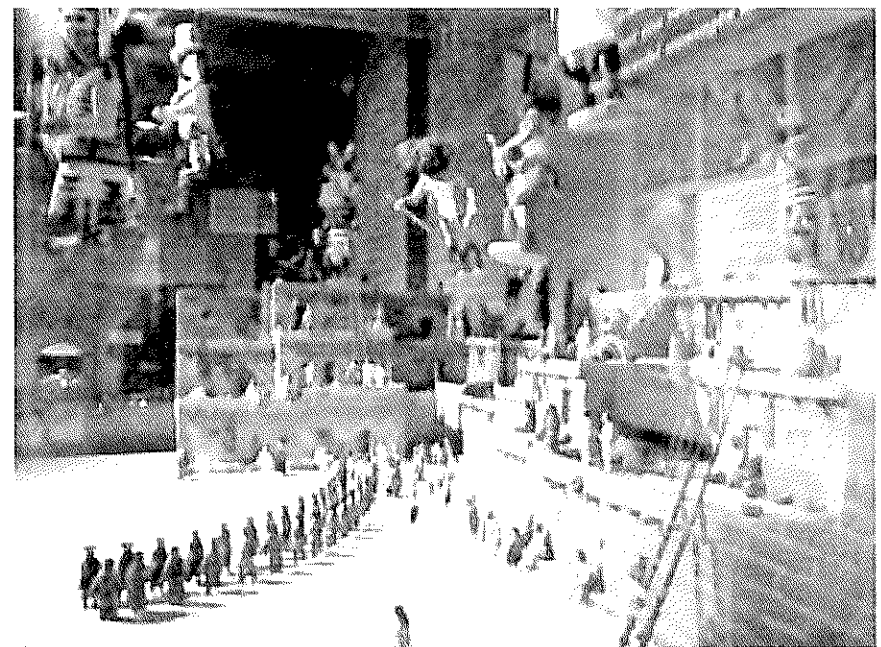


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nestor:



With Sun's first light
they filed into the
Center of flower-covered-cliffs
on brilliant rays

Spirits from metaphysical
dimensions
hair flowing like rain
their dance
swaying like tall pines
in mountain breeze
their breath

Noise, sounds
guttural and volcanic
sending electrical
excitement into
deep soul
as hopi people
and white tourist
ouu and ahh at
the mighty charismatic
kachina

Then with solemnness
the kachina dance
to life heart-beat
of drum
pouring forth
kachina poetry
that reveal the
spirituality of
hopi kachina

kachina feelings
kachina life
kachina wisdom
kachina prayer
the kachina way

Fathers of life
bringing blessings
gifts and messianic
messages

As father the Sun
follows its
east-west sky road
enlightened by the
holiness of the

KACHINUM.

Hopi Kachina Dolls

Clustered about the Black Mesa region in northeastern Arizona are several villages, some of which have been continuously inhabited for 800 years. Archaeological evidence shows the area has been occupied since the sixth century A.D. These early inhabitants and their predecessors who migrated to this region are referred to as "Hisat Senom" (long-ago people) by their descendants, "Hopitu", people who live according to the Hopi Way.

The Hopi Way is the continual fulfillment of the covenant made between "Hisat Senom" and "Masau-u," the deity who facilitated the access of long-ago people into the present world from the underworld. The Hopi Way may be described as an ecological process; the maintenance of a proper relationship and balance between people and the universe and of people to one another. Ritual knowledge and mutual cooperation form the basis of Hopi life. "Katsina" (most often spelled Kachina in the literature) is the Spiritual Guardian of Hopi life. Kachina spirits are believed to reside in the mountainous area called "Nuvatukyaovi" situated about 80 miles southwest of the Hopi villages. For several months commencing with the Winter Solstice various Kachinas descend upon the Hopi villages to convey their blessings and renew their relationship with Hopitu. Ritual knowledge and mutual cooperation are manifested in a variety of ceremonies in which Kachina spirits, impersonated by eligible village members, transmit their blessings and messages through prayer, dance and song. Following "Niman Teekeevah," the Summer Solstice observance, the Kachina spirits return to "Nuvatukyaov.

Images and other reminders of Kachinas abound even after they have departed from the villages. Such images may be seen in the continuing traditions of age-old artistry. Pottery, basketry and wood sculpture, to name a few, provide the forms through which artists can pay homage to Kachina spirits as well as illustrate some of the characteristics which distinguish the different Kachinas.

This exhibit focuses on one art form, the "Tihu," commonly called Kachina doll. In Hopi culture a "Tihu" is a prayer stick and an educational tool used by Hopi elders to impart knowledge and understanding about Kachinas to Hopi children. Over the years the "Tihu" has taken on commercial value and is highly sought after by collectors here and abroad. The "Tihu" is probably one of the most recognized artifacts in the total inventory of Native American material culture.

To the Hopi and especially to the Hopi child the "Tihu" is a memento of that first special meeting between the child and his or her Kachina friend. The "Tihu" also opens up new channels of inquiry and understanding as the child asks his or her elders about Kachina colors, garments and types. As the child grows it is the girls who are the lucky recipients of "Tihu" while the boys receive bows and arrows from the Kachinas. This contact which begins at infancy and continues throughout the person's life creates a strong spiritual bond. If we look further into this process we will find the creation of another bond; the relationship between the child and his or her maternal Uncle. For it is the maternal Uncle who performs the job of Kachina's aide by crafting with great love and precision the "Tihu" that the child will receive. Maternal Uncles figure prominently in the rearing and training of Hopi children and continue to serve as respected advisors well into adulthood.

Hartman H. Lomawaima
HOPI

II. WORLD VIEW

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The Kachina Exhibit



In recognition of Native Americans of the Southwest, a beautiful new exhibit of Kachina dolls from TCM's Dakota collection is now open at The Children's Museum. Kachina dolls, skillfully carved and painted wooden figures, represent Kachina spirits and can be identified by the symbols they wear or carry.

"The Kachina dolls are an extremely important part of the Pueblo culture," says Joan Lester, Chief Curator and Native American Developer. "Learning about the Kachinas gives us a chance to begin to connect with one facet of Pueblo people's lives."

The main section of the Kachina exhibit is a detailed scene, in miniature, of a ceremonial dance taking place in a Pueblo village. A group of 18 Kachinas watch over the ceremony and the observers below. The dolls hang over the Pueblo as a symbol of the Kachina's blessing and protection of the Hopi people. The ceremony that is taking place is a ritual performed to keep the world in balance.

Other cases in the exhibit hold three

design of the exhibit to ensure that we were creating an appropriate display. Out of respect for the religious beliefs of Hopi, Zuni and other Pueblo people, we are not exhibiting Kachina masks. The mask and other objects that eligible Pueblo men wear are sacred and intended only for use in Kachina rituals."

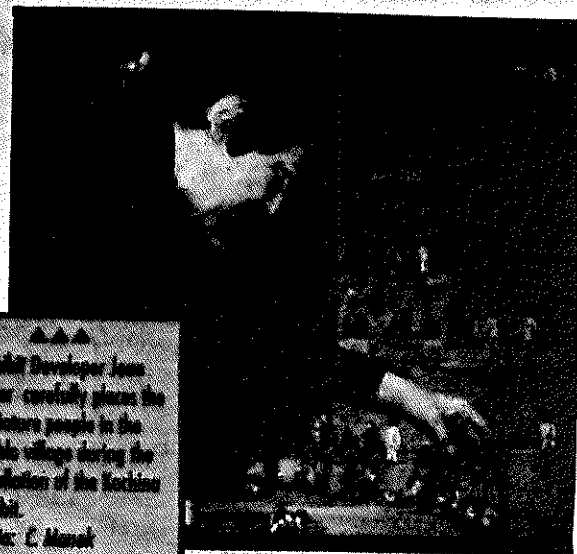


Exhibit Developer Joan Lester carefully places the miniature people in the Pueblo village during the installation of the Kachina exhibit.

Photo: E. Marsh

All of the Kachinas displayed are from Arizona and New Mexico and are a generous gift from John Ward, a William Powell Mason Professor of Music Emeritus of Harvard University. The

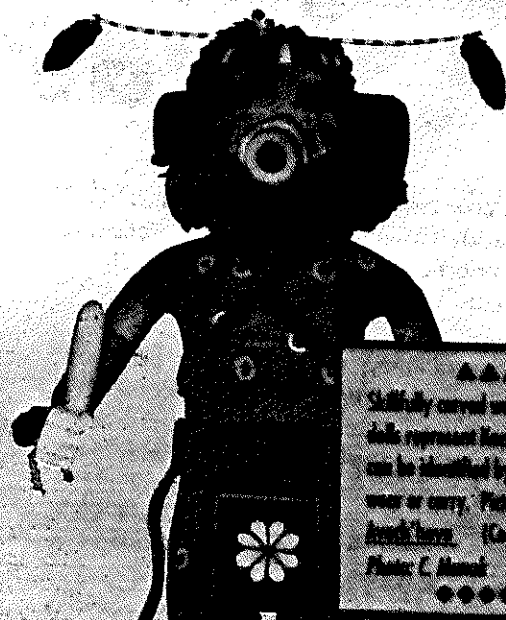
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The Children's Museum

Mar. Apr.
& May

1991



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Skillfully carved wooden Kachina
dolls represent Kachina spirits and
can be identified by the symbols they
wear or carry. Pictured here is
Kachina (Corn dancer)
Photo: C. Mendi

from the Museum's Southwest Indian collection. These cases provide Museum visitors with an opportunity to see important Pueblo pieces up close and in full size. Viewers can then search for the same objects in the main display case to see how they are used by the Pueblo people.

A teaching cart built into the Kachina exhibit holds trays filled with items that can be handled including a drum, clay pot, a Kachina doll, a metate (grinding stone) and mano (corn grinder), replicas of Pueblo clothes to try on and reference books. With the aid of Museum staff, visitors may actually hold, try on or use the objects providing a chance for children and adults to gain a better understanding of the exhibit.

The Museum's exhibit developers and designers wanted to create an exhibit that Pueblo people themselves would feel comfortable with and appreciate. To accomplish this, Museum staff worked closely with Pueblo people. Signage and labels in and around the exhibit help visitors understand the reasoning behind the design of the display. Joan Lester said, "We worked with Pueblo people on the wording of the labels and the

letter and designed by Graphic Artist and Designer Kerri Bennett. Barbara Newry, the Museum's Registrar, played a major role in the restoration and preparation of the model pueblo. Paula Jennings and Linda Coombs, Native American program staff, offered advice and support throughout all stages of the exhibit. The Children's Museum is proud to display this beautiful example of Pueblo culture as part of the Museum's multicultural initiative to encourage adults and children to learn about and appreciate the rich cultural diversity of the world.

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