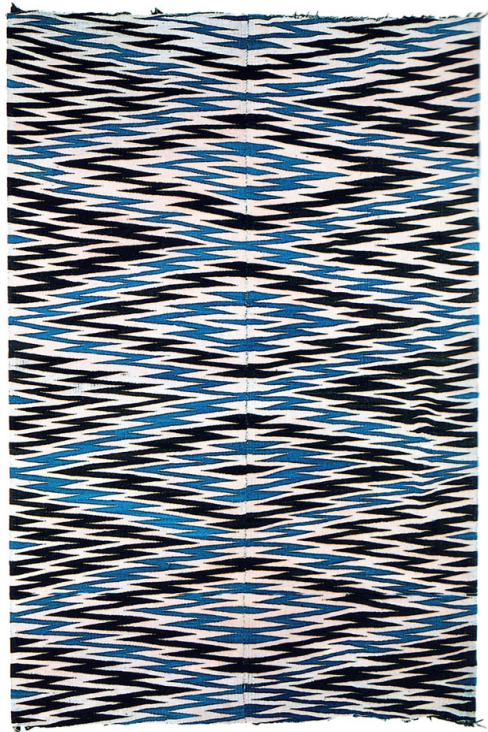
Illustrated as Plate 49 in Fisher and Bowen, *Rio Grande Textiles*, 1979.

Bowen describes the serape as: "Rio Grande Blanket, pre-1860..."

Currently in the collection of the Museum of New Mexico  
at the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe,  
by gift from Mr. and Mrs. John Gaw Meem. Catalog #L.5.62.97.



The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.  
The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.



The Meem Rio Grande Serape, Northern Rio Grande Valley, circa 1850.  
The serape measures 87 inches long by 55 inches wide, as woven in two vertical panels.

## **Comparable Examples – The Carson Serape**

The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, has lightning designs and weaving techniques in common with a Classic Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1855, also known as the Carson Serape. The Carson serape is one of the earliest known examples of a Navajo serape in which the lightning design appears as horizontal sections in the field. The Carson Serape is ex- Kit Carson, of Taos, New Mexico. The following biography of Carson was adapted from Wikipedia.com.

Christopher Houston “Kit” Carson (1809-1868) was an American frontiersman and Indian fighter. At the age of sixteen, Carson left rural present-day Missouri and became a mountain man and trapper in the West. Carson explored the west to California, and north through the Rocky Mountains. He lived among and married into the Arapaho and Cheyenne tribes. Carson was hired by John C. Fremont as a guide, and led Fremont through much of California, Oregon and the Great Basin. Carson achieved national recognition through Fremont’s accounts of his expeditions.

Between 1846 and 1848, Carson was a courier and scout during the Mexican-American War. Carson was celebrated for his rescue mission after the Battle of San Pasqual, and for his coast-to-coast journey from California to deliver news of the war to the federal government in Washington, D.C. In the 1850s, Carson was the Agent to the Ute and Jicarilla Apache tribes. During the Civil War, in 1862, Carson led a regiment of Hispanic volunteers at the Battle of Valverde. Carson led armies to pacify the Comanche, Kiowa, Mescalero Apache, and Navajo tribes. In modern times, Carson has been vilified for his siege and conquest of the Navajo in 1865, and for his forced transfer of the Navajo tribe to Bosque Redondo, New Mexico Territory, where many Navajos died.

Brevetted a General, Kit Carson is probably the only American to reach high military rank without being able to read or write, although he could sign his name. Carson’s alliterative name, adventurous life, and participation in historical events has made him a favorite subject of biographers, historians, and novelists.

The Carson Serape is ex- Andrew Nagen of Corrales, New Mexico. Nagen purchased the serape from Eli Valdez, one of Carson’s descendants, in Alamosa, Colorado, during the late 1970s.

The Carson serape has no exhibition history. The serape is not illustrated in any books or publications.

Illustrations of the Carson Serape appear on Pages 11 and 12 of this appraisal.



The Carson Serape, Navajo, circa 1855.

The serape measures 72 inches long by 55 inches wide, as woven.

Condition is excellent with less than 1% restoration.

Corner tassels, side selvages, and top and bottom edge cords are 99% intact.

The red yarns are raveled bayeta dyed in the fabric with lac. The blue yarns are handspun Churro fleece dyed in the yarn with indigo. All of the white yarns used both as warp and weft are un-dyed handspun Churro fleece.

Ex- Kit Carson (1809-1868), Taos, New Mexico.

Ex- Andrew Nagen, Corrales, New Mexico. Nagen purchased the serape during the late 1970s in Alamosa, Colorado, from Eli Valdez, one of Carson's descendants.

The Carson serape is one of the earliest known examples of a Navajo serape in which the lightning design appears as horizontal sections in the field.

No exhibitions or publications. Currently in a private collection in Santa Fe, New Mexico.



The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.  
The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.



The Carson Serape, Navajo, circa 1850.  
The serape measures 72 inches long by 55 inches wide, as woven.

### Comparable Examples – The Thaw Serape

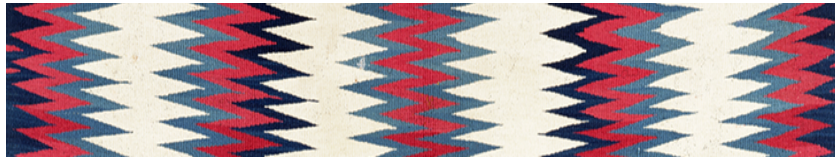
The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, has lightning designs and weaving techniques in common with a Classic Serape with Medium Blue Yarns, Navajo, circa 1855, also known as the Thaw Serape. The Thaw Serape is ex- Robert Musser of Aspen, Colorado; and ex- Bert Lies, Jr., of Santa Fe, New Mexico. In 1991, the Thaw Serape was acquired by Claire and Eugene Thaw of Cooperstown, New York. The Thaw Serape is currently in the Thaw Collection of American Indian Art at the Fenimore Art Museum in Cooperstown, New York, by gift from Claire and Eugene Thaw.

In August of 1985, the Thaw Collection Serape was displayed at Morning Star Gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico, as part of an exhibition entitled *Collecting the Navajo Child's Blanket*. The Thaw Serape is illustrated as Figure Two in Baer, *Collecting The Navajo Child's Blanket*, 1985—the exhibition catalog. The serape is dated “circa 1855.”

The Thaw Serape is illustrated as Figure T126 on Page 238 in Vincent, *Art of the North American Indian*, 2000. Vincent dates the serape: “ca. 1850-1860.”

Full illustrations of the Thaw Serape appear on Pages 14 and 15 of this appraisal.

Details of the lightning designs that appear as horizontal sections in the Thaw Serape are illustrated below.





The Thaw Serape, Navajo, circa 1855.

The serape measures 58 inches long by 40 inches wide, as woven. Condition is excellent with minor damage to the side selvages, as pictured.

The red yarns are raveled bayeta dyed in the fabric with cochineal. The medium blue and dark blue yarns are handspun Churro fleece dyed in the yarn with indigo. The white yarns are un-dyed handspun Churro fleece.

Ex- Robert Musser, Aspen, Colorado. Ex- Bert Lies, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Acquired in 1991 by Claire and Eugene Thaw of Cooperstown, New York.

Exhibited: *Collecting the Navajo Child's Blanket*, Morning Star Gallery, Santa Fe, 1985. Illustrated as Figure Two in Baer, *Collecting the Navajo Child's Blanket*, 1985—the exhibition catalog. Dated “circa 1855.”

Illustrated as Figure T126 in Vincent, *Art of the North American Indian*, 2000. Vincent dates the serape “ca. 1850-1860.”

Currently in the Thaw Collection at the Fenimore Cooper Museum, Cooperstown, New York, by donation from Claire and Eugene Thaw.



The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.  
The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.



The Thaw Serape, Navajo, circa 1860.  
The serape measures 58 inches long by 40 inches wide, as woven.

### Comparable Examples – The Mulberger Serape

The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, has lightning designs and weaving techniques in common with a Classic Serape with Lightning Designs, Navajo, circa 1860, also known as the Mulberger Serape. The Mulberger Serape is ex- Michael Mulberger of Scottsdale, Arizona. Mulberger is the great-grandson of Frederick Miller, founder of the Miller Brewing Company in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. During the late 1970s, Mulberger became an active collector of antique and prehistoric Native American art. Mulberger bought many of the works of art in his collection from Lee Cohen of Gallery 10, in Scottsdale, Arizona, and from Christopher Selser, of Tucson and Scottsdale.

In 1979, the Mulberger Serape was displayed at the Aspen Center for the Visual Arts in Aspen, Colorado, as part of an exhibition entitled *Enduring Visions*. The Mulberger Serape is illustrated as Plate 44 in Erdman and Holstein, *Enduring Visions*, 1979—the exhibition catalog. Erdman and Holstein date the serape “1840-1860.”

In 1982, the Mulberger serape was acquired by private collectors in New York, New York. The Mulberger serape has remained in the same private collection since 1982.

The Mulberger serape is illustrated as Plate 66 in Selser and Kaufman, *The Navajo Weaving Tradition*, 1985. Selser and Kaufman date the serape “1865-1870.”

Full illustrations of the Mulberger Serape appear on Pages 17 and 18 of this appraisal.

A detail of the lightning designs in the Mulberger Serape appears below.





The Mulberger Serape, Navajo, circa 1860.

The serape measures 60 inches long by 38 inches wide, as woven.

Condition is excellent with less than 5% restoration.

One of the red yarns is raveled bayeta dyed in the fabric with cochineal. The other red yarn is three-ply machine-spun yarn, also known as Saxony yarn, dyed in the skein with cochineal. The blue yarns are handspun Churro fleece dyed in the yarn with indigo. The white yarns are un-dyed handspun Churro fleece.

Exhibited: *Enduring Visions – 1000 Years of Southwestern Indian Art*, the Aspen Center for the Visual Arts, Aspen, Colorado, 1979. Illustrated as Plate 44 in Erdman and Holstein, *Enduring Visions*, 1979—the exhibition catalog.

Erdman and Holstein date the serape “1840-1860.”

Illustrated as Plate 66 in Selser and Kaufman, *The Navajo Weaving Tradition*, 1985.

Selser and Kaufman date the serape “1865-1870.”

Ex- Michael Mulberger, Scottsdale, Arizona. Acquired by the current owners in 1982.

Currently in a private collection in New York, New York.



The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.  
The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.



The Mulberger Serape, Navajo, circa 1860.  
The serape measures 60 inches long by 38 inches wide, as woven.

### **Comparable Examples – A Classic Serape with a White Field**

The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, has lightning designs and weaving techniques in common with a Classic Serape with a White Field, Navajo, circa 1860. The lightning design appears in the field at the top and bottom of the serape.

The Classic Serape with a White Field is ex- private collection, Santa Fe, New Mexico. The serape was acquired by the current owners in April, 2013. The serape is currently in a private collection.

The Classic Serape with a White Field has no exhibition history. The serape is not illustrated in any books or publications.

Full illustrations of the Classic Serape with a White Field appear on Pages 20 and 21 of this appraisal.

Details of the lightning pattern at the top and bottom of the Classic Serape with a White Field, Navajo, circa 1860, appear below.





A Classic Serape with a White Field, Navajo, circa 1860.

The serape measures 62 inches long by 38 inches wide, as woven.

Condition is excellent with less than 1% restoration.

The red yarns are raveled bayeta dyed in the fabric with cochineal. The green yarns are raveled bayeta dyed in the fabric with indigo and vegetal dyes. The medium blue and dark blue yarns are handspun Churro fleece dyed in the yarn with indigo. The white yarns are un-dyed handspun Churro fleece.

No museum exhibitions. No publications.

Ex- private collection, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Acquired by the current owners in April, 2013. Currently in a private collection.



The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.  
The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.



A Classic Serape with a White Field, Navajo, circa 1860.  
The serape measures 62 inches long by 38 inches wide, as woven.

### **Comparable Examples – A Late Classic Wedge-Weave Serape with Raveled Yarns**

The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, has format, lightning designs, and weaving techniques in common with a Late Classic Wedge-Weave Serape with Raveled Yarns, Navajo, circa 1870. The Late Classic Wedge-Weave Serape with Raveled Yarns is the earliest known example of a Navajo serape where the lightning pattern appears as an overall design, as opposed to a sectional design. The Late Classic Wedge-Weave Serape with Raveled Yarns is one of the few wedge-weave serapes woven with significant quantities of raveled red yarns and handspun blue yarns dyed with indigo. See Page 23 for details.

The Late Classic Wedge-Weave Serape with Raveled Yarns, Navajo, circa 1870, has no exhibition history. The serape has not been illustrated in any books or publications.

The Late Classic Wedge-Weave Serape with Raveled Yarns, Navajo, circa 1870, is currently in a private collection in Denver, Colorado.

Full illustrations of the Late Classic Wedge-Weave Serape with Raveled Yarns, Navajo, circa 1870, appear on Pages 23 and 24 of this appraisal.

A detail of the center of the Late Classic Wedge-Weave Serape with Raveled Yarns, Navajo, circa 1870, appears below.





A Late Classic Wedge-Weave Serape with Raveled Yarns, Navajo, circa 1870.

The serape measures 76 inches long by 50 inches wide, as woven.

Condition is excellent with less than 1% restoration.

The deep red yarns are raveled bayeta dyed in the fabric with lac.

The pale red yarns are raveled bayeta dyed in the fabric with cochineal.

The orange-red yarns are raveled American flannel dyed in the fabric with synthetic dyes.

The dark blue yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with indigo.

The yellow yarns are four-ply machine-spun knitting yarns, also known as Saxony yarns, dyed in the skein with vegetal dyes. The grey yarns are un-dyed brown and un-dyed white

Merino fleece carded together and handspun to create grey yarn. The brown yarns are un-dyed handspun Merino fleece. The white yarns are un-dyed handspun Merino fleece.

While combinations of raveled red yarns often appear in late classic Navajo serapes, this serape is the only known example of a wedge-weave serape woven

with significant quantities of deep red, pale red, and orange-red raveled yarns.

This serape is also the only known example of a wedge-weave serape where quantities of raveled red yarns appear side-by-side with blue handspun yarns dyed with indigo.

Currently in a private collection in Denver, Colorado.



The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.  
The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.



A Late Classic Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1870.  
The serape measures 76 inches long by 50 inches wide, as woven.

### Comparable Examples – The Berlant Wedge-Weave Serape

The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, has lightning designs in common with a Transitional Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1880, also known as the Berlant Wedge-Weave Serape. The Berlant Wedge-Weave Serape is ex- Tony Berlant, of Santa Monica, California.

In 1979, the Berlant Wedge-Weave Serape was displayed as part of an exhibition entitled *Enduring Visions – 1000 Years of Southwestern Indian Art*, at the Aspen Center for the Visual Arts in Aspen, Colorado. The serape is illustrated as Plate 51 in Erdman and Holstein, *Enduring Visions, 1979*—the exhibition catalog. Erdman and Holstein date the serape “ca. 1885.”

In 1981, the serape was displayed at the Machida Museum, Tokyo, Japan, as part of an exhibition entitled *The Berlant Collection of Navajo Blankets*. The serape is illustrated as Plate 45 in Berlant and Whitaker, *Nineteenth Century American Indian Blankets: The Berlant Collection of Navajo Blankets*, 1981—the exhibition catalog. Berlant and Whitaker date the serape “1885-1895.”

The Berlant Wedge-Weave serape was woven in the pulled-warp style.

During the 1990s, the Berlant Wedge-Weave Serape was sold by Berlant and is currently in a private collection.

Full illustrations of the Berlant Wedge-Weave Serape appear on Pages 26 and 27 of this appraisal.

A detail of the center of the Berlant Wedge-Weave Serape appears below.





The Berlant Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1880.

The serape measures 79 inches long by 60 inches wide, as woven.

Condition is excellent with less than 2% percent restoration.

Side selvages and corner tassels are 95% percent original.

The serape exhibits the scalloped edges associated with the pulled-warp style.

The red yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with synthetic dyes.

One of the blue yarns is handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with indigo.

The other blue yarn is handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with synthetic dyes.

The black yarn is handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with synthetic dyes.

The white yarn is un-dyed handspun Merino fleece.

Ex- Tony Berlant, Santa Monica, California.

Exhibited: *Enduring Visions*, Aspen Center for the Visual Arts, Aspen, Colorado; 1979.

Illustrated as Plate 51 in Erdman and Holstein, *Enduring Visions*, 1979—  
the exhibition catalog. Erdman and Holstein date the serape “ca. 1885.”

Exhibited: *The Berlant Collection*, the Machida Museum, Tokyo, Japan; 1981.

Illustrated as Plate 45 in Berlant and Whitaker, *The Berlant Collection*, 1981—  
the exhibition catalog. Berlant and Whitaker date the serape “1885-1895.”

Currently in a private collection.



The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.  
The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.



The Berlant Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1880.  
The blanket measures 79 inches long by 60 inches wide, as woven.

## Comparable Examples – The Cushing Wedge-Weave Serape

The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, has lightning designs and weaving techniques in common with a Transitional Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1880, also known as the Cushing Wedge-Weave Serape. The Cushing Wedge-Weave Serape is ex- Frank Hamilton Cushing (1857-1900) of Erie County, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C.

In 1920, the Cushing Wedge-Weave Serape was purchased from the estate of Frank Cushing by the Museum of the American Indian / Heye Foundation, in New York City. The serape is currently in the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C., (NMAI #9.9821). In terms of age, condition, provenance, and style, the Cushing Wedge-Weave Serape is among the most important Navajo wedge-weave serapes in a museum collection.

The Cushing Wedge-Weave Serape is illustrated as Plate 11 in Bonar, *Woven by the Grandmothers*, 1996. In her caption for Plate 11, Bonar refers to the serape as a “*Beeldléi*” and dates it “ca.1885.” In her notes, Bonar refers to the serape’s design as a “Zig-zag pattern” and dates the serape “about 1885.” (See Bonar, Page 194.)

Frank Hamilton Cushing was an anthropologist and ethnologist associated with the United States Bureau of Ethnology. In 1879, Cushing accompanied Colonel James Stevenson, Stevenson’s wife, Matilda Coxe Stevenson, and the photographer John Hillers, on Colonel Stevenson’s expedition through the Southwest. Between 1880 and 1884, Cushing lived as a member of the Zuni tribe at Zuni Pueblo. In 1881, Cushing was initiated into the Warrior Society, also known as the Priesthood of the Bow, and was given the Zuni name *Tenatsali*, or “Medicine Flower.” In the field of anthropology, Cushing is known as the first participant observer.

In 1882, Cushing took his adopted Zuni father and fellow Priests of the Bow on a tour of the eastern United States. The tour was an example of what Cushing described as “the reciprocal method,” where the subjects of Cushing’s field work were introduced to the people and places of Cushing’s world, just as those subjects had introduced Cushing to the people and places of their world. Today, this practice is known as “reflexive anthropology.” During the nineteenth century, Zuni Pueblo was a trade center for Native Americans, Spanish Americans, and Anglo-Americans. In September of 1851, Samuel Woodhouse collected two classic chief’s blankets at Zuni Pueblo. (See Bonar, Page 178.) The Cushing Wedge-Weave Serape’s original condition, along with Cushing’s documented residency at Zuni Pueblo, suggest that Cushing acquired the serape at Zuni Pueblo between 1880 and 1884.



A portrait of Frank Hamilton Cushing by Thomas Eakins, 1895.



A detail of the center of the Cushing Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1885.  
Full illustrations of the serape appear on Pages 30 and 31 of this appraisal.



The Cushing Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1880.

The serape measures 47 inches long by 36 inches wide, as woven.  
Dimensions are small for wedge-weave serape.

Condition is excellent and original with no restorations.  
Side selvages and corner tassels are 99% original and intact.

The red yarns are four-ply machine-spun knitting yarns dyed in the skein with synthetic dyes. The blue yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with indigo. The green yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with indigo and vegetal dyes. The yellow yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with vegetal dyes. The brown yarns and the white yarns are un-dyed handspun Merino fleece.

Ex- Frank Hamilton Cushing (1857-1900), Washington, D.C.

Illustrated as Plate 11 in Bonar, *Woven by the Grandmothers*, 1996.  
Bonar refers to the serape as a “*Beeldléi*,” and dates it “ca.1885.”

Currently in the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian,  
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (NMAI #9.9821).



The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.  
The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.



The Cushing Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1880.  
The serape measures 47 inches long by 36 inches wide, as woven.

### Comparable Examples – The Boulder Wedge-Weave Serape

The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, has format, lightning designs, scale, and weaving techniques in common with a Transitional Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1890, also known as the Boulder Wedge-Weave Serape. The Boulder Wedge-Weave Serape is currently in the collection of the University of Colorado Museum in Boulder, Colorado (UCM catalog #22475).

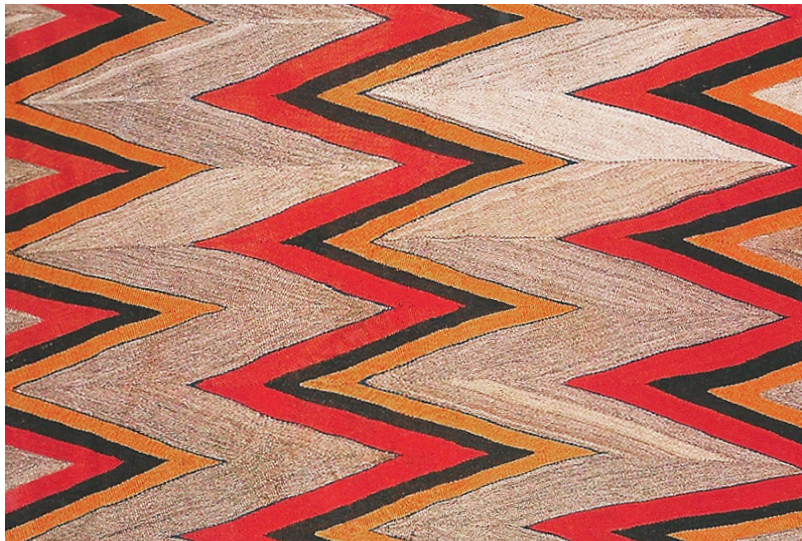
The Boulder Wedge-Weave Serape is illustrated as Plate 160 in Wheat and Hedlund, *Blanket Weaving in the Southwest*, 2003. Wheat and Hedlund classify the serape as a “Navajo Diyugi,” and date it “1880-1890.”

At 82 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven, the Boulder Wedge-Weave Serape is one of the largest wedge-weave serapes in museum or private hands. The serape’s dimensions raise the possibility that it was woven by the same weaver who wove the Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.

The Boulder Wedge Weave Serape was woven in the pulled-warp style.

Full illustrations of the Boulder Wedge Weave Serape appear on Pages 33 and 34 of this appraisal.

A detail of the center of the Boulder Wedge-Weave Serape appears below.





The Boulder Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1890.

The serape measures 86 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.

Condition is excellent with less than 1% restoration.

Side selvages and corner tassels are 99% original.

The serape exhibits the scalloped edges associated with the pulled-warp style.

The red, orange, black, and blue yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with synthetic dyes. The grey yarns are un-dyed brown and un-dyed white

Merino fleece carded and handspun together to create grey yarn.

The brown yarns are un-dyed handspun Merino fleece.

Illustrated as Plate 160 in Wheat and Hedlund, *Blanket Weaving in the Southwest*, 2003.

Wheat and Hedlund date the serape "1880-1890."

Currently in the collection of the University of Colorado Museum in Boulder, Colorado (UCM Catalog #22475).



The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.  
The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.



The Boulder Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1890.  
The blanket measures 86 inches long by 62 inches wide, as woven.

### Comparable Examples – Sotheby’s 2011 Wedge-Weave Serape

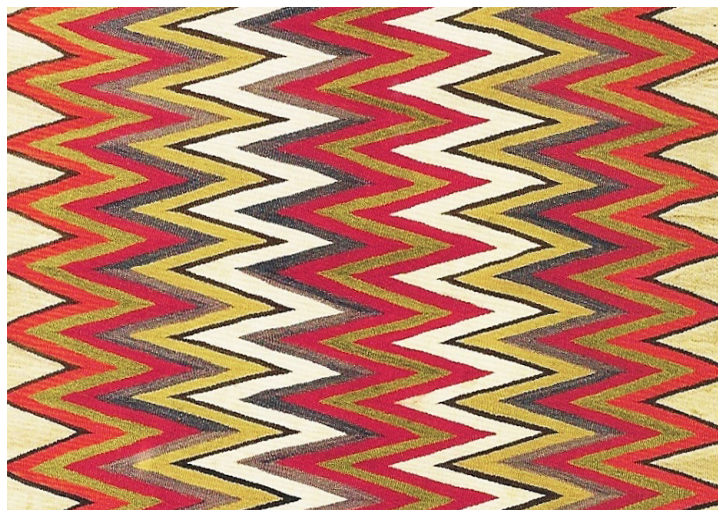
The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, has format, lightning designs, and weaving techniques in common with a Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1890, also known as Sotheby’s 2011 Wedge-Weave Serape. On May 18, 2011, Sotheby’s 2011 Wedge-Weave Serape was sold as Lot #86 by Sotheby’s, New York, as part of Sotheby’s *American Indian Art Sale*. The serape sold for \$68,500, buyer’s premium included. \$68,500 stands as the auction record for a Navajo wedge-weave serape, and as the auction record for a transitional Navajo serape. The serape is currently in a private collection.

Sotheby’s 2011 Wedge Weave Serape is woven entirely out of handspun yarns. All of the colored yarns are dyed in the yarn with synthetic dyes. The brown yarns and the white yarns are un-dyed handspun Merino fleece.

In terms of composition, style, and yarns, Sotheby’s 2011 Wedge-Weave Serape is a typical example of the Transitional Period (1880-1900) of Navajo weaving. The serape contains no raveled yarns, no plied commercial yarns, and no blue handspun yarns dyed with indigo.

Full illustrations of the Sotheby’s 2011 Wedge-Weave Serape appear on Pages 36 and 37 of this appraisal.

A detail of the wedge-weave designs near the center of Sotheby’s 2011 Wedge-Weave Serape appears below.





Sotheby's 2011 Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1890.

The serape measures 73 inches long by 60 inches wide, as woven.

Condition is excellent with less 2% restoration.  
Side selvages and corner tassels are 99% original.

All of the colored yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with synthetic dyes. The white yarns are un-dyed handspun white Merino fleece.

Sold on May 18, 2011, as Lot #86 for \$68,500, buyer's premium included, by Sotheby's, New York, as part of Sotheby's *American Indian Art Auction*. Sotheby's describes the serape as a "Navajo Transitional Blanket." Sotheby's does not date the serape. \$68,500 stands as the auction record for a wedge-weave serape.

The serape is currently in a private collection.



The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.  
The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.



Sotheby's 2011 Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1890.  
The serape measures 73 inches long by 60 inches wide, as woven.

### Comparable Examples – Sotheby’s 1998 Wedge-Weave Serape

The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, has lightning designs and weaving techniques in common with a Transitional Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1880, also known as Sotheby’s 1998 Wedge-Weave Serape. On December 2, 1998, Sotheby’s 1998 Wedge-Weave Serape was sold as Lot #223 for \$28,750, buyer’s premium included, by Sotheby’s, New York, as part of Sotheby’s *Important American Indian Art Sale*. In 1998, \$28,750 set the auction record for a wedge-weave serape. The auction record stood until 2011— see pages 35 and 36, above.

In August, 2015, Sotheby’s 1998 Wedge-Weave Serape was sold by Shiprock, Santa Fe, to a private collector, for \$75,000—a record price for a wedge-weave serape. As of May, 2017, the record stands.

Sotheby’s 1998 Wedge Weave Serape is woven entirely out of handspun yarns. All of the red yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with synthetic dyes. The blue yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with indigo. The grey yarns are un-dyed brown and un-dyed white Merino fleece carded and handspun together to create grey yarn. The brown yarns are un-dyed handspun Merino fleece.

Full illustrations of Sotheby’s 1998 Wedge-Weave Serape appear on Pages 36 and 37 of this appraisal.

A detail of the center of Sotheby’s 1998 Wedge-Weave Serape appears below.





Sotheby's 1998 Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1880.

The serape measures 63 inches long by 55 inches wide, as woven.

Condition is excellent with less than 2% restoration.

The red yarns on both sides are 5% faded.

The red yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with synthetic dyes.

The blue yarns are handspun Merino fleece dyed in the yarn with indigo.

The grey yarns are un-dyed brown and un-dyed white Merino fleece carded together to create grey handspun yarn. The dark brown yarns are un-dyed handspun Merino fleece.

Sold on December 2, 1998, as Lot #223, for \$28,750, buyer's premium included, by Sotheby's, New York, as part of Sotheby's *Important American Indian Art Auction*.

Sotheby's does not date the serape. \$28,750 stood as the auction record for a wedge-weave serape until May 18, 2011—see Pages 35 and 36, above.

Sold in August, 2015, for \$75,000, at Shiprock, Santa Fe.

\$75,000 stands as the record price for a Navajo wedge-weave serape.

The serape is currently in a private collection.



The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein.  
The serape measures 85 inches long by 63 inches wide, as woven.



Sotheby's 1998 Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1880.  
The serape measures 63 inches long by 55 inches wide, as woven.

### *Rarity*

Navajo wedge-weave serapes with original colors, and original corner tassels, side selvages, and top and bottom edge cords, are rare. In terms of age, condition, format, size, and style, The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, qualifies as a Navajo serape of the highest rarity. The opportunity to replace the Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, appraised herein, with a comparable example, either at auction or through a private sale, might occur once every ten years.

### *Style*

Native Americans, Spanish Americans, and Anglo-Americans have been collecting Navajo serapes since the early 1800s. Between 1840 and 1900, the age, condition, and yarns of a Navajo serape were considered more important to the value of a serape than a serape's aesthetic appeal. Between 1900 and 1960, the aesthetic attributes of a Navajo serape became more important than they had been during the second half of the nineteenth century but aesthetic considerations remained secondary to age, condition, and yarns.

Between 1960 and 2000, prices paid for Navajo serapes—both at auction and through private sales—increased dramatically. As prices increased, it became obvious that collectors and dealers were willing to pay premium prices for Navajo serapes that qualified as visually compelling works of art. During this period, the aesthetic merits of a Navajo serape became as important as the serape's age, condition, and yarns.

During the last twenty years, the market for Navajo serapes has continued to value aesthetic appeal more highly than age, condition, or yarns. This is especially true for wedge-weave serapes, which appeal to contemporary art collectors. In terms of color, composition, and design, the Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, is one of the most visually compelling wedge-weave serapes in either museum or private collections. The serape compares favorably with all of the wedge-weave serapes listed as comparable examples in this appraisal.

**Summary**

In terms of age, condition, rarity, style, and yarns, the Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, is on a par with the finest Navajo wedge-weave serapes in museum and private collections. The Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field has attributes in common with the Boulder Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1890, currently in the collection of the University of Colorado Museum in Boulder, Colorado (UCM catalog #22475).

The \$68,500 paid at auction on May 18, 2011, for the Sotheby's 2011 Wedge-Weave Serape, Navajo, circa 1890, established market demand for a visually compelling wedge-weave serape woven during the 1890s. (See Pages 35 through 37, above.) The \$75,000 paid in August, 2015, for the 1998 Sotheby's Wedge-Weave Serape, confirmed that demand. (See Pages 38 through 40, above.)

In the current market, replacing the Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein, with a comparable wedge-weave serape would require an offer of no less than \$70,000.

**Appraisal**

I have examined the Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein. The **Fair Market Value** and **Replacement Value** assigned to the Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field are consistent with fair market prices currently being asked and received both at public auction and through private sales for outstanding Navajo serapes as of May, 2017. In assigning a **Replacement Value**, I took into account the age, condition, format, rarity, style, and yarns of the Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, appraised herein. I also took into consideration the relative market values of each of the Navajo wedge-weave serapes listed and illustrated as comparable examples.

<b>Fair Market Value:</b>	<b>\$65,000.</b>
<b>Replacement Value:</b>	<b>\$75,000.</b>

Joshua Baer / Appraiser  
Federal Tax I.D. Number: 85-0359582  
Appraisal #051717-Wedge

## *Valuations*

In this appraisal, \$65,000 is provided as the Fair Market Value of the Wedge-Weave Serape with a Red Field, Navajo, circa 1890, illustrated and appraised herein. \$75,000 is provided as the Replacement Value of the serape.

According to IRS Section 1.170 and 20.2031 (b), Fair Market Value is: “The price at which the property would change hands between a willing buyer and a willing seller, neither being under any compulsion to buy or sell and both having reasonable knowledge of relevant facts.”

In the art market, Fair Market Value is the price a given work of art can be expected to realize either at auction, at an art gallery, or through a private sale within ninety days of being offered for sale. Fair Market Value does not take into account sales commissions which a collector should expect to pay to an art broker, art gallery, or auction company for reselling a consigned work of art. In a private sale, the seller’s commission can range from 10% to 50% of the final sales price of a work of art. Established auction companies typically collect a 10% commission from the seller plus a 25% commission, or “buyer’s premium” from the buyer, plus fees for catalog placement, insurance, and photography. After commissions and fees, the average consignor receives between 60% and 65% of the sold item’s Fair Market Value.

“Replacement Value” refers to the retail price a collector will have to spend in order to replace a damaged, lost, or stolen work of art with a comparable work of art by purchasing that replacement work of art either from an art gallery, auction company, or private collector. In the case of a unique work of art, Replacement Value refers to the retail price a collector will have to replace the damaged, lost, or stolen work of art with a comparably unique work of art. Replacement Value does not include the costs of research, time, or travel associated with finding a venue where the replacement work of art may or may not be available for purchase.

The Internal Revenue Service uses Fair Market Value as the value of a work of art being given by its owner as a charitable donation, provided that the donor has owned the work of art for more than one year. Established insurance carriers (Chubb, Lloyd’s, or Traveler’s, for example) insure works of art in private collections at their Replacement Values. Claims for damaged, lost, or stolen works of art are settled at Replacement Value, minus a deductible.

Financial institutions and established auction companies will loan money to art collectors against the Fair Market Values of works of art pledged as collateral. However, the amounts of such loans, terms of such loans, and rates of interest charged for such loans depend more on the net worth of the borrower than on the Fair Market Values of the works of art pledged as collateral.

(continued...)

*(Valuations, continued...)*

The disparity between the Replacement Values and Fair Market Values of works of antique Native American art expands and contracts according to the strengths and weaknesses of the global economy and the art market. During periods of extended strength in the art market, Fair Market Values can either equal or temporarily exceed Replacement Values. During periods of extended weakness, Fair Market Values can contract to as little as 33% of Replacement Values.

During the last forty years, Fair Market Values either approached or exceeded Replacement Values twice: from November of 1989 through December of 1990, and again from August of 2000 through December of 2000. During that same forty-year period, Fair Market Values contracted to 50% of Replacement Values during the spring of 1984, during the spring of 1993, and during the spring, summer, and fall of 2001. Fair Market Values for outstanding works of antique Native American art currently stand at between 80% and 90% of Replacement Values.

In most instances, a work of art of extraordinary rarity will support a Replacement Value in excess of its Fair Market Value. However, the Replacement Value of a work of art that is commonly available will be only marginally higher than that work of art's Fair Market Value.

Collectors of antique Native American art can enhance the values of the works of art in their collections by having those works of art published in books, by having those works of art exhibited in museums, by displaying those works of art to their best advantage in the collectors' residences, by improving and protecting the condition of those works of art, and by holding those works of art for a period of three to five years. During the last forty years, collectors of antique Native American art who consulted and worked with a knowledgeable art consultant or art dealer saw dramatic appreciation in the Replacement and Fair Market Values of the works of art in their collections.

Collectors of antique Native American art can reduce the values of the works of art in their collections by displaying those works of art improperly, by offering those works of art for sale on a recreational basis, by consigning those works of art to auction at high reserves, by physically damaging those works of art, by improperly restoring those works of art, or by attempting to re-sell those works of art within less than three years of their dates of acquisition. Invariably, the collector who regards his or her collection as inventory will reduce the value of his or her collection, regardless of the quality of the individual works of art in that collection.

## **Joshua Baer – *Qualifications as an Appraiser***

Joshua Baer is president and managing partner of Joshua Baer & Company in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Joshua Baer & Company specializes in the appraisal, purchase, resale, and restoration of Navajo blankets, historic Navajo rugs, antique Native American art, New Mexican tinwork, Spanish Colonial furniture, and vintage American photography. Joshua Baer & Company has been a New Mexico Corporation since October of 1987.

Since 1985, Joshua Baer has performed more than two thousand appraisals of Navajo blankets and rugs. Baer has acted as a consultant to auction companies dealing in Navajo blankets, including Bonham's of San Francisco, Christie's of New York, Heritage Auctions of Dallas, and Sotheby's of New York. Individual appraisal and consultation clients have included Tony Berlant, Donald Ellis, Steve and Laurene Jobs, Ralph Lauren, Arthur Levitt, Linda and Stanley Marcus, Hal Riney, Gerald Peters, Helen Schwab, Jack Silverman, Gaylord Torrence, Mark Winter, and other private collectors. Between 2003 and 2004, working on a pro-bono basis, Baer appraised all of the classic Navajo blankets in the collection of the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture (MIAC) in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Joshua Baer has advertised appraisal and consultation services in *American Indian Art Magazine*, *The Magazine Antiques*, *The Magazine*, and online at WESTERNPICTURES.NET and NAVAJOBLANKETAPPRAISALS.COM. Baer has appraised Navajo blankets which were donated to the Navajo Cultural Museum in Window Rock, Arizona; the de Young Museum in San Francisco, California; the Center of Southwest Studies at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado; El Rancho de las Golondrinas in Santa Fe, New Mexico; the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture in Santa Fe; the Wheelwright Museum in Santa Fe; the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Massachusetts; the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City, Missouri; and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, New York. Baer has appraised works of antique Native American ceremonial art which were repatriated to the Acoma, Apache, Hopi, Jemez, and Navajo tribes.

In 1996, Joshua Baer testified as an expert witness in a court case involving commercial values of Navajo blankets (*Burke vs. Harmon*; Lincoln, Nebraska, June, 1996). Baer has appeared on CNBC (January, 1997), on NBC (January, 1997), and on CBS (October, 2000) as an authority on the market for Navajo blankets. On January 14, 1997, Baer was featured in *USA Today* as a prominent dealer in Navajo blankets. Between February, 2000, and February, 2001, Baer performed online appraisals as the Native American art specialist at AUCTIONWATCH.COM.

Joshua Baer is a magna cum laude graduate of the University of California at Santa Cruz, with bachelor's degrees in Art History and English Literature in 1974. Baer is the author of three books about Native American art: *Collecting The Navajo Child's Blanket* (1986), *Twelve Classics* (1989), and *The Last Blankets* (1998). Baer's articles about Native American art have appeared in *Hali Magazine*, *The Magazine Antiques*, *Tribal Art Magazine*, and the *Santa Fean Magazine*. Baer has written articles about Navajo blankets and prehistoric Southwestern pottery for AUCTIONWATCH.COM.

(continued...)

*(Qualifications, continued...)*

In 1986, Joshua Baer curated an exhibition of Navajo child's blankets for Morning Star Gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico. In 1992, Baer curated *Space and Design*, an exhibition of Navajo chief's blankets, for the Monterey Peninsula Museum in Monterey, California. In 1998, Baer curated *The Last Blankets*, an exhibition of historic Navajo double saddle blankets. *The Last Blankets* appeared at Joshua Baer & Company in Santa Fe, and at the Winter Antiques Show in New York City. In 2001, in cooperation with the San Francisco Folk Art Museum, Baer curated *The Rio Grande Serape*, an exhibit of Navajo, Rio Grande, and Saltillo serapes for the Tribal and Textile Show at Fort Mason in San Francisco, California.

In March of 2012, Baer appraised the Chantland First Phase Chief's Blanket, Navajo, circa 1840, for \$1,800,000. On June 19, 2012, the Chantland First Phase sold at Moran's Auctions in Pasadena, California, for \$1,800,000, buyer's premium included—at the time, a record price for a Navajo chief's blanket. In 2015, Baer appraised the Denman Ross First Phase for the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. In May of 2016, Baer gave a lecture entitled *Dahistlo* ("From the ground up," in Navajo) to the Textile and Costume Society at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

### ***Appraisal Fees***

Joshua Baer charges \$250 per hour for written appraisals. His minimum day rate for an on site appraisal is \$500. Appraisals fees are calculated according to these hourly and daily rates. Appraisal fees are not based on the values of the works of art being appraised.

Standard Appraisals include the Replacement Values of the works being appraised. Custom Appraisals include Replacement Values and Fair Market Values of the works being appraised, and recommendations regarding how, when, and where to donate or sell the appraised works of art.

Joshua Baer is available for consultations regarding auction consignments, auction estimates and reserves, bidding at auction, long-term management of private or corporate collections, and the cleaning and restoration of Navajo blankets. Consultation fees are based on the nature of the consultation, the research involved, and the client's ability to pay for the consultation. Pro-bono appraisals and consultations are available by request.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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