

Basic Detail Report



No Zone Today

Date

1990

Primary Maker

Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds

Medium

Pastel on paper

Description

Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds' No Zone Today is part of a series of the artist's "Wall Lyrics" that evoke various elements of Native American oppression by the United States government.

Heap of Birds has emphasized that the "Lyrics" are open to interpretation, and that they are "mostly personal reflections in a coded language." However, the Fort Gansevoort Gallery notes that No Zone Today specifically references the oppression and mandatory relocation of the Cheyenne and the Arapaho. The two distinct tribes—under the Medicine Lodge Treaty—were forcibly moved together onto a reservation in Oklahoma in 1867, where they were treated as a singular group by the federal government. Then, in 1887, the Dawes Act was used to subdivide Native lands into individual parcels, creating even more constrictive zones. This separation was meant to encourage "cultural assimilation" through independent land ownership, but the actual result was that over sixty percent of original Indigenous land was transferred to non-Natives, severely reducing traditional hunting grounds and access to other natural resources. In his drawings, Heap of Birds utilizes the color pink to denote words that he associates with "white culture," including the oppressive "Zone" in No Zone Today. This work along with Taste and Spit—another drawing in the Wellin's collection—are representative of Heap of Birds' oeuvre, as they exemplify the artist's continued use of language in his conceptual art since the 1970s.

Dimensions

Sheet: 22 × 30 in. (55.9 × 76.2 cm) Frame: 25 1/2 × 33 1/2 × 1 5/8 in. (64.8 × 85.1 × 4.1 cm)