



Blanket, c. 1855-1885 Diné (Navajo)

Wool, dye

THE VIRGINIA DONEGHY PURCHASE FUND 93.11.2

This blanket embodies the most important concept in Navajo thought-- **hózhó** (pronounced hoe - zhoe). Hózhó is a concept that embodies Navajo ideals of symmetry, balance, order, grace, beauty and well-being. Both things and people can be in a state of hózhó.

This textile embodies the idea of hózhó as it has great balance, symmetry, and order in the design. In order for the artist's end product to reflect this great representation of beauty, the weaver's mind must be in a state of hózhó as they weave.

They don't make "studies" or patterns of their textile designs, instead, all of their patterns and designs come directly from the mind of the artist as they are creating the work.

In the top right corner of this textile, you will see a small red line that moves from the outermost design field to the outermost corner of the textile. This is called the **ch'i'honi'ti** (pronounced chee-hee-on-ee-tay) or weaver's pathway. Another term for this line is the spirit line.

For Navajo weavers, all of the thoughts and state of their well-being went into creating the textile. In order to release the thinking and the well-being of the maker, the weaver creates a pathway out of the textile. The line found in the upper right hand corner is this pathway, and it releases all of the weaver's thoughts and ways of being from the textile so that the artist's essence doesn't remain "trapped" in the work. This way, the artist can continue to live in a state of beauty and to imagine and create new pieces.

Compare this coral colored textile from 1860 to the green woven textile found in gallery 259 near the entrance. The green shaded piece was created by DY Begay in 2015 and is called *Blessings of Rain*. Both of these works were created by Navajo weavers utilizing traditional techniques. What are some of their similarities and what are some of the differences? Can you see the state of Hózhó in each piece of work?

Label Text

Both commercial and handspun yarns were used to create this stunning Third Phase child's blanket. The bold red, white, and indigo motifs reference both the man's and woman's Third Phase blankets in that terraced diamonds and triangles merge with the traditional placement of horizontal stripes. The innovative use of salmon-colored trade yarn works to further expand upon Diné traditions and help pave the way for more daring experiments with color.