

Navajo Silver Jewelry: A Modern Art Form Based on Historical Relevance

New site Navajosilverjewelry.net explores wonder and historical aspects of Navajo silver jewelry.

Personal adornment is a purely human trait, but it is an ancient urge; archeology has confirmed that Egyptian women and noblemen more than 5,000 years ago wore breathtakingly beautiful pieces of jewelry and furnished their homes and their tombs with incredible pieces of art.

Today, more than ever before, personal expression is evident in personal fashion and in home decor. A resurgence of interest in traditional art and jewelry forms has resulted in a renewed appreciation for the traditional craftsmanship and beauty of Navajo silver jewelry from the American Southwest.

Recent online auctions of Old Pawn pieces have brought record prices for designs from known artists; and prices for newly crafted Navajo silver jewelry are climbing as well, whether crafted in traditional form or with a more modern aesthetic.

“The higher prices may be partially attributable to the increased cost of silver,” according to jewelry dealer David Jepsen, “but in part it is due to increased demand and rising popularity. The silver jewelry being produced today by native artists in the Southwest are truly one-of-a-kind art pieces, with a history dating back generations.”

These pieces are not "tourist trinkets," nor are they costume jewelry. Rather, they are finely crafted pieces of art, produced by serious men and women who respect the traditions of their ancestors and look to the future for their own validation. They produce stunning custom necklaces, bracelets, rings and earrings which take form from the vision and skill of the creator.

“Those who purchase and wear these pieces have an appreciation for the work of the artist,” insists Jepsen. "Modern women demand style and beauty in all aspects of their lives; they have discovered the timeless quality and the artistic relevance of Navajo silver jewelry," he notes, adding that today's artisans work with a variety of stones and craft colorful designs which appeal to many different age groups. Men, as well, buy and wear Navajo silver jewelry with business suits as well as with jeans.

Silver is a popular choice for the younger generation, because it offers a modern, fresh look, and because it is less expensive. A custom-designed piece of silver jewelry, while not cheap, is certainly more affordable than a similar piece crafted in gold.

Buying and wearing silver pieces designed by Native American artists is truly a nod to history, and an investment in the future. As with any art, it should be purchased with love and appreciated always.

For more information, visit the website Navajosilverjewelry.net.