

Barry Ace

Anishinaabe [Odawa]

Visual artist Barry Ace uses found objects and computer components to create garments that are also works of art. Like the famous Belgian design house Maison Martin Margiela, whose Artisanal collection “upcycles” discarded items into haute couture, Ace does more than simply recycle. He completely reimagines the cast-off remnants of our culture of consumption, turning assemblage into art.

Long before Duckie Brown’s colorful beaded wingtips made their way into men’s wardrobes, Ace had made his own foray into fashionable men’s footwear. He uses the leftovers of the digital age in objects that celebrate and reflect his Native heritage. Resistors and flat ceramic capacitors take the place of beads and quills, while clusters of coated copper wire stand in for fringe on these square-toed lace-up shoes. The substitutions comment on the impact of technology on Native culture. Ace’s object-based work builds a new circuit of ideas that is exciting for devotees of Native culture and fashion aficionados alike. – JC

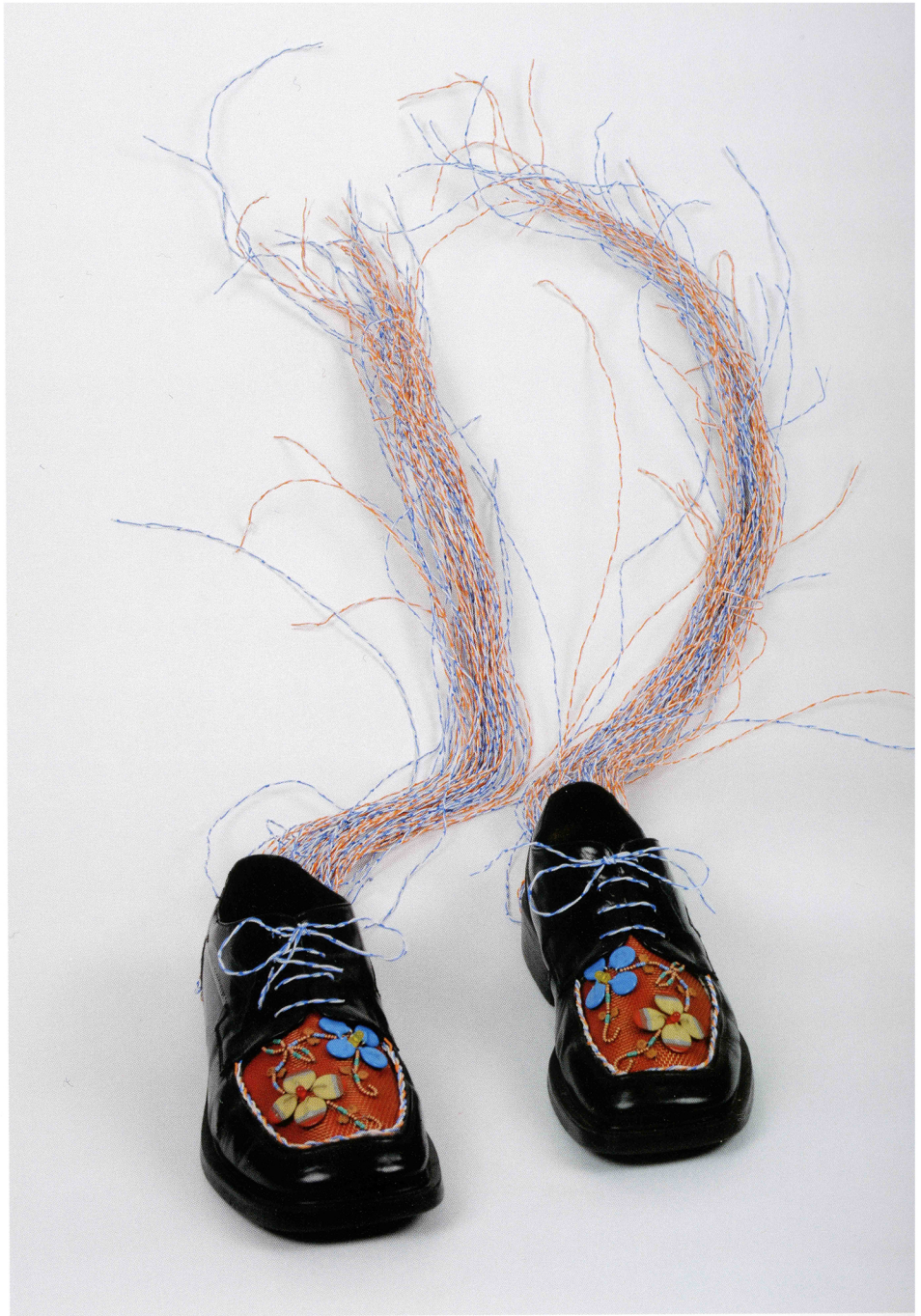


PLATE 73

Barry Ace

(born 1958, Anishinaabe [Odawa])

Reaction shoes, 2005

Found leather shoes, computer components,
wire, paper, rubber, and metal
Courtesy John Cook