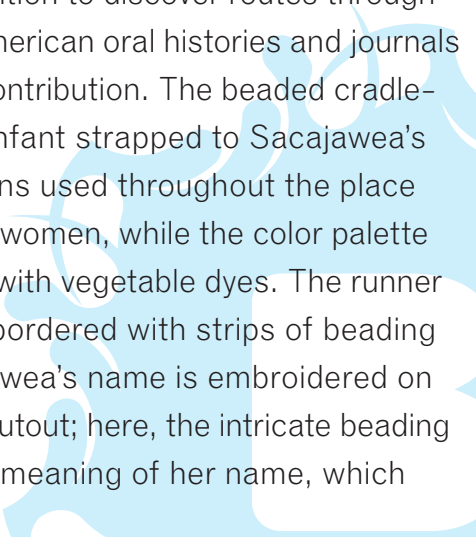


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## Sacajawea

**Susan Kennedy Zeller:** Hello. I'm Susan Kennedy Zeller, the Brooklyn Museum's Assistant Curator of Native American Art. Sacajawea, a Shoshone Native American woman born in the late eighteenth century, was an essential member of the expedition to discover routes through the North American West to the Pacific Ocean. Both Native American oral histories and journals from the Lewis and Clark expedition reference her important contribution. The beaded cradleboard and hood attached to the top of this plate refer to the infant strapped to Sacajawea's back while making the trip with Lewis and Clark. Linear patterns used throughout the place setting reference abstract geometric art created by Shoshone women, while the color palette used in the plate imagery refers to colors the Shoshone made with vegetable dyes. The runner is constructed of hand-tanned deerskins, and the edges are bordered with strips of beading made with almost forty thousand opaque seed beads. Sacajawea's name is embroidered on fabric under the deerskin and visible through an asymmetrical cutout; here, the intricate beading around the illuminated S refers to her adopted Hidatsa tribe's meaning of her name, which translates to "Birdwoman."



*For more information about these objects, be sure to visit [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org)*