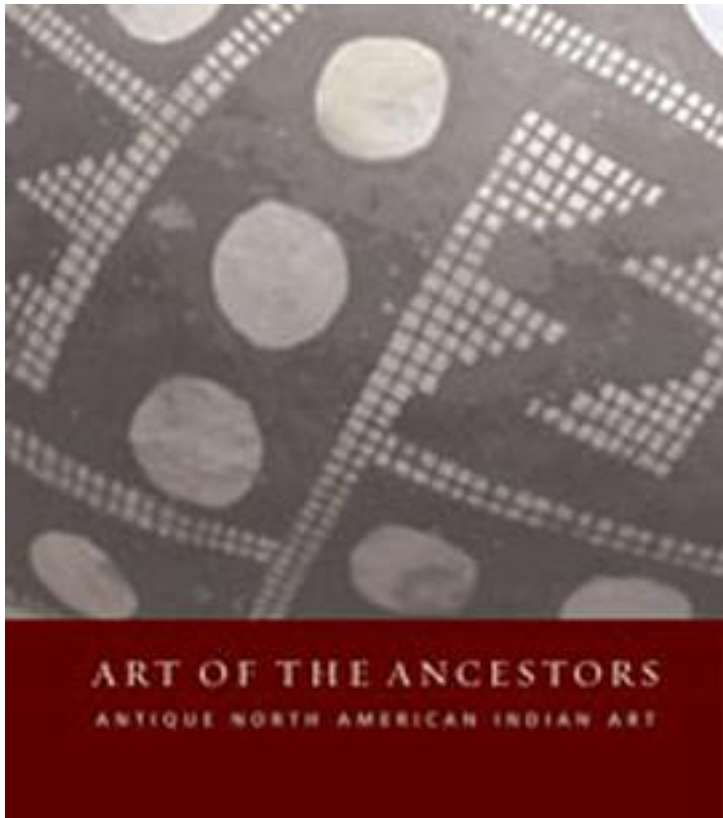


# The Art of the Ancestors



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From the author of the award-winning "Art of Grace and Passion" comes this spotlight on North American artisanship between 200 BC and the early 1900s. The masterworks featured here range from clothing, accessories, and ceremonial and hunting gear to blankets, cradles, storage vessels, and utensils. Each was crafted of such diverse materials as quills, ivory, hide, wood, fibers, stone, clay, and even glass beads imported by European traders. George Everett Shaw, Steven C. Brown, Benson L. Lanford, and

Bill Mercer examine how American Indians' existence developed around the challenges and benefits of the climate, terrain, flora, and fauna of their locales. Their art objects embody the spiritual devotion inseparable from their relationship with the natural world that even now shapes their lives. Whether decorated with abstract patterns or with representations of humans and animals, such pieces were vehicles for passing down beliefs and customs before written languages existed. Thus we can appreciate them not only for their beauty and the skill and ingenuity of their makers but also in the context of the cultures from which they sprang.

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