from Minnesota who is German, Welsh and Lakota Sioux. She had an exhibition at the Lilley earlier this year, and she's publicly posed this question: If major 20th-century American artists like Agnes Martin and Jackson Pollock have cited Native artists as influences, why does their work tend not to appear in museum collections?

"The answer is racism—period," said Baker Prindle. "We think that art that non-white people make is 'craft.' And that's crap. ... I think anyone who's working in contemporary art—we decide what's contemporary based on cultural conversations. Our notion of what contemporary is is defined by us. It's not this notion that came down from the heavens."

"One of the things that I think is so important is that at least a few museums need to step up and start collecting traditional indigenous art," he added. "Then, other museums will follow. The art world is like that. He said that the conversations over dinner and beers with Melero-Moose gave him the courage—his word—to recraft UNR's curatorial mission.

"She gave me the language to talk about it,"

FUTURE GOALS

"Museums are aware that there is a new breed of curator that is coming in and attempting to have a full representation of art in America and art in general," Melero-Moose said. "And, I think, around here, Nevada Museum of Art is ahead of their time, doing the archive and doing the solo show ... for Jack Malotte."

But, she noted, Malotte's show "shouldn't be the first [Native artist's solo show] we've had that I can think of—ever. ... There's still tons of work to do at museums internationally, about education, about Native people, just in general."

And Jones brought up a couple of problems she'd like to see addressed.

"The big museums ... really go after who's popular," she said.

Jones likened the museum representation of Native artists to a high school popularity contest. "It's not about the quality of the work sometimes," she said. "It's about something else. People are getting overlooked."

"I think right now there's a huge market for appropriation, where you basically take some kind of pop thing and turn it Native," Jones added. "It becomes very popular real fast. It's kind of like eye candy."

"With social media, anyone can be famous in a couple minutes," she said. "It just depends on who you know. ... There's a part of that process that's a little too instant."

Jones would not mind living in a world where artists' reputations took more to build than a knack for being an Instagram influencer. And, as she and Melero-Moose both know, a lot of good artwork is, well, still un-Google-able.

► For more information about Great Basin Native Artists, visit greatbasinnativeartists.com. The group is holding an exhibition, also titled "Great Basin Native Artists," at Sierra Arts, 17 N. Virginia St., from Oct. 4-28, with a reception at 6 p.m. Oct. 17.



"Blinded" is a painting by Topaz Jones, a Great Basin Native Artists member from Owyhee who now lives in

COURTESY/TOPAZ JONES



