

Dog Dancer

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United States



Comoro Islands



Ivory Coast

The Hidatsa tribe of North Dakota was encountered during an 1833 expedition along the Missouri River conducted by German explorer Prince Maximilian zu Wied-Neuwied (1782-1867). Swiss artist Karl Bodmer (1809-1893), was commissioned to record natural landmarks and inhabitants along the expedition's northwest route. Bodmer produced aquatints to illustrate Prince Maximilian's book of his travels in North America.

National Museum of the American Indian

Perhaps the most famous painting among these Native American scenes is the 'Dog Dancer', depicting Pehriska-Ruhpa (Two Ravens), a principal warrior and leader of the Hidatsa Dog Society performing a dance in full regalia. Native American societies included only the tribe's bravest warriors, willing to protect their tribe to the death.

Bright blue magpie feathers with brown wild turkey feathers make the headdress especially noteworthy. In his right hand he holds a whistle and a deer hoof rattle attached to a beaded stick. In his left he has a bow and arrow.

Description: Moenitarri warrior in the costume of the dog dance.

Artist: Karl Bodmer

Date: ca. 1841

Medium: Aquatint, etching, and mezzotint with applied watercolor

Dimensions: 17 1/2 x 24 1/4 in.



'Dog Dancer' Pehriska-Ruhpa (Two Ravens)
Principal warrior and leader of the
Hidatsa Dog Society