



Frank Big Bear (b. 1953), Spirit Warriors, 2007, colored pencil on paper, 18" × 43.5"; detail, below right.

NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIST Frank Big Bear summons ancestral spirits from the distant past in *Spirit Warriors*, a recent addition to the Minnesota Historical Society's art collection. Big Bear often combines Ojibwe symbolism, dream imagery, and childhood memories to create unique and vivid pencil drawings.

Born in 1953 on Minnesota's White Earth Reservation, Big Bear moved to Minneapolis in his early teens. Though largely self-taught, he studied briefly with another well-known Native American artist, George Morrison, at the University of Minnesota. Big Bear has received numerous grants and fellowships and has exhibited throughout the United States, including one-person shows at the Institute of American Indian Arts Museum in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and at the Jacobson Foundation in Norman, Oklahoma. He was featured recently in a group exhibition in London, England, along with two other Minnesota artists. Big Bear received the 2008 Enduring Vision Award from the Bush Foundation in St. Paul.

This acquisition was made possible, in part, through several memorial gifts in honor of Marilyn Bockley.

—Brian Szott, MHS curator of art



About the Cover

Born when commerce was transforming from a very local endeavor to a farther-flung, competitive enterprise, business letterheads to this day do far more than decorate a correspondence sheet. Combining a little bit of advertising, a touch of personality, perhaps, an assurance of solidity, and sometimes humor or whimsy, they are small but powerful symbols of the companies they represent. To discover how some Minnesota examples fit within the evolution of design, printing, and business history, see the article beginning on page 132.