

Parfleche Painting: Plains Indians Design

Ruby Red Workshop
Saturday, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
March 7, 2026
Educator: Danielle SeeWalker, hello@seewalker.com

CLASS DESCRIPTION

This one-day workshop will explore the Indigenous design practice of parfleche. The name *parfleche* was initially used by French fur traders and derives from the French language *parer* meaning "to parry" or "to defend", and *flèche* meaning "arrow". *Parfleche* was used to describe tough rawhide shields carried by Plains Indian warriors but was later used primarily for decorated rawhide containers. Plains Indian tribes often had an abundant source of hides in the buffalo they hunted, but, as they were nomadic, they had little opportunity to tan the skins. Parfleche, or rawhide, was prepared by cleaning and dehairing the skin and then by stretching it and allowing it to dry in the sun. This process created a stiff but durable leather that was used for many items, including bags, boxes, envelopes, and war shields. Designs historically consisted of geometric shapes and symbols in primary colors. Today, many contemporary Plains Indian artists evolved the idea of parfleche by making earrings, bracelets, wallets, etc. Students will learn about parfleche techniques and create their own keychain or earrings using their newfound knowledge.

Pricing:

Museum Friend: \$95 / Member: \$100 / Student: \$100 / Non-Member: \$110

**Price includes a \$30 Studio Fee for all materials provided.*

Refund and Class Cancellation Policy:

The Denver Art Museum adheres to a no-refund, no-exchange policy. If you are unable to attend, please consider your payment a tax-deductible donation.

If a class or workshop is cancelled by the Denver Art Museum due to inclement weather or teacher illness, a make-up day will be scheduled on a later SATURDAY as the educator's schedule allows.

Accessibility Statement:

To request large print materials, a sign language interpreter, CART or any other accessibility service, please email access@denverartmuseum.org at least ten (10) business days in advance of the program. We will make every effort to provide accommodation for requests made outside of that window of time.

Please see further information about accessibility, parking, and directions to the DAM here: <https://www.denverartmuseum.org/en/accessibility>

Materials:

All materials will be provided for this workshop and are included in the Studio Fee of \$30.

What to Expect:

Students can expect to learn about the origins and history of parfleche and take that knowledge into the creation of their own keychain or earrings. Students will be using leather paints on rawhide to craft their parfleche.

Educator:

Danielle SeeWalker is Húnkpap̃ha Lak̃hóta and citizen of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in North Dakota. She is a fine artist, muralist, writer, activist, and boymom of two, based in Denver, Colorado. Her visual artwork often incorporates the use of mixed media and experimentation while incorporating traditional Native American materials, scenes, and messaging. Her artwork pays homage to her identity as a Lak̃hóta wíñyan (woman) and her passion to redirect the narrative to an accurate and insightful representation of contemporary Native America while still acknowledging historical events.

Alongside her passion for creating visual art, Danielle is a freelance writer and published her first book in 2020 titled, *"Still Here: A Past to Present Insight of Native American People & Culture."* She is also very dedicated to staying connected and involved in her Native community and has served as a mayoral appointed City Commissioner for the Denver American Indian Commission since 2019. Danielle has also been working on a personal, passion project since 2013 with her long-time friend called The Red Road Project. The focus of the work is to document, through words and photographs, what it means to be Native American in the 21st century by capturing inspiring and positive stories of people and communities within Indian Country.

<https://www.seewalker.com/>

WORKSHOP SPACE POLICIES

About:

The Ruby Red Workshop is a dedicated space for Creative Classes and adult programs located on the first floor of the DAM's Martin Building. Students can expect a traditional style art workshop with tables and four-legged chairs with backrests. There are a variety of other seating options available. Sinks, soaps, paper towels, and waste receptacles are accessible in the workshop. Restrooms are located in the elevator bay just outside the workshop entrance. Food and beverages are allowed inside the workshop space, please ensure that you do not enter any galleries with these items.

Each class is different and does not follow a strict or set structure, but will generally include instructor presentations and demonstrations, class gallery visits to view artworks in the DAM collections, individual work time supported by class instructor and assistant, and discussion or share-out time of finished works and works-in-progress.

Cleanup:

Please remove all artworks from the classroom at the end of each class. If wet paintings or in-progress artworks need to be stored in the classroom, there is limited storage on drying racks and in the equipment closet. Students must take home their own materials after each class. Please ensure that art supplies and equipment belonging to the DAM are put back in the appropriate locations. Sponges, paper towels, and cleaning solution are provided in the classroom for cleanup.

Classroom Access:

Students will have access to the classroom only during scheduled class hours. Please contact Mia DeBakker, Creative & Public Engagement Coordinator, if you need to arrange entrance to the Workshop outside of those hours – mdebakker@denverartmuseum.org.

QUESTIONS

Questions about class content, curriculum, materials, etc. can be directed to Mia DeBakker at mdebakker@denverartmuseum.org or Sarah Rockett at srockett@denverartmuseum.org.

For any questions concerning your registration, please reach out to our Sales & Service Team at info@denverartmuseum.org or (720) 913-0130.

Thank you for being part of Creative Classes at the DAM!