



### **Petroglyph, 350 to 2,000 years old**

Artist and tribal affiliation unknown

Montana Historical Society Collection, Gift of Western Energy

Through the centuries, people have left their mark on the land, carving [petroglyphs] or painting [pictographs] powerful images in caves or on bluff faces. This petroglyph is from the Ellison Rock near Colstrip.



### **Buffalo hide robe, ca. 1880**

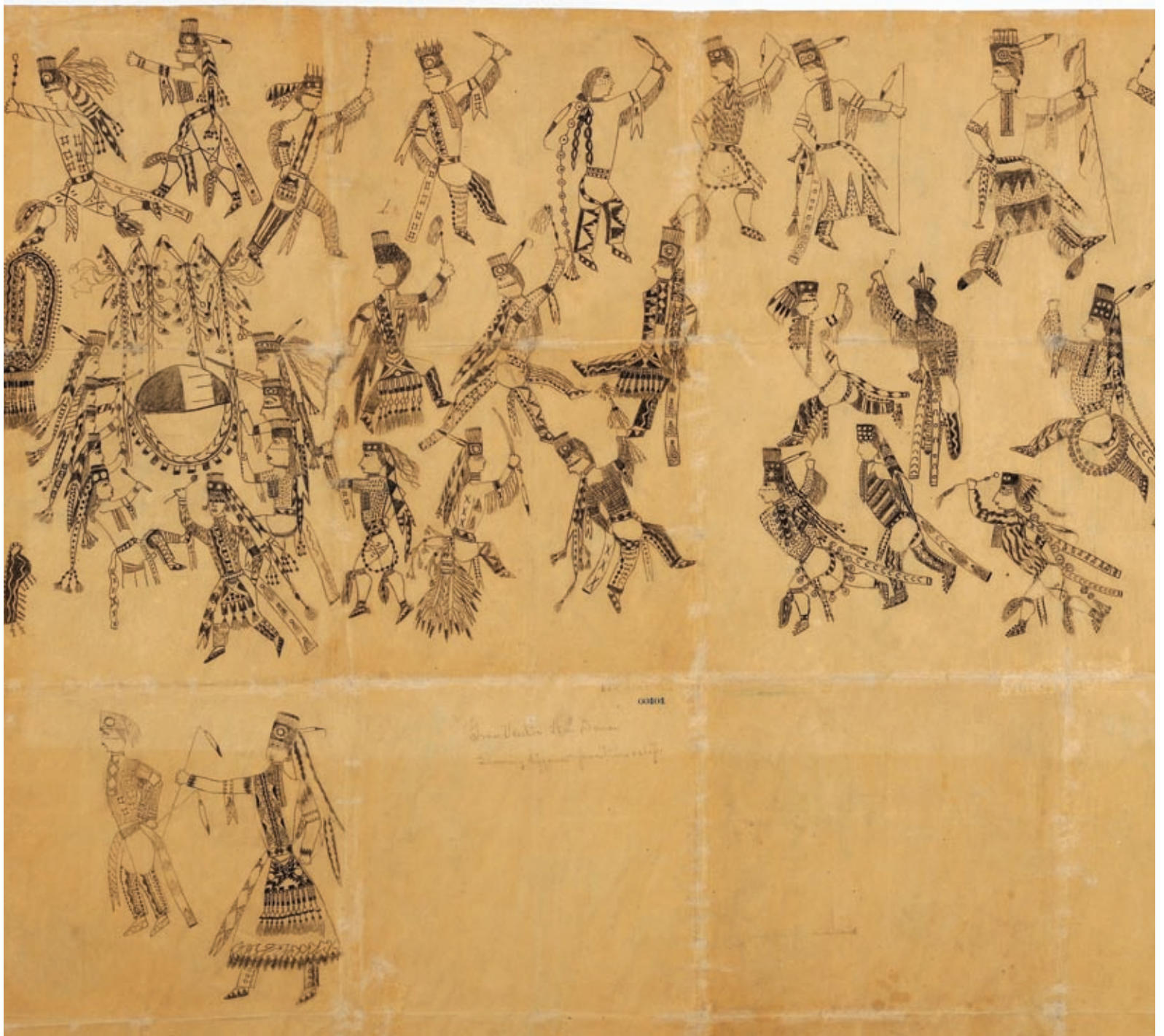
White Swan and unidentified artist(s), Crow

Buffalo hide, beads, pigment, dye, ink

Montana Historical Society Museum Collection, Gift of Isabel Haynes, 1978.38.105

White Swan—a young Crow warrior who served the U.S Army as a scout during the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876—painted the lower half of this beautiful robe. A prolific artist, White Swan often depicted events from the Little Bighorn battle in his art. However, on this robe he illustrates his exploits in intertribal warfare. Here, among other heroic deeds, he is shown counting coups on his enemy and stealing a gun.

A different artist (or artists), painted the battle scene in the upper half of this robe. That artist might have been Curley, another Crow warrior who also served as U.S. scout during the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Although this theory cannot be verified, the composition of several of the warriors' feet, arms, and faces resemble warriors in ledger art that we know Curley created. Possibly, two different artists worked on this part of the robe; note the stylistic differences in the rendering of some of the warriors' faces.



### **Untitled ledger drawing (detail), ca. 1883-1885**

Elk Head (born c. 1850), Hidatsa

Pencil on paper

Montana Historical Society Museum Collection, X1982.49.01

This drawing portrays Hidatsa Indians at a social/ceremonial dance, dressed in all their finery. Elk Head was sentenced to the territorial prison in Deer Lodge in 1879 for committing a murder, the exact circumstances of which are unknown. Elk Head drew this pictorial history from memory during his incarceration. He was released from prison in 1885 having earned four years off of his sentence "by his excellent conduct." We do not know what happened to Elk Head after his release.



### **Tipi liner, ca.1900**

Artists unidentified, Gros Ventre

Painted canvas

Montana Historical Society Museum Collection, 1981.67.09

This Gros Ventre tipi liner is covered with many pictographic images that represent the work of more than one artist. Liners like this served a dual purpose within the tipi. On a practical level, liners provided an air space that helped to insulate the lodge against winter cold and summer heat. Socially, liners were decorated to publicize a man's war record, thus declaring his status within the tribe. Tipi liner art served the same function as the degrees and diplomas modern day professionals hang in their offices for all to see.



### Untitled ledger drawing, 1886

Curley (ca. 1856-1923), Crow

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

Montana Historical Society Museum Collection, X1915.01.02

Curley served as a scout for the Seventh Cavalry under George Armstrong Custer at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Ten years after the battle, while encamped for the winter on Hide Creek near Meteetse, Wyoming, he produced this and many other drawings. Curley utilized a unique and lively graphic style, portraying warriors with elongated bodies, small curved feet, and no hands.



### **(Fig)ht between Cheyenne and [Coma]nche Indians, 1885**

White Bear (ca. 1867-1886), Cheyenne, and Elk Head (born c. 1850), Hidatsa  
Graphite and colored pencil on paper

Montana Historical Society Museum Collection, Gift of Mrs. Francis Jergens, X1961.16.02

This drawing represents a collaboration between White Bear and Elk Head, executed while both men were incarcerated at the territorial prison in Deer Lodge. White Bear drew the top half, while Elk Head drew the lower half.

White Bear was one of several Northern Cheyenne Indians sentenced to the territorial prison in Deer Lodge for burning buildings on the Alderson ranch (near present-day Lame Deer) in retaliation for the ranch hands' attack on their chief, Black Wolf. After serving one year of his five-year sentence, White Bear was pardoned and released. He died from tuberculosis shortly thereafter.

Elk Head was sentenced to the territorial prison in Deer Lodge in 1879 for committing a murder, the exact circumstances of which are unknown. He was released from prison in 1885 having earned four years off of his sentence "by his excellent conduct." We do not know what happened to Elk Head after his release.



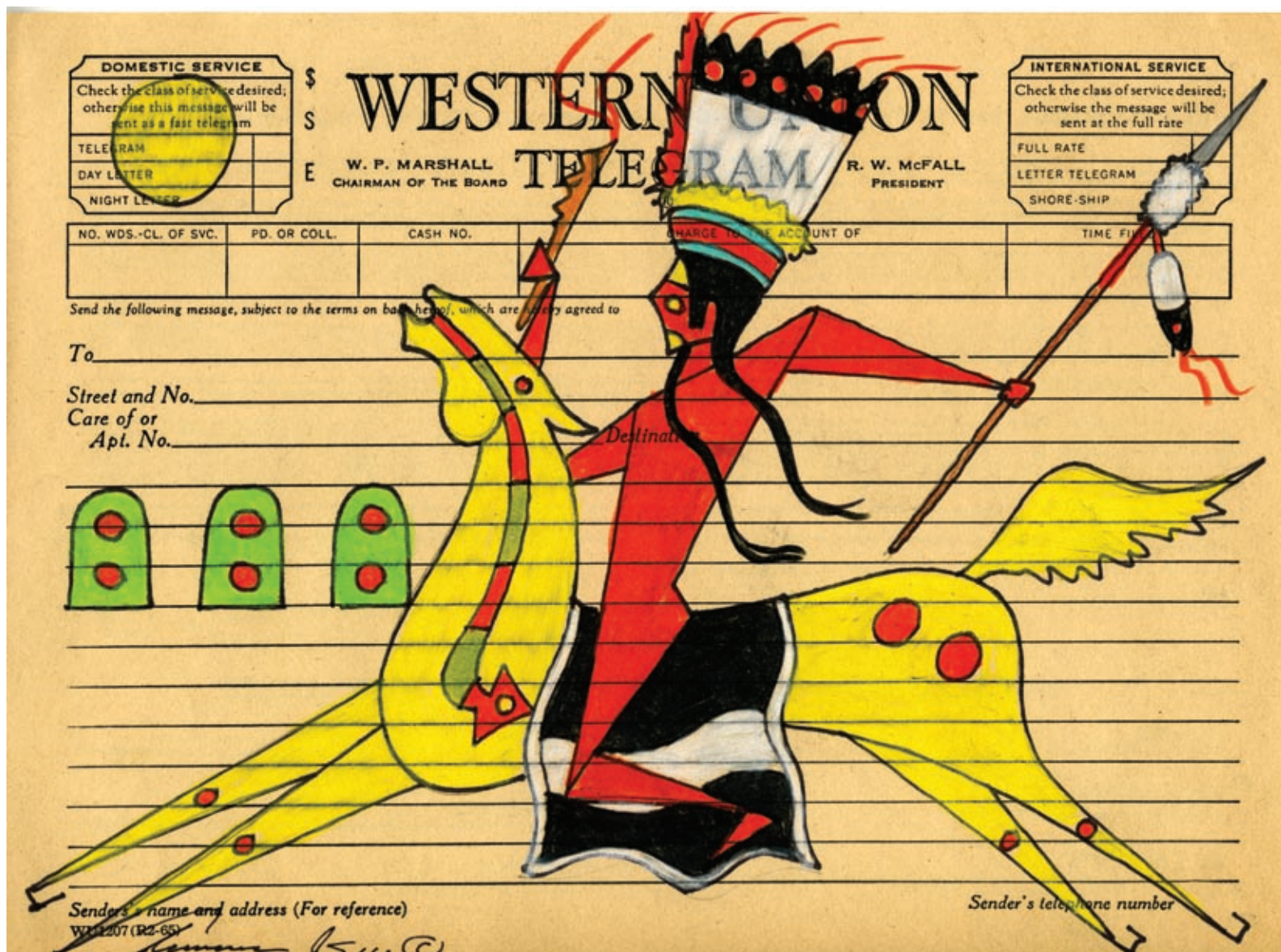
### **Montana, 1988**

Jaune Quick-To-See Smith (born 1940), Salish/Kootenai

Acrylic on paper

Montana Historical Society Museum Collection, 2008.33.01

Jaune Quick-To-See Smith is one of many contemporary artists who continue the vibrant tradition of chronicling Native American culture and history through art. An enrolled member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, she was born in St. Ignatius but grew up primarily in Washington State. In 1976, she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Art Education from Framingham State College in Massachusetts and four years later received her Master of Arts from the University of New Mexico. As exemplified by *Montana*, Quick-to-See Smith uses visual symbols—combining traditional native imagery with contemporary imagery—to tell a complex story, presenting Native American aesthetics in a modern context.



## Untitled, 2009

Terrance Guardipee (born 1968), Blackfeet

Colored pencil and ink on paper

Montana Historical Society Museum Collection, 2009.05.01

This contemporary piece is drawn on original 1900 Western Union ledger paper. The sun represents the Creator as a giver of light, warmth and light for the plants, animals, and people of the earth. The green rolling hills symbolize the high plains. The circles stand for stars. Guardipee studied at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He was among the first contemporary artists to incorporate antique documents into his work.