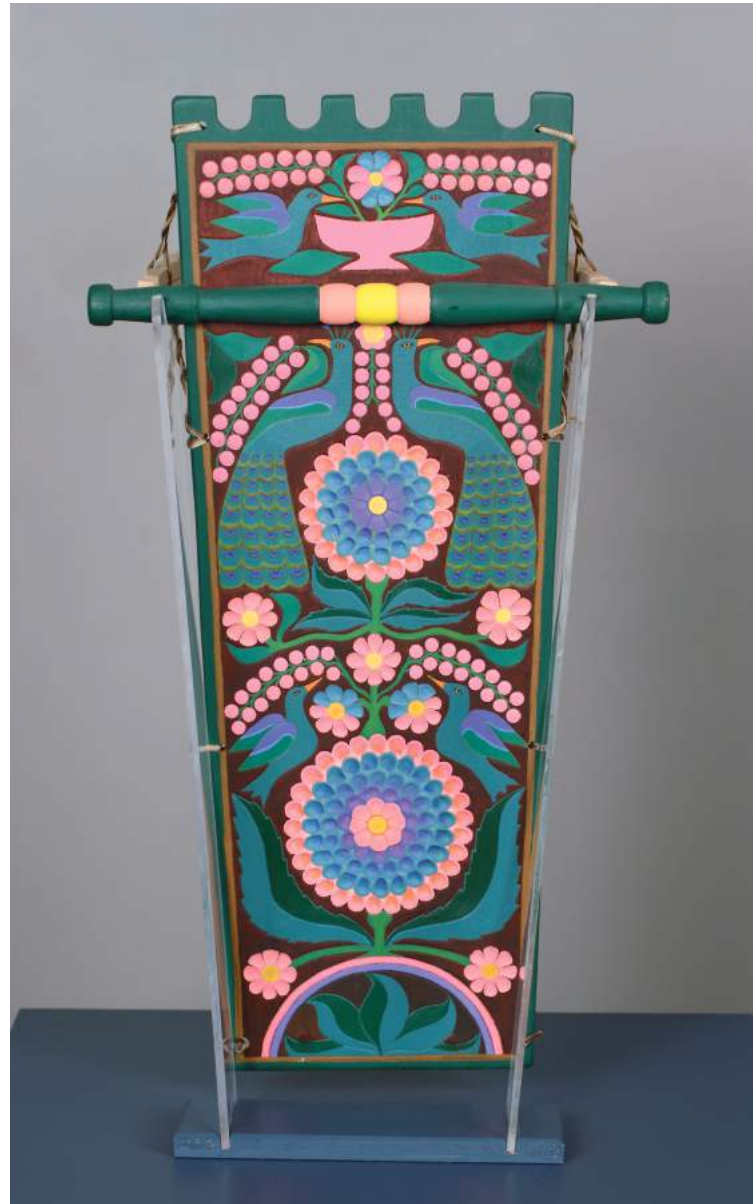




Image: **Da Hoon Gu Gwa A Gwa, or Lacrosse**, 1942, Thomas J. Dorsey (1920–1993), gouache on composition board, Albany Institute of History & Art Purchase, 1942.93.7



Object: **Cradleboard**, Preston and Nancy Jacobs, Kahnawake, Quebec, Canada, 1997, wood, paint, courtesy of Iroquois Indian Museum, 98:131

The Iroquois



The Capital Region in 50 Objects

The Iroquois

The Iroquois, or Haudenosaunee, which means the “People of the Longhouse,” inhabited the Upper Hudson and Mohawk River valleys before the arrival of European settlers. Iroquois traditional territory extended from the eastern shore of Schoharie Creek through the Mohawk Valley to the Genesee River in western New York. There is some debate regarding when the Iroquois Confederacy was established. Historians and archeologists agree that it was in existence by 1630 and possible by 1536, but oral tradition of the Haudenosaunee states that the Confederacy was founded more than 1,000 years ago “on the last day that the green corn was ready.”

Going from east to west in what is today New York State, the original five nations were the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca. The Tuscarora Nation applied for and gained entrance to the League in the early 1700s. After the American Revolution, many moved to communities outside their original territory, but some Iroquois continue to live on their original lands. Although the Iroquois today live in seventeen communities, some great distances from each other, and while these seventeen communities have their own political structure and governing bodies, most Iroquois still consider themselves part of the Iroquois Confederacy.

Today, Iroquois artists still make traditional objects such as clay pots, pack baskets, and cradleboards. Making these things keeps the knowledge and ideas of their ancestors alive. Mohawk craftsman Preston Jacobs lives and teaches in Kahnawake, the Mohawk Reserve outside the city of Montreal, Canada. Preston constructs and carves the cradleboards while his daughter Kaherawaks paints the designs. The cradleboard displayed here was painted by his wife Nancy.

Vocabulary

Ancestors – people related to you that lived a long, long time ago

Archaeologist – one who studies the remains of an ancient culture

Confederacy – an alliance or union of many groups

Cradleboards – a frame used to wrap and carry an infant

Lacrosse – a team game using a ball and long-handled, webbed stick; originally played by Native Americans on a large open field

League – groups that combine for protection and cooperation

Political – relating to the government or ways in which it runs

Traditional – long-established and used cultural items or beliefs

The Iroquois

Name _____ Date _____

Directions

Use the depiction of the object, image, and corresponding text to answer the following questions.

1. Name of the object: _____

2. What is the object primarily used for? _____

3. Where was the object made? _____

4. What is significant about that location? _____

5. Identify two designs the artist took from nature to include on the cradleboard:

a. _____ b. _____

6. What activity does the image show? _____

7. Who are the people depicted in the image? _____

8. What were the original five nations of the Iroquois Confederacy? _____

9. When was the Iroquois Confederacy believed to be in existence by? _____

10. Identify two traditional objects made by the Iroquois:

a. _____ b. _____

11. What were the eastern and western traditional boundaries of the Iroquois Confederacy? _____

12. Identify a natural object that the artist included in “Lacrosse” _____