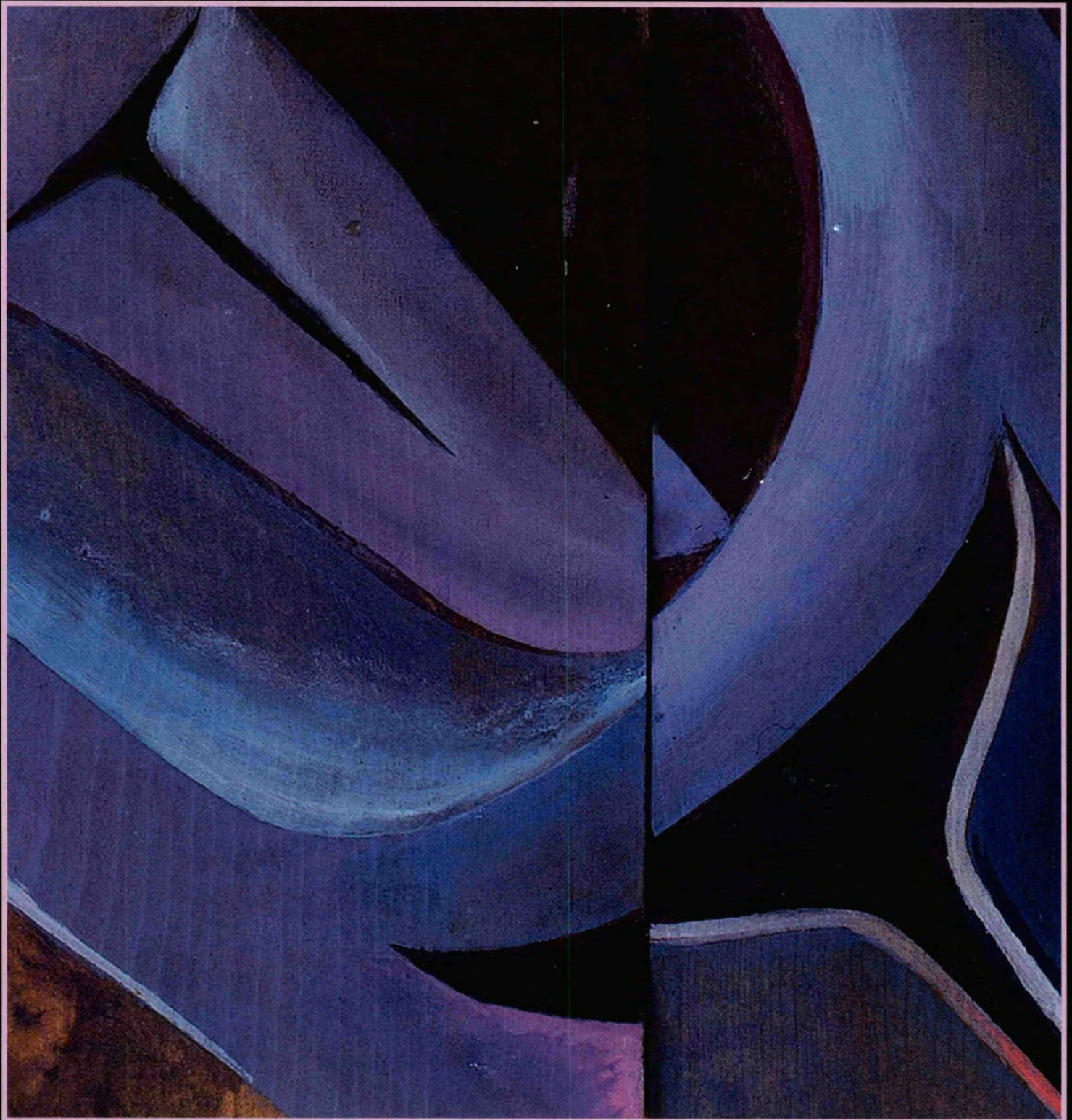


NATIONAL MUSEUM *of the* American Indian

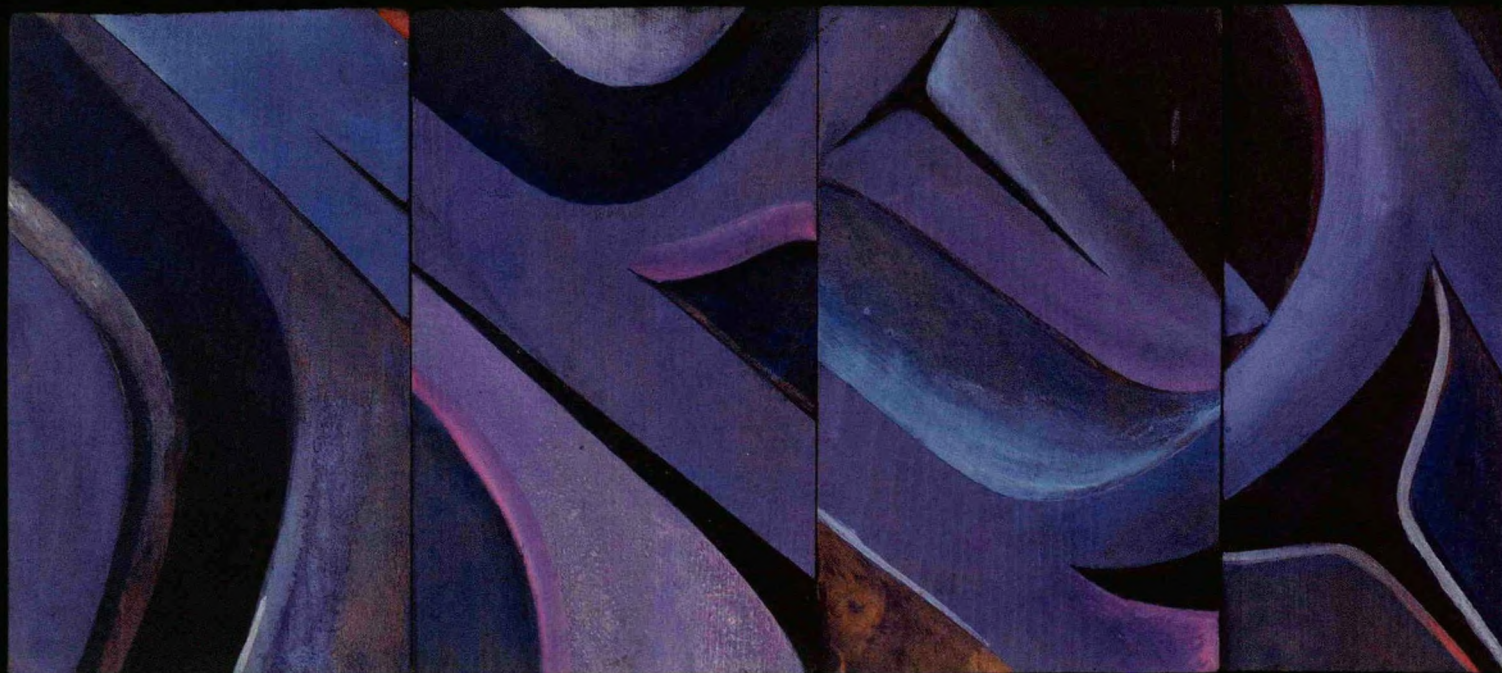
Fall 2001

Celebrating Native Traditions & Communities



Smithsonian
National Museum of the American Indian

Photograph by Katherine Fogden



ABOUT THE COVER:

Another Feather for Moon's Nest

by James Schoppert (Tlingit, 1947-92)



Great works of art elicit the power of hope and inspiration while others move us to reflect. Perhaps it is the latter emotion that most typifies the mood of so many people affected by the tragedies in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania.

The late Jim Schoppert was one of the brightest stars in the contemporary Indian art world. This refined painting with its quiet repose, its cool pensive colors, and its subtlety reveals Schoppert's dignified character and his wonderful qualities as a human being. It has a healing power to help us remember and reflect while giving us promise of tomorrow.

"During difficult and trying times such as these, we look to our tribal leaders for words of wisdom and strength. We hope that these selected quotations will provide just that.

- W. RICHARD WEST, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

"It is incumbent upon us that those of us in leadership stand with all nations who abhor criminal attacks against innocent people. Our nation's members proudly support this country in all times of strife."

- SOUTHERN UTE ACTING CHAIRMAN PEAL CASIAS

"It is with great sadness that I have to say this, but the Navajo Nation extends its deepest sympathies and condolences to all of those who have lost family and loved ones this morning. Our thoughts and prayers are with them today. The Navajo Nation also condemns in the strongest terms possible these horrible acts of violence, and we can only hope that the perpetrators are brought to justice. The men and women of the Navajo Nation have always been among the first who have answered the call to serve the United States in times of need, and we stand ready to do so right now."

- NAVAJO NATION PRESIDENT KELSEY BEGAYE

"The emotional trauma brought on by the distressing news about the terrorist attack on the nation was too much to bear. Like many of you, the reality of such a horrible event has not yet fully sunk in. My deepest sympathy and condolences go out to the relatives of the many innocent victims of this tragedy. At times like this, we need to remind ourselves that we live in a dangerous place today. Life is sacred and precious, so take care of yourselves and your loved ones."

- HOPI TRIBAL CHAIRMAN WAYNE TAYLOR, JR.

"On behalf of all Métis people in Manitoba, I offer our sympathies and prayers to the victims and all their families involved in the disaster. Our world today is very small and anything of this magnitude will impact every single person on our planet. Every life lost today will be remembered for all time. The federation also calls on all Métis people in Canada to think about what they could do to assist those who are suffering because of these desperate attacks. We want to do whatever we can, including the giving of blood, to assist those in need."

- MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION PRESIDENT DAVID CHARTRAND

My Indian Name is "Thunder Bear," my story is alive.

Robert Tree Cody (Thunder Bear), age 50, **Musician, Composer**, Pima/Maricopa, knows the importance of keeping the story alive. He is one of the many people the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian can call friend and supporter. He knows that he is helping to preserve the rich culture of his people. **Preservation for generations.** He knows that someday his great-granddaughter will thank him.

The stories are about me and they are about you.

The NMAI is working to make sure that the tradition is continued. The museum in collaboration with Native peoples is dedicated to the preservation, study, and exhibition of the life, languages, history, and arts of the Americas. Currently the NMAI is building a museum in Washington, D.C., next to the U.S. Capitol, where these powerful stories will be kept alive.



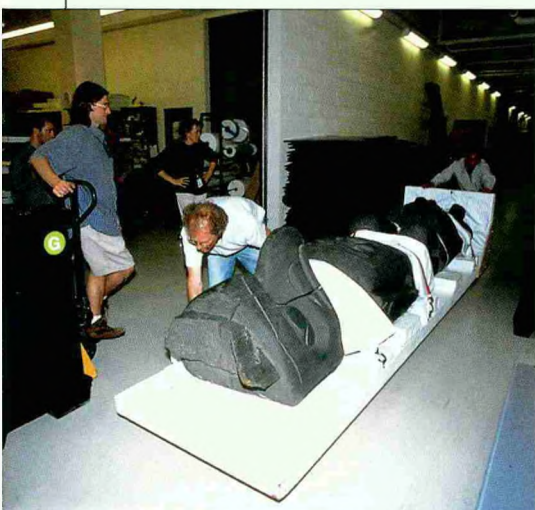
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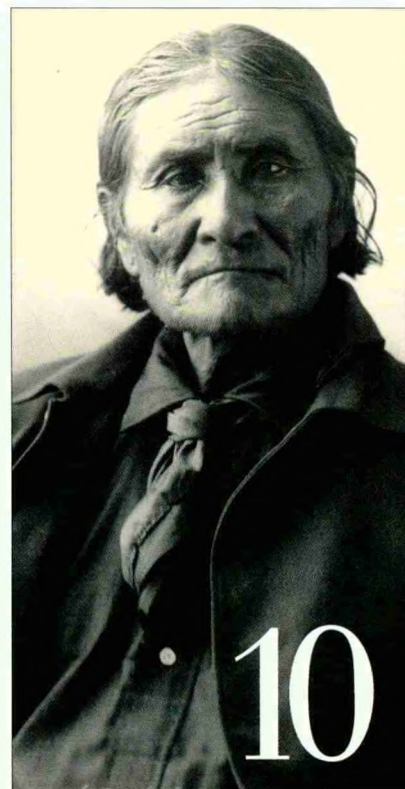


In this issue, we give you an inside look at the National Museum of the American Indian's historic move of its more than 800,000 objects from the Bronx to Suitland, Md., a 250-mile journey. The move necessitated the first inventory since George Heye began the cataloguing system in 1904. Our stories bring to light a sampling of the new discoveries and insights that enrich the Museum's collections records.



20 The Chance of a Lifetime

Liz Hill (Ojibwe) travels to the Research Branch in the Bronx with a camera to show us the people behind the scenes of the National Museum of the American Indian's move. She documents the special care that staff give the objects as they make the unprecedented move of more than 15,000 objects a month from cramped quarters in the Bronx to the spacious Cultural Resources Center in Suitland, Md.



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12 One at a Time

National Museum of the American Indian Photo Archivist Lou Stancari says there are "buried treasures" waiting to be found in the NMAI's collections move. Stancari discovered 750 Paul J. Wolff photographs of Indian communities in the American Southwest and in Central America. Russ Tall Chief (Osage) reveals this story and more.

24 The Case of the Métis Coat

Amid the bustle of the Museum's move, mysteries are uncovered and solved. Liz Hill (Ojibwe) explores an intriguing case of a Métis coat, originally labeled as Choctaw. National Museum of the American Indian curators Ann McMullen and Emil Her Many Horses (Oglala Lakota) employed sharp detective skills to discover the coat to be Métis.

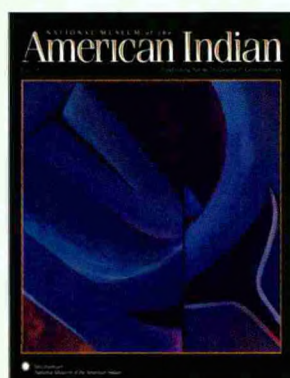


Correction: The Spring issue's Collections feature carried an incorrect photo credit. The photographs were taken by Katherine Fogden (Mohawk).

NATIONAL MUSEUM of the American Indian

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Celebrating Native Traditions & Communities



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Bringing Zuni Heritage Home

After 80 years, the legacy of Hawikku returns to the Pueblo of Zuni

by Bruce Bernstein

Eighty years of waiting ended for the Pueblo of Zuni in New Mexico on August 10, 2001, when the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) brought Zuni pottery, brimming with cultural patrimony, home to the Pueblo.

Zuni elders still have childhood memories of questioning what was being taken from their community in the procession of horse-drawn wagons filled with tarp-covered crates. Today we know the contents of those wagons: They were laden with 20,000 objects excavated by the Museum of the American Indian - Heye Foundation's 1917-1923 Hendricks-Hodge archaeological expedition from Hawikku, a Zuni ancestral village. Their destination was New York City.

There they were added to the fabled collections of the Museum of the American Indian - Heye Foundation but never displayed until now. In the 1980s, Heye Foundation staff members worked to organize the collection and make it more accessible. Despite these efforts, very few of the objects were ever seen by the general public, let alone Zuni people. It is fitting that the first public display of these objects is at the Pueblo of Zuni.

From this collection, Zuni people selected 75 pieces. These were returned to Zuni this past summer to be placed on exhibition as well as to be handled by Zuni people. *Hawikku: Listening to Our Ancestors* is a project of the A:shiwi A:wan Museum and Heritage Center and will remain open to the public for approximately one year. The return of the physical and spiritual essence of Hawikku to Zuni people is the heart of the project and a demonstration of NMAI's important collaborations with Native communities. The opening of the exhibition marks a beginning of Zuni public discussion and understanding of Hawikku and its place in



Zuni people in New Mexico will open an exhibit featuring prehistoric pottery from the National Museum of the American Indian.

their history and consciousness. The exhibition will also stimulate and contribute to the discussion of Zuni's unique place in our nation's history and cultural heritage.

Scholarship at NMAI is inclusive, seeking to empower Native people to tell their own stories and histories. A guiding principle of the Museum's collection and curatorial work is the creation of partnerships and collaborative work. Our research goals and results, as depicted in our exhibitions, programs, projects, and publications, acknowledge that expertise about Native people resides with Native peoples.

As Zuni Governor Malcolm Bowekaty reminded the Pueblo at the exhibition opening, "We have waited over 80 years to bring back the pots. These pots are finally home. We consider this a blessing, that our ancestors are coming to bless us." Jerome Zunie, a tribal archaeologist, said, "We have quite a history in these pots, and it's a blessing to get some of these pots back."

Occupied by Zuni people from the 1400s to 1680, Hawikku is the site at which Europeans first entered and encountered indigenous peoples in what today is the American Southwest. This Zuni pueblo, made famous by the Spanish explorers of the 16th century, was one of the

fabled Seven Cities of Cibola and was first visited by Spanish explorer Francisco Vázquez de Coronado in the summer of 1540. Coronado found a flourishing town, with hundreds of people growing corn, beans, and squash in their irrigated fields. In addition, Hawikku was a trading center. At this important population center, the Spanish established a mission in 1629. Following the Pueblo Revolt and removal of the Spanish from New Mexico, Zuni people left Hawikku in 1680.

From the summer of 1916 to 1923, museum curators and anthropologists excavated the village of Hawikku. The archaeological work included the excavation of 370 rooms, some to a depth of 15 feet.

We remain grateful and honored to be a part of the *Hawikku: Listening to Our Ancestors* exhibition. Projects such as this are most welcome because they help the Museum fulfill its mission. But more importantly, it empowers Zuni people and acknowledges to the world Zuni political and cultural sovereignty and continued cultural integrity. ■

Bruce Bernstein is the National Museum of the American Indian's assistant director for cultural resources.



GGHC Spared From Damage

A Message to the Members and Friends of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian

We have received many telephone calls and emails from our friends and Museum members throughout the nation inquiring about the safety of our staff and the condition of our George Gustav Heye Center in lower Manhattan following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center. We are most appreciative of this outpouring of concern. All of the Museum staff in New York are safe and unharmed and we are most grateful for this good news. We also can report to you that the Heye Center, which is located within the National Historic Landmark Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House, is undamaged after initial inspections. Our exhibitions and the Native objects on display also are thankfully spared from damage. The George Gustav Heye Center was closed on September 11 following the attacks. It reopened to the public on October 1.



As a vital part of the lower Manhattan community, the National Museum of the American Indian and its staff express our deep sympathy and condolences to our neighboring institutions and businesses and their

employees who have suffered untold losses. Thank you for the concern and support you have expressed. — *W. Richard West, Director, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian*

Living Voices Reach Out to Communities

The voices of 45 Native people from North and Latin America, including writers, activists, elders, and scientists, will be heard on local radio stations in Canada, Mexico, Panama, and the United States in the coming months through the National Museum of the American Indian's (NMAI) *Living Voices/Voces Vives* audio CD series.

Produced in English and Spanish, the series features 45 pieces, each about five minutes long, designed to air alone or as a serial. Radio stations can use the pieces "however or whenever they wish," explains Nan Rubin, production coordinator for the program. The individuals featured represent a variety of ages and backgrounds, from Chris LaMarr, a Paiute/Pitt River rapper from Oakland, Calif., to Linda Hogan, an Osage writer and poet.

"These are living voices that were selected for their impact on their communities," says Keevin Lewis (Navajo), community services coordinator, who co-produced the series along with Elizabeth Weatherford, head of the NMAI's Film and Video Center at the George Gustav Heye Center in New York City. "Some

are well-known people nationally; some are well known in their community," Lewis says.

The three-CD series was distributed in November to public radio stations on reservations and in small towns, cities, and rural areas throughout North and Latin America. A fourth compact disc was produced exclusively in Spanish and features 10 profiles.

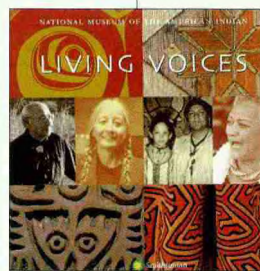
Each piece begins with a musical intro by the vocal group Ulali, followed by a brief commentary by New Mexico television journalist Conroy Chino (Acoma Pueblo), who sets up the English-language series, and by Guadalupe Carrasco, Samuel Rodriguez, Jessica Hernandez, and Alejandro Guzman on the Spanish-language disc.

One segment features Autumn Morning Star (Choctaw/Blackfeet), who is introduced as the only Native American grand illusionist. Like David Copperfield, Morning Star dazzles audiences with spectacular Vegas-style stage shows. But unlike her fellow magicians, Morning Star

incorporates Native themes into her show. "In 1981, I began doing magic professionally and most of my peers said: 'You should incorporate your culture into your show,'" she says. "I was hesitant about it and decided, maybe I could do it if I asked some respected elders. I expected them to rally against the idea, but actually they were really for it."

Morning Star describes an illusion in which a fancy shawl dancer in her troupe lies down on a table and Morning Star covers her with a cloth. The dancer then rises off the table. When Morning Star pulls off the cover, the dancer has vanished. She then reappears in the back of the auditorium riding an Appaloosa horse.

Living Voices/Voces Vives marks the first collaboration between the Museum's Community Services Department and the Film and Video Center. The series also received support from the Latino Initiatives Fund, administered by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives. — *Rita Pyrellis*



Pipestone to Grace Mall Museum Entrance

From deep in the earth of southwestern Minnesota comes a sacred element that will soon hold a central place in the new National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in Washington, D.C. Pipestone will be embedded in the floor of the Potomac, the main entrance area. Often used to make pipes, as the name implies, pipestone is found in only a few places in North America and quarried only by Native American people. One of them is Travis Erikson (Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota), a fourth-generation pipe maker who has been quarrying pipestone for nearly 30 years. He was asked by the NMAI to provide the Museum with pipestone.

The history of pipestone's usage – also known as catlinite – dates back more than 2,000 years, but quarrying pipestone at the Minnesota site began in earnest with the introduction of metal tools acquired from European traders in the 17th century. Sioux and other Plains people quarried the malleable rock to make sacred pipes and other objects. Ranging from pink to brick red, the stone's bright hue is prized by Native American people, and several tribes have traditional stories about it being the flesh of the earth's "red children" and the blood of mother earth.

The Sioux secured free and unrestricted access to the pipestone in 1858 as part of a treaty but relinquished their claim to the federal government when they were placed on reservations a number of years later. In 1937, the U.S. Congress designated the site as Pipestone National Monument and formed a partnership with Native Americans to preserve the stone. Native Americans were then granted exclusive access to quarry the pipestone.



Lou Weller (Caddo/Cherokee), one of four Native American consultants who assisted in the design of the Museum, says using pipestone as the centerpiece of the Museum is an obvious choice. "It is something that most tribes can relate to, and Native American people recognize it for its value and its spiritual meaning," according to Weller.

The pipestone design will be a circle approximately 30 inches in diameter, divided into four quadrants to represent the four directions. Outside this circle of pipestone will be a larger circle of maple, approximately 50 feet in diameter, also divided into four quadrants. On this striking floor, dancers, demonstrations, and events will be showcased and will be visible immediately when visitors enter the Museum. – Jennifer David



Above: Travis Erickson working on a pipe that was taken out earlier this season from his quarry.

Left: Working on quartzine with sledge hammers, wedges, and prybars. Quartzine, which is ranked in the top 10 hardest rocks to work with, has to be removed to uncover the seams of pipestone.





“Who with their savage finery are rapidly passing away...”

Frank A. Rinehart's turn-of-the-century photographs from the Omaha exposition shed light on the birth of Indian stereotypes.

by Lou Stancari

The 1898 Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition, held in Omaha, Neb., was meant to present the products, industries, and cultures of the American West and to showcase “the latest in art and industry and all the advantages of white man’s civilization [as] . . . evidence of what Manifest Destiny had accomplished in the West.” Included in this trade fair was an Indian congress, organized by James Mooney of the Smithsonian, which exhibited Indian tribes who “had been advanced under the national policy of assimilation.”

The congress’s official photographer was Frank A. Rinehart of Omaha, who (along with his assistant, Adolph F. Muhr) photographed more than 500 Native peoples from some 70 tribes. These portraits included such notables as Goyathlay (Geronimo, far right), still a prisoner and shipped in from Fort Sill, and the Sioux chiefs Red Cloud and American Horse. They were posed and beautifully lighted in front of a painted backdrop, the perfect metaphor for the “vanishing race.”

Half of the photographs were donated to the Smithsonian, and the rest were marketed by the exposition. Like other commercial photographers of the late 19th century, Rinehart was interested in selling photographs and, of course, was concerned with producing the most salable images possible: those embracing a Euro-American concept of Indianness. He was not above literally augmenting the costumes of his subjects; in the portrait at right, Gov. Diego Narango (Santa Clara Pueblo) has been dressed in Plains clothing to appear more “Indian” and less threatening to the Victorian audience, who, in this age before movies and television, collected these images by the hundreds.

We still live with stereotypes of Indians today, stereotypes pounded home by Edward Curtis, the Hollywood Indian, and the Tontos



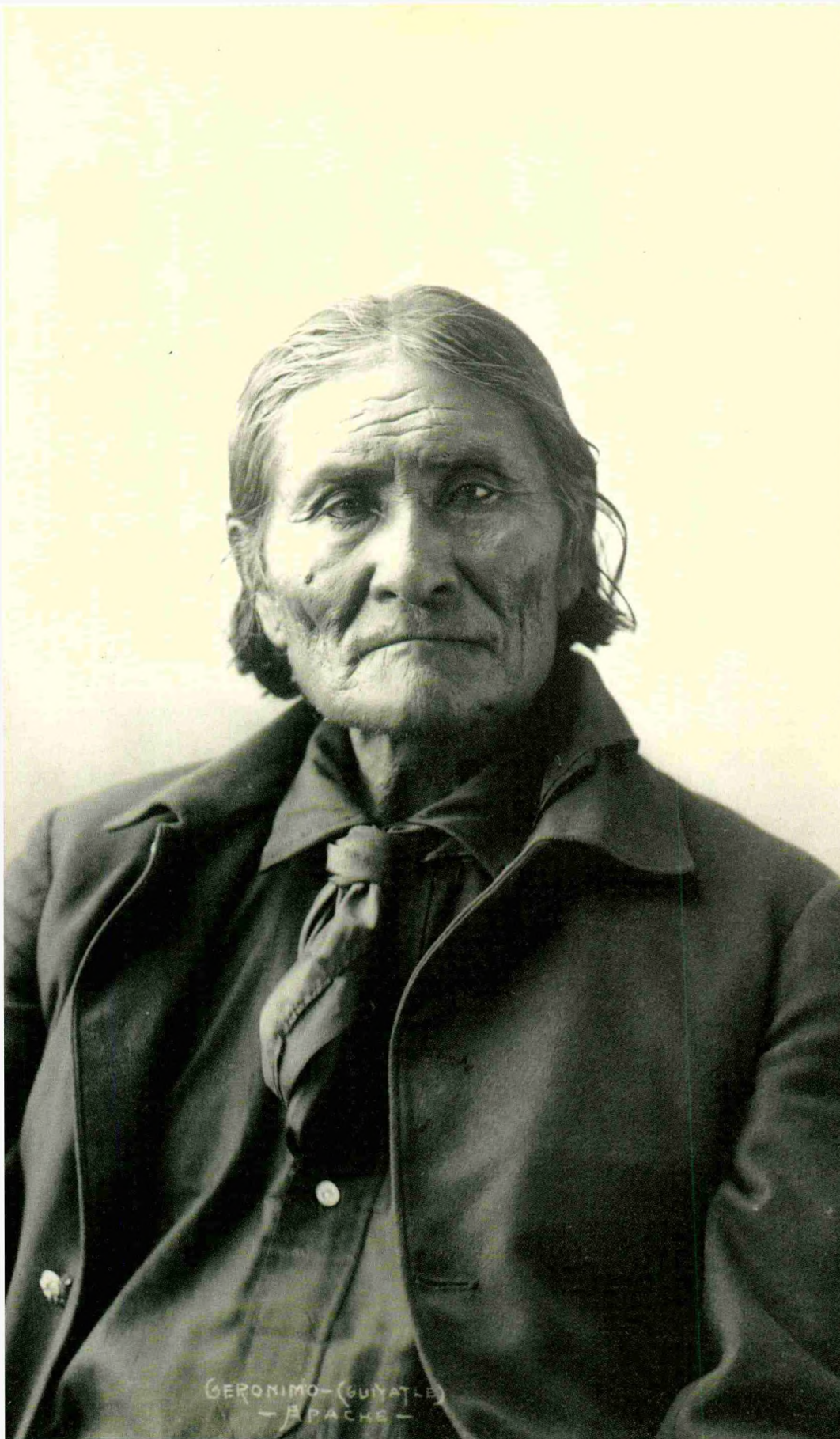
Rinehart was not above “augmenting” the costumes of his subjects – in this portrait, Gov. Diego Narango (Santa Clara Pueblo) has been dressed in Plains clothing to appear more “Indian” and less threatening to the Victorian audience. Photo by Frank A. Rinehart or Adolph F. Muhr.

of Saturday morning TV. And you can learn a great deal from these historical images about such things as clothing and decoration. But these images are in essence a lie, romanticizing cultures “on the verge of becoming myth.”

In the end, the Omaha exposition’s Indian congress broke down into a circus atmosphere of sham battles, burnings at the stake, and scalplings. Geronimo went back to Fort Sill, remaining a prisoner until his death in 1909; Muhr went on to become the studio

manager for Edward Curtis in Seattle. In the only known portrait of Rinehart, the photographer is dressed as Napoleon for a costume ball. ■

For six years, Lou Stancari served as photo editor in the Publications Office of the National Museum of the American Indian, and since 1999, as photo archivist at the Cultural Resources Center.



Above: Goyathlay (Geronimo, 1825-1909), Chiricahua Apache, 1898. Omaha, Nebraska. Photo by Frank A. Rinehart or Adolph F. Muhr.

Top right: Chief American Horse (Oglala Sioux), 1898. Omaha, Nebraska. Photo by Frank A. Rinehart or Adolph F. Muhr.

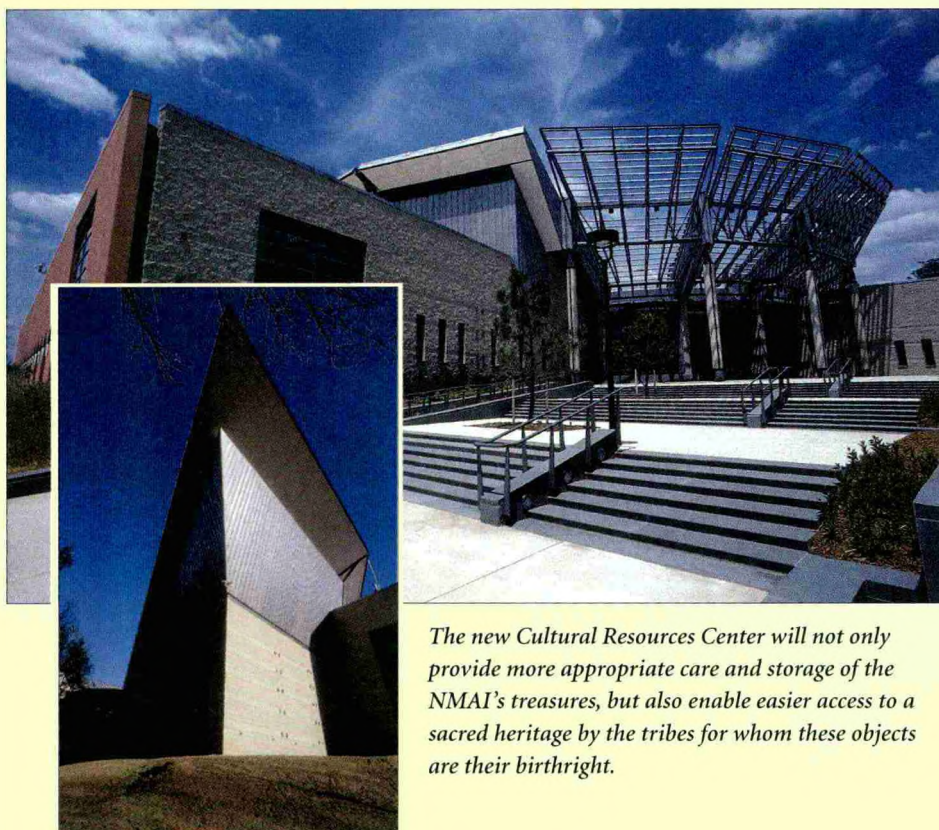
Lower right: Bony Tela (San Carlos Apache) and Hattie Tom (Chiricahua Apache), 1898. Omaha, Nebraska. Photo by Frank A. Rinehart or Adolph F. Muhr.

One at a

In a Herculean effort that will take several years, NMAI staff members are meticulously cataloguing and oh-so-carefully moving the entire collection from its old home in the Bronx to the state-of-the-art facility at the Cultural Resources Center in Suitland, Maryland.

by Russ Tall Chief

While packing for our recent move, as my family and I stumbled across items we'd forgotten we had, hadn't seen in years, or never knew we had, I couldn't help but reflect on the National Museum of the American Indian's (NMAI) collections move. Although the extent of my family's and my own possessions appeared staggering at times (especially for having had it all stuffed into a tiny apartment in Brooklyn), a humbling perspective on just how monumental a move could be was just to the north, at the NMAI's Research Branch (RB) in the Bronx. Throughout the process of moving approximately 15,000 objects per month down to the Cultural Resources Center (CRC) in Suitland, Md., Museum staff members rediscover treasures in the collection on a daily basis.



The new Cultural Resources Center will not only provide more appropriate care and storage of the NMAI's treasures, but also enable easier access to a sacred heritage by the tribes for whom these objects are their birthright.

Time...

This is the first collection inventory completed since George Heye began the cataloging system in 1904, according to Bruce Bernstein, the NMAI's assistant director of cultural resources. "An inventory made during the 1970s was cut short by other Museum needs and time and therefore had about a 25 percent error factor," Bernstein says. "The new inventory will have less than a 3 percent error factor."

In the course of the RB inventory, materials surface that had been partially labeled, mislabeled, or sometimes not labeled at all as Museum staff clean and photograph the objects before carefully packing and shipping them. Thus, staff members gain new perspectives on and better understanding of objects that previously have not been available for close examination.

Registration initiates the process of moving an object by ensuring that it is properly identified. It is in this phase that the identification of many items has been clarified. Maria McWilliams, a museum registration specialist, found two items labeled as a net and fishing line sinker, inventoried in the 1970s as one object but accessioned as two. After she examined the materials with Ann Drumheller (Onondaga), registrar, and Raj Solanki, assistant move coordinator for registration, the objects were identified not as fishing equipment but as an instrument Apaches call *tsli'edo'a'tl*, meaning "wood that sings." The instrument often is referred to simply as an "Apache violin."

McWilliams said that the instrument might have been misidentified because it didn't look



The Mesoamerica storage vault at the NMAI Research Branch, Bronx, New York, ca. 1965. At the Research Branch, objects were compacted in storage areas that lacked proper ventilation, climate controls, and security. Twenty thousand objects could be found in the seven 12-by-12-by-20-foot rooms that housed the collection.



Photo by Liz Hill

One by one, each object in the collection is cleaned, examined, identified, registered (notice the bar code tags) and carefully packed for transportation to its new home at the CRC.



1



2

In the course of the RB inventory, materials surfaced that had been partially labeled, mislabeled, or sometimes not labeled at all as Museum staff clean and photograph the objects before carefully packing and shipping them.

like a traditional violin, but geometrical Apache designs run the length of the 18-inch agave plant stalk that makes up the body of the instrument. The bow is made of willow or aspen. The craft, more than a hundred years old, was nearly dead until musicians like Chesley Goseyun Wilson, a San Carlos Apache, revived the tradition. Wilson's music, recorded by the NMAI, can be heard in the Smithsonian's Folkways recording of fiddle music from throughout the hemisphere, titled *Wood that Sings* in honor of the instrument.

On another occasion, the inventory process turned up a knife and a sheath (picture 4) registered only as an "Apache knife" acquired in 1945 from Edward Borein, the American Western painter. The 12-inch leather knife

sheath bore George Heye's catalog number 20/7829 and was described as "decorated with beadwork, brass tacks, and dangles." But the knife didn't fit the sheath.

McWilliams called upon the expertise of curator Emil Her Many Horses (Oglala Lakota), who determined through the designs and materials that the sheath actually was from the Blackfeet or another Northern Plains tribe. Her Many Horses speculated that perhaps the original knife was lost and the owner chose another one. Although it could not be determined whether the knife and sheath belonged together, they were moved together down to the CRC to await further research.

Phonetic spelling could have led to a miscount in the Museum's collection of *qeros*, cer-

emonial drinking cups (picture 1) used for millennia in the Andean region and still used today in traditional communities. Several *qeros* were not accounted for because they were misspelled in the database as "karos," according to Emily Kaplan, assistant move coordinator for conservation. Of the 90-some *qeros* in the collection, the majority are from Peru, but they also originate from Chile and Ecuador. Inka-period *qeros* in the collection are unpainted but feature intricate incised decoration. The colonial-period *qeros*, by contrast, are elaborately painted with decoration, an art widely considered lost.

For Kaplan, who is on the receiving end of the move, unpacking the materials at the CRC is an exercise in selfless discipline in which she



3



4

1. Colonial Period wooden Inka q'ero (ritual cup) with painted representations of human and geometric figures. Bolivia. Height 19.7 cm. Photo by David Heald.

2. Mapuche poncho, early 20th century, Chile, Mrs. Thea Heye-Lothrop Expedition. Photo by Gina Fuentes-Walker.

3. Maya polychrome vase, A.D. 550-850, Nebaj, Guatemala. Photo by Katherine Fogden.

4. Blackfeet or Northern Plains leather knife sheath decorated with beadwork, brass tacks, and dangles, with "Hudson Bay" knife. Edward Borein Collection. Photo by Rachel Chapa.

The inventory process turned up a knife and a sheath registered only as an "Apache knife" acquired in 1945 from Edward Borein, the American Western painter.

The pipestone was listed in the database as simply a signed pipe.

“It was difficult to read, but I was able to make out the signature of Gray Wolf, the Cheyenne warrior.” – RAQUEL CHAPA



5

anticipates the needs of future access to the collection. “You want to study the materials but you have to stay on schedule,” she says. “The rediscovery that you go through every day is astonishing. It’s why we get up and come to work every day.”

New discoveries also have been made during the photographic imaging phase, which, since the move officially began on June 9, 1999, has produced nearly 80,000 images. Using digital equipment, photographers such as Raquel Chapa (Apache/Yaqui/Cherokee) are creating a database of images of the entire collection.

When Chapa photographed Cheyenne materials, she noticed that a gray pipestone had a signature on it. The pipestone (picture 6) was listed in the database as simply a signed

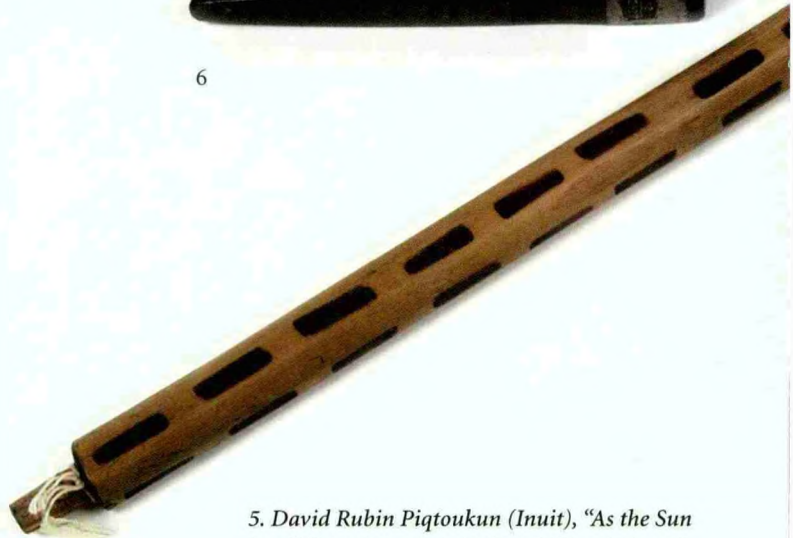
pipe. “It was difficult to read, but I was able to make out the signature of Gray Wolf, the Cheyenne warrior,” Chapa says.

Another photographic gem was that of approximately 750 photos of Native subjects taken by Paul J. Wolff, a psychiatric social worker from New York who used photography as a form of occupational therapy. In 1987, Bernice Kreiswirth donated the collection, which spans nearly 50 years, to the Museum. It was only during the move that it was fully accessioned. “These were buried treasures that had never been publicly seen or published,” says Lou Stancari, the Museum’s photo archivist. “Another advantage is that [some] are recent photographs, taken as late as the 1960s.”

The works are extremely valuable for their



6



5. David Rubin Piqtoukun (Inuit), “As the Sun Sets,” from the painted triptych “Symbols and Survival.” Paulatuk, Northwest Territories, Canada. Photo by Katherine Fogden.

6. Cheyenne pipe and stem, attributed to Gray Wolf. Oklahoma. Collected by Mark R. Harrington. Photo by Raquel Chapa.

7. The acade of the Temple of Quetzalcoatl, Teotihuacan, Valley of Mexico, ca. 1963. Photo by Paul J. Wolff.

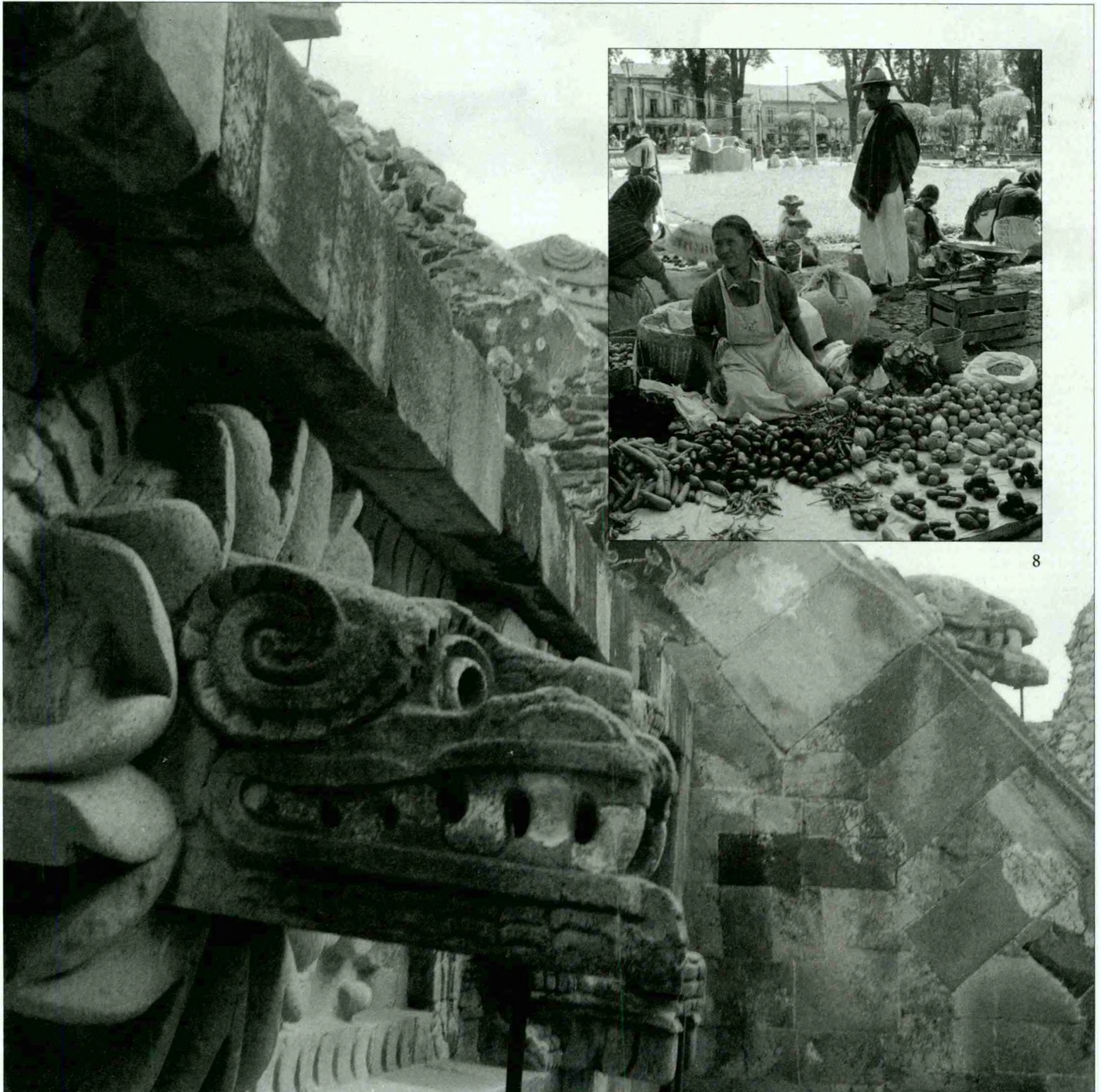
8. Produce vendors in plaza, ca. 1963. Lake Patzcuaro, Michocan, Mexico. Photo by Paul J. Wolff.

survey of archaeology, architecture, and everyday life of Native people of Central America. Pictures of monuments, market scenes, dances, and everyday activities, such as drawing water from a well, illustrate the vibrant living cultures, particularly in Mexico and Guatemala. The images also were instrumental in Wolff’s psychological research into human relationships, which he conducted in collaboration with his wife, Margaret Fries, a physician.

Greater accessibility to the collection and better storage and evaluation of the materials, allowed by the move to the spacious CRC, are the ultimate reward for Museum staff and researchers. At the RB, Native objects were compacted in storage areas that lacked proper

Another photographic gem was that of approximately 750 photos of Native subjects taken by Paul J. Wolff, a psychiatric social worker from New York who used photography as a form of occupational therapy.

7



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11



ventilation, climate controls, and security. Twenty thousand objects could be found in the seven 12-by-12-by-20-foot rooms that housed the collection, according to Bernstein. At the CRC, 50 objects from a single drawer at the RB are now stored in up to 10 drawers and shelves, and space for a tribe's collection is increased sometimes as much as ninefold. "Mimbres pottery that was stored upside down in the Bronx was covered with 70 years of dust," says Mark Clark, collections management specialist. "Now it is safely stored right side up at the CRC so that you can view the beautiful abstract designs and the

painted insects and animals."

Greater accessibility to the collection has provided more curatorial insights into exhibition planning. Wolff's photographs can be seen at the Heye Center in New York in the exhibition *Spirit Capture: Native Americans and the Photographic Image*. Also, materials have been selected to be shown in the inaugural exhibitions on the Mall, including *qeros* from the Andes.

Jim Pepper Henry (Kaw), repatriation program manager, says the most important result of the move is the creation of better ways for tribes to rediscover their own cultural materi-



als. The increased space at the CRC not only accommodates viewing of the materials but also provides private areas, in the building and outside, where tribal representatives can use their objects for their intended purposes. "Having the collection more accessible to tribes gives us an opportunity to hear about how to better care for the materials — to try to find the balance between institutional collections management and traditional tribal care." ■
Russ Tall Chief (Osage), a former NMAI public affairs officer, writes for Native Peoples magazine and also teaches writing at Bemidji State University in Bemidji, Minn.



9. Larry Beck (Yup'ik, 1938-1994), *Ooger uk inua (Walrus Spirit)*, 1982. Photo by Katherine Fogden.

10. Blackfeet hide shirt with quillwork, mid-19th century, Montana. Photo by Katherine Fogden.

11. Lucy Parker Telles (Yosemite Miwok-Mono Lake Paiute, 1870-1956), basket, ca. 1920, Yosemite National Park, California. Photo by Gina Fuentes-Walker.

12. Cecilia Fire Thunder (Oglala Lakota), pair of dolls, late 20th century. Photo by Roger Whiteside.



“Having the collection more accessible to tribes gives us an opportunity to hear about how to better care for the materials – to try to find the balance between institutional collections management and traditional tribal care.” – JIM PEPPER HENRY

The Chance

Confronted with a task that has no precedent in the museum world, NMAI staff has responded with curatorial zeal, exacting precision, and advanced technology.

Story and Photos by Liz Hill

“**T**he truck is 15 minutes away,” says Anthony Williams, assistant move coordinator for collections at the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), speaking into his two-way radio. Suddenly the office noise level increases, as the staff moves to prepare for the weekly arrival of a truck at the Cultural Resources Center (CRC) in Suitland, Md.

It is a scene that has been repeated time after time during the past two years. Since June 1999, the NMAI staff has been involved in a monumental undertaking – the move of its 800,000-plus objects from the Research Branch (RB) in the Bronx to the CRC. The transport of these objects – which may well constitute a move unique in the history of museum collections – is expected to take five years to complete.

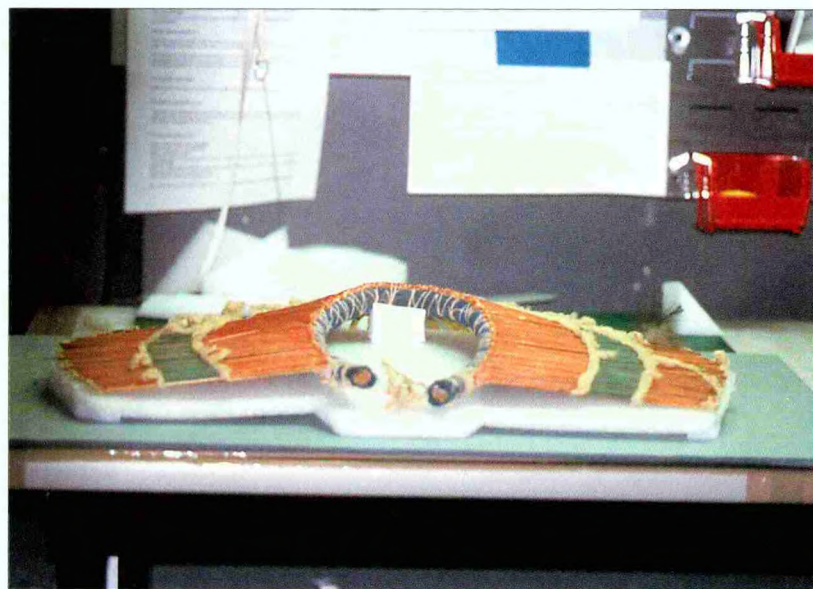
“Historically, there’s nothing to match what’s going on at the NMAI,” says NMAI Director W. Richard West (Southern Cheyenne). “It’s the move of a massive collection over much longer distances than collections normally are moved. Logistically, it is immensely complex. And we are doing it in record time.” The distance between the RB and the CRC is con-

siderable – 250 miles. This trip takes approximately four hours door to door, without calculating the challenges of traveling safely through “the world’s worst traffic,” says NMAI collections management specialist Mark Clark. A little more than two years later, the Museum has now moved more than 100,000 objects.

Other important preparations and considerations – more emotional and spiritual – also accompany the move.

On one late afternoon in July 2001, a moment of the utmost seriousness is being observed at the CRC. As a large moving van backs slowly into the loading dock, the collections move crew murmurs as the truck’s brakes hiss to a stop. Typically, about seven staff members handle the unloading of the truck, but today a larger number of CRC staff gather to participate in a special prayer and smudging.

Prayers and smudges are an integral part of the NMAI move. A smudge is a purification or cleansing ceremony, which can be done for any number of reasons, explains Museum specialist Terry Snowball (Ho-Chunk/Prairie Band Potawatomi). On this particular day, he holds an eagle feather in his hand and lights sage in a large abalone shell. He walks over to the truck’s open cargo door and speaks softly in the Potawatomi language, while his hand gently propels the smoke toward the truck’s cargo. “This



of a Lifetime

is done in preparation to see these [objects], and to be placed in a good way – or mind, or heart – before and after,” Snowball says. “The things that I mainly pray for are [the objects’] forgiveness in touching them and taking care of them, and to also ask that they have good thoughts about us.”

Snowball turns and walks toward the staff. The pungent smoke fills each person’s nostrils as he smudges each one. The ceremony reminds the move staff again of the sacred task to which they have been assigned. Not all of the people present are collections move staff. Many of them gather just for Snowball’s smudging and then go back to their respective jobs. The move staff stays and goes through the process of unloading the truck.

The objects were packed at the RB in cardboard boxes and then placed in black, collapsible moving crates called “kivas.” Under the watchful eyes of NMAI registration staff, with clipboards of computer lists of the truck’s contents and electronic scanners in hand, crew members begin shuttling crates from the loading dock inside to the CRC’s collections area. In an hour or so, the job is done, the staff is gone for the day, and some 45 kiva crates stand packed.

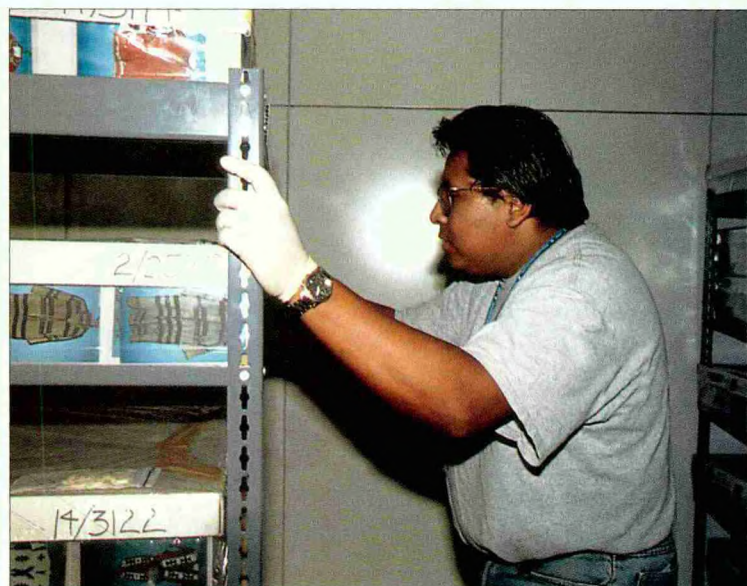
It’s not as easy as it looks. Each kiva holds up to 1,500 pounds, and a truck holds 48 kivas. With that much weight borne by staff on a continual basis, Clark’s priority has had to be saving people’s backs; “material handling” has become his mantra. The mind-boggling array of modern lifting and transportation equipment includes dock lifts and levelers for the loading docks; two different sizes of pallet jacks; electric forklifts; various carts; work assist vehicles called “waves,” used to facilitate storing and retrieving objects on the shelves; and sculpture lifts, for moving large stones.

“When I started work in the Bronx, the Museum had two



Above: The objects were packed at the RB in cardboard boxes and then placed in black, collapsible moving crates called kivas under the watchful eyes of NMAI registration staff.

Below, L to R: Storage shelves at the NMAI’s Research Branch in the Bronx. An object being packed at the Research Branch for shipment to the Cultural Resources Center. Scanning an object’s bar code after it has been shelved at the CRC. Carefully moving objects to be rehoused at the CRC.





Left: A totem pole arrives at the CRC from the Bronx.



Above: Raquel Chapa photographs objects in the move line at the Research Branch.

pneumatic-tired pushcarts that were too bulky and not at all maneuverable to use in collections, two old shelf trucks that had to be modified to hold drawers, two dollies that had been loaded with stone sculptures for so long their wheels were flat on the bottom, three rickety aluminum ladders – two of which we destroyed immediately as safety hazards – and one rolling library ladder that was stuck in the Meso American vault,” Clark says. “We’ve come a long way into the 21st century of modern museum equipment.”

At the Bronx, crammed shelves and entire rooms of objects are rapidly being emptied, in preparation to be moved to the CRC. Scott Merritt, RB collections move coordinator, has plenty of tales to tell about the challenges and triumphs of working in the branch, known for its crowded cubbies, narrow passageways, and close working and storage quarters.

How did multistory Northwest Coast totem poles and house posts ever get into the RB in the first place (the answer: through windows that were long ago bricked over), and how would staff move them out to ship them to their new home at the CRC?

Merritt says it took 10 staff members to move the house posts – some as tall as 18 feet – out of the RB. “As the house posts each weighed up to 2,000 pounds, the real trick was rigging the RB elevator shaft to accommodate them. The elevator was rigged with steel scaffolding and I-beams, and the house posts were then lowered down with an electric winch.”

New technology plays a major role in tracking objects from the RB to the CRC. The NMAI assistant move coordinator for registration, Rajshree Solanki, says, “NMAI and its collection move are at the forefront of technology, using technology like the kind you see at retail stores like Target and WalMart and applying it to the Museum setting for tracking the objects.”

“We keep track of objects not only at the RB but also at the George Gustav Heye Center, the CRC, and the future Mall Museum,” Solanki says. “It’s wonderful to tell a researcher or tribal member about a particular object. By typing in a catalog number, someone can see exactly where that object is, where the object has been, a digital image, and all the other information associated with that object.” In the past, it took longer to give information about objects to researchers and tribal members. Today, “the information is obtained a lot faster than before, because of technology,” Solanki continues, “All of the information is located in one place with just a touch of a button.”

The bar-code scanners have revolutionized the tracking of objects as they make their way from the RB to the CRC. A system with built-in double- and triple-checking measures ensures that no object will ever go astray. The bar-code scanners even record which staff members have come into contact with particular objects (all staff have bar-code numbers assigned to them). “What’s really wonderful about the bar-code scanners is that we know where any object is anytime, anywhere,” says NMAI supervisory collections manager Pat Nietfeld.

At the RB, a bar code is associated with an object as it is removed from its original shelf. Conservation comes next – a cleaning process that involves analyzing each object for stability and recommending types of pest management. In the museum profession, “‘stabilizing’ means to do something quite simple to the object so that it will be physically stable enough to travel,” says NMAI conservator Emily Kaplan. “A stabilization treatment for beadwork with broken threads might involve simply tying off the ends of broken beads so that beads don’t slip off while the object is being moved; a more extensive treatment might involve cleaning the beads, and perhaps restringing loose beads.”

From there, it’s off to a sophisticated digital-imaging station, where photographers Raquel Chapa (Apache), Robert Gerhardt, Allen Phillips, and Natalie Russo document each object. From an individual one-eighth-inch bead to a 44-foot totem pole, and many different sizes of objects in between, this documentation can be a challenging job indeed. According to Chapa, however, the process for photographing large or small objects doesn’t differ dramatically. “We use different lenses; we have a macro lens to do the beadwork, for example,” she says. “The only difference is if the

Continued on page 28

The Luckiest Person in the World

“I sincerely feel that I am doing my part to give these objects the honor and respect they deserve.” – LISA ANDERSON

Lisa Anderson (Seminole/Oklahoma) feels like the “luckiest person in the world” to be working with the Native American objects that she loves. As a museum technician at the Cultural Resources Center (CRC), Anderson is specifically charged with garments and textiles. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with a concentration in textiles from the Rhode Island School of Design and has been working with garments and textiles for 20 years. As a member of the collections move staff, she also is responsible for unpacking trucks filled with objects arriving from the Research Branch (RB) in the Bronx, crafting individual mounts – or supports – for the objects, and, finally, shelving the objects.

“The objects are [electronically] scanned when they are put on the truck at the RB in their ‘kiva’ boxes. The truck brings them here to the CRC. Next, the kivas are scanned by the registration staff as we are unloading the truck; then we scan objects as they come out of the kivas; and, finally, we scan the objects as they are shelved,” Anderson says. “The process sounds simple but it isn’t.”

Anderson’s interest in working for the Smithsonian began when she was living in New Mexico and working with Native American objects in a store that sold Indian art. She also worked with private collectors, restoring Native American beaded objects. Along the way, she obtained a fellowship at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C., researching the beaded bags of her own Seminole culture. “When I saw the Natural History Museum collection, I knew immediately that this is where I needed to be – working with and learning about these objects in a more encompassing way. For example, I wanted to learn about different beadwork styles, colors, patterns, and techniques, and how the objects were used historically by different tribes.”

Once Anderson had completed her fellowship and had returned to New Mexico, she started making long-distance queries to the Smithsonian – “Anything to be working with Native objects again.” She found out that NMAI was hiring people to work on the collection move. Anderson has been at the NMAI for a little more than two years.

Anderson guesses that she has examined thousands of garments, textiles, and objects since she’s been at NMAI. At the Research Branch, most of the garments and textiles were never laid out flat. At the CRC, “they are placed flat on sheets of very strong archival material, and then they get housed on large textile screens [large pull-out shelves].” Textiles are placed flat so that they don’t crease or bend fragile materials like quillwork or beadwork. Lying flat also makes the textiles more visible to researchers and other visitors at the CRC.

Anderson says, “My background in art, my love of Native American art, learning about my own family history, and learning about the history of Native America – all of it comes together here.” She cites her daily interaction with her

“My background in art, my love of Native American art, learning about my own family history, and learning about the history of Native America – all of it comes together here.”

NMAI colleagues, the visits by tribal people from all over the hemisphere, the stories shared by staff and visitors about the objects, and, especially, her work with the objects, as contributing to her depth of knowledge and heightened appreciation for the important work she conducts.

“In my job, I sincerely feel that I am doing my part to give these objects the honor and respect they deserve by my being able to give them wonderful mounts and, especially, more room.” Anderson works with objects other than garments and textiles, and she explains that mounts – all of them unique and intricately fashioned – protect objects from slipping and shifting in their storage trays. At the same time, the mounts are designed to be nonintrusive, keeping the objects visible and accessible to researchers. “I am helping these objects to be in a better situation – in other words, not in a crowded space and piled one on top of each other but in a better environment.” – LH

The Case of the Métis Coat

Some sharp detective work by NMAI curators has uncovered a longstanding case of mistaken identity.

by Liz Hill

Ann McMullen and her colleague, Emil Her Many Horses (Oglala Lakota), recently found themselves facing a case of mistaken identity in the National Museum of the American Indian's (NMAI) collection. The collection of more than 800,000 objects includes a treasure trove of totem poles, cradleboards, baskets, pottery, clothing, and much more. "We get to do detective work sometimes," says McMullen, the NMAI curator and a scholar of Woodlands Indian art for 20 years.

The case of mistaken identity, which involved a mid-19th-century man's moose-skin coat, came about as the result of a letter to the NMAI from Derrick Prefontaine, curriculum developer at the Gabriel Dumont Institute in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The letter inquired about a knee-length, beaded, fringed coat with a cherry-colored lining, believed to be in the Museum's collection. Prefontaine included a copy of Frank Mayer's 1851 sketch of the coat.

The sketch, now part of the Edward Everett Ayer Collection at the Newberry Library in Chicago, gave the following caption information: "Frank Mayer met this Red River Métis in Minnesota in 1851. The man wears a bead-worked skin coat, now in the Museum of the American Indian, New York." Before the NMAI became part of the Smithsonian Institution, it was known as the Museum of the American Indian.

The coat's existence is documented in *Indian Notes*, a periodical of short essays about recent acquisitions that was published by the Museum of the American Indian in the 1920s, which acknowledges Alanson Skinner, a self-trained anthropologist and collector, as securing the

coat for the Heye collection. The coat was purchased by the Museum of the American Indian in 1929. *Indian Notes* states that Skinner "endeavored to procure for the Public Museum of the City of Milwaukee (today the Milwaukee Public Museum), and later for the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, a beaded and painted coat, probably of elk skin, that had belonged to John W. Quinney, both because it was an excellent example of old Stockbridge handiwork and for its association with the most noted representative of the tribe in recent times."

The coat made its way from Canada to points farther south. In the 19th century, many Métis lived along the Red River, which flows south from Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba to Minnesota. Every year, thousands of Métis traveled south hundreds of miles to St. Paul, Minn., to trade furs.

The Métis – French for "mixed blood" – are a culturally distinct people with their largest populations in Canada. Contemporary Métis are the descendants of Cree or Ojibwa Indians and French, Scottish, or Irish traders. The Métis made their appearance in the 18th century as the fur trade accelerated in the northern regions and intermarriage between Europeans and



Native women became widespread. Over time, the Métis carved out their own culture, blending Native and non-Native traditions.

Although the original NMAI object catalog card states that the coat is Stockbridge, a reference to the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican tribe of Wisconsin, what may have happened next in the coat's history at NMAI provides an interesting twist in the tale. McMullen notes that the coat was perhaps identified as Cree or Cree-Métis by Ted Brasser, curator of Plains ethnology and an authority on Métis art, at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec. This identification was somehow later misread as Crow.

"I am not sure that Ted Brasser actually identified the coat as Cree – that is my supposition since he appears to be the one who identified the NMAI coat as the same one in the 1851 Mayer engraving," McMullen says. "He probably did research on Museum of the American Indian collections in the 1970s. I know he visited the Research Branch (RB) in 1975."

McMullen first spied the coat on one of her walks through the collections storage area at the Cultural Resources Center (CRC) before receiving the Gabriel Dumont Institute's inquiry. "I

picked up the tag [identifying the coat], and it read, 'Crow.' I said, 'That's not Crow, it's Métis.'" She continues: "The characteristics of the coat which point to Métis manufacture are the form of a modified frock coat, decoration around the bottom, decorated lapels, floral decoration, medallions on the back – specifically on the shoulder-blade area – bands of decoration at the shoulders, and the treatment at the back of the waist." McMullen immediately told Her Many Horses, with whom she shares a great interest in Métis material, about her revelation. "I don't remember exactly, but what I probably did was ask him to come back with me and look at it and ponder why anyone would call it Crow," she says.

Coincidentally, McMullen and Her Many Horses had just started discussing plans for *Our Lives*, one of the Mall Museum's inaugural exhibitions. The exhibition includes a section about the Manitoba Métis. "We were beginning to talk about how to identify collections at NMAI as Métis," McMullen says. "I had seen this coat. When this inquiry came in, we had already begun to see more coats in the collection."

If just one object in the NMAI collection can tell such an intriguing tale, there must be many more with remarkable stories. McMullen agrees, adding that most do not have false affidavits, such as the one this particular coat possessed for so many years. Still, "there are a lot of objects with great stories," she says.

"Knowing who said what about our collections is important, as in the case of this coat." This information, even though some might see it as erroneous, will not be deleted from the record – indeed, it will become an important part of the object's history at the NMAI. "We will not want any of this information to disappear – that the coat was once called Stockbridge, and then someone else came in and called it something different," McMullen says. "All of this information is interesting, because it is historical information. All of the information should be part of the permanent record."

"Some of [the information] isn't necessarily erroneous; it was based on what people knew or thought at the time, and it is all opinion," she continues. "Preserving that information is important in terms of understanding how ideas change and how knowledge changes. The constitution of knowledge depends on who said it. Just because I think the record should be corrected doesn't mean that I'm correct or that what I say should supersede what others have said. This information is additive, and that's why it should be preserved as part of the records."

"Knowing who said what about the collec-

tions is important, too," she adds. "Information is only as good as the one who gives it. If, for instance, we knew that a particular person said that coat was Crow, rather than my assuming that it is a misread of a handwritten remark that may have come from Ted Brasser, then I could evaluate that person's ability to make such a determination. Without knowing anything about the nature of the authority or knowledge of the person making the claim, it's pretty meaningless."

In the meantime, an object of beauty and significance to Métis history and culture has been discovered anew. McMullen and Her Many Horses had just begun identifying color combinations (usually red, white, and blue) and stylistic cuts (akin to European frock coats) of the coats. Once the two curators had developed criteria for Métis designs, they found discovery after discovery. "We were finding these things all over the place, in other [NMAI] collections," says Her Many Horses. They have now identified six coats (including a little boy's coat), horse ornaments (known as "cruppers," or decorative pieces used to hold the horse's tail), and a saddle pad from collections of Mandan, Arikara, Ojibwe, and Cree material.

The find of the beaded Métis coat (the only beaded Métis coat in the NMAI's collection) represents a transition in Métis art from quill embroidery to beadwork.

Dating the coat to match the 1851 sketch contributes to the study of Métis art and Métis cultural change. "Any artifact which represents a clear style change is interesting, and to know exactly when it was worn and by whom assists those efforts since it allows us to date the transition from quillwork to beads by at least some Métis coat makers to 1851 or before," McMullen says. "Without the etching, we might have suspected that the coat was more like the 1870s or the 1880s or perhaps not have been able to hazard much of a guess at all."

For this NMAI object with a long-secret identity, the pieces of the puzzle fit together perfectly. A new discovery in the NMAI collection means a new knowledge and understanding of the history and cultures of this hemisphere's Native peoples. ■

An object of beauty and significance to Métis history and culture has been discovered anew...

Once the two curators had developed criteria for Métis designs, they found discovery after discovery.

Coyote's Place

by SHAWN TERMIN &
JOHANNA GORELICK



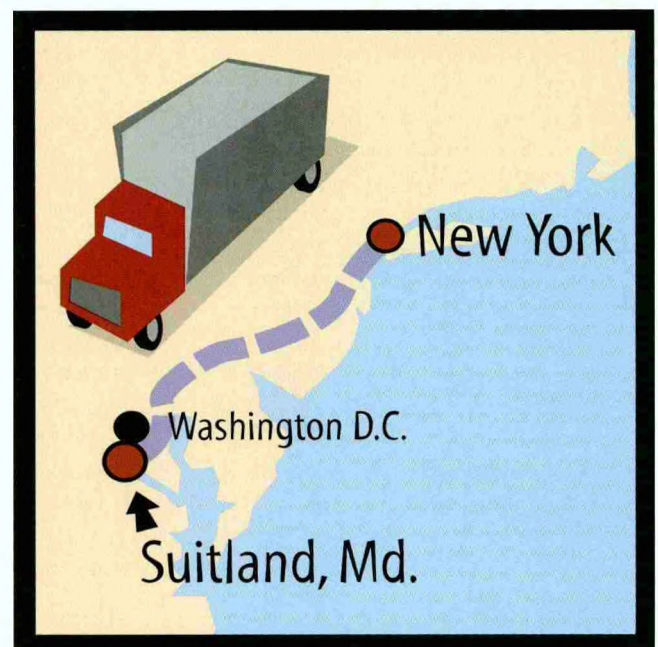
I love to travel.

In the past year I've traveled all over the United States visiting many of my friends. And apparently, I am not the only one doing a lot of moving.

The National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) has built a new home, located in Suitland, Md., for its collection of Native American objects. The objects are being moved from their old home in New York City. Moving these objects takes a lot of careful planning as they travel from New York to Maryland.

Recently, I got to ride in one of the moving trucks as they moved some of the NMAI objects. I was so impressed with how careful the employees were with the objects as they placed them in the van.

When we arrived at the Cultural Resources Center in Suitland, everyone treated the objects as if they were family returning from a long trip. The new home of the objects, the Cultural Resources Center, is a very special place.



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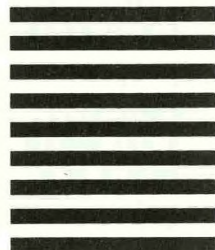
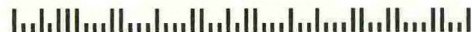
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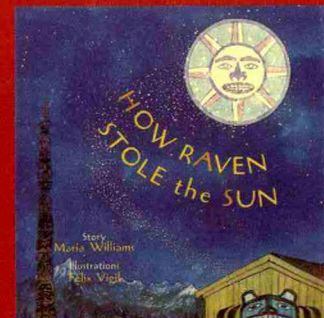
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HOW RAVEN STOLE THE SUN

A traditional Tlingit tale about how a snow-white Raven trickster—who steals the stars, moon, and sun—ends up with beautiful, shiny black feathers.

Author: Maria Williams (*Tlingit*)

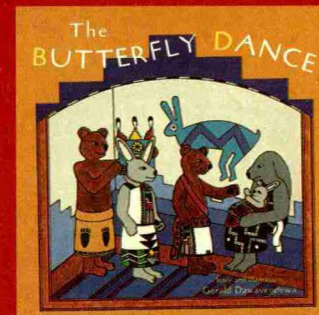
Illustrator: Felix Vigil (*Jicarilla Apache/Jemez Pueblo*)



THE BUTTERFLY DANCE

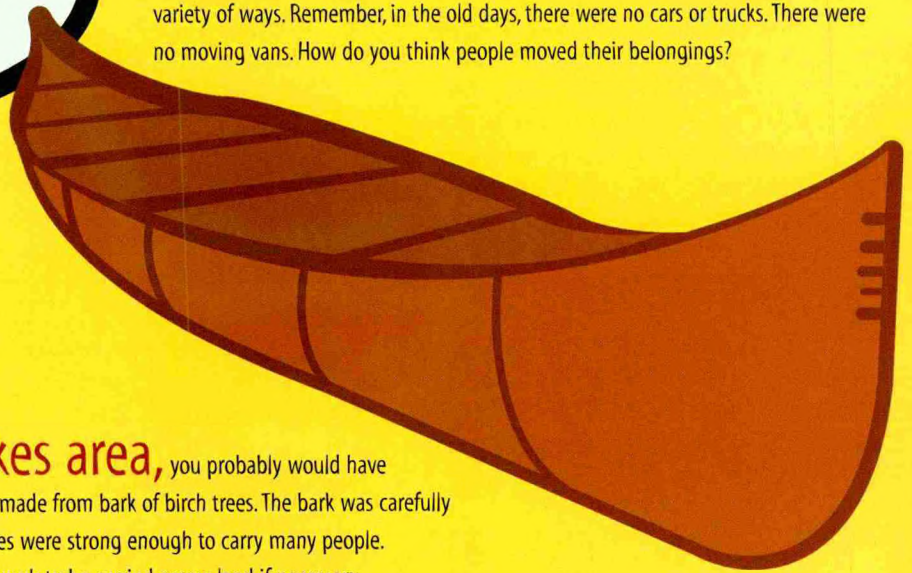
Sihumana, a young Hopi girl, prepares for and performs in her first Butterfly Dance.

Author and Illustrator: Gerald Dawavendewa (*Hopi/Cherokee*)

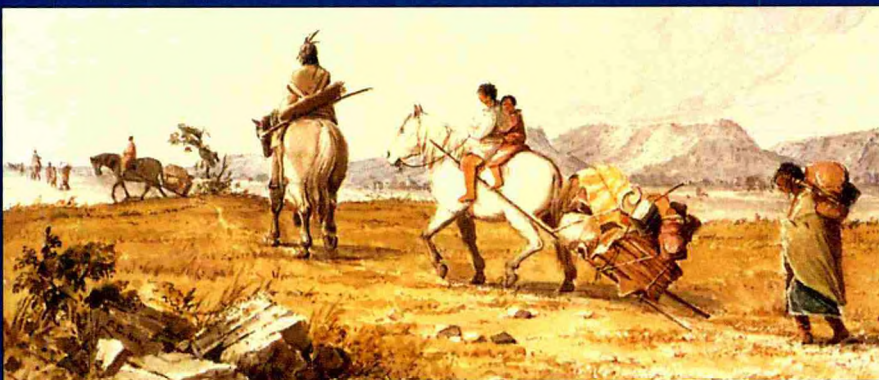




How did you travel? By plane or car? Moving is nothing new to Native people. For centuries, they have moved from one place to another in a variety of ways. Remember, in the old days, there were no cars or trucks. There were no moving vans. How do you think people moved their belongings?



If you lived in the Great Lakes area, you probably would have moved from one place to another in a canoe. These canoes were made from bark of birch trees. The bark was carefully cut off the tree so the tree wouldn't be hurt. Some of these canoes were strong enough to carry many people. Others were smaller, to be used by individuals, and were light enough to be carried across land if necessary.



< Indians Traveling

(Watercolor, 6 9/16 x 10)

by Seth Eastman

W. Duncan Macmillan Collection

Photo: Afton Historical Society Press

On the Great Plains, Native people moved their belongings on a travois. Travois were made from two poles tied together and harnessed to a horse or even to a person. Hides were placed between the two poles, which created a space for materials to be placed. Recently, an exhibition of paintings by Seth Eastman were shown at the NMAI's George Gustav Heye Center in New York City. One of these paintings shows a Dakota family moving using a travois.

In the far north, Inuits used seal or walrus skins to create watertight canoes called kayaks. Kayaks are popular today all over the United States.



Whatever the means of transportation, moving is not an easy thing to do. At the NMAI, objects are photographed and carefully studied by experts. The object is carefully packed in a crate before it is loaded into the truck. When it arrives in Maryland, a specialist unpacks it. It is then placed in its new home at the Cultural Resources Center. It is important to the NMAI that these objects also be cared for in the traditional manner. Native elders and spiritual leaders visit the objects and bless them.

object is really big – for instance, the textiles are all done in the conservation lab, mostly with a wide-angle lens.”

From the imaging station, objects are shuttled to the packing stations to be carefully packed in boxes, each with their own bar codes. It is always known which object is in which box. The boxes are then scanned into the kiva crates, and, finally, each kiva crate is scanned into the truck.

Scott Merritt is very proud of this streamlined system. The objects flow smoothly from shelves to their final resting place inside the truck with the most meticulous care and respect. Equally important to the physical handling of the objects is the Museum’s philosophy

of “traditional care,” which is about “initiating and maintaining a relationship, through direct consultation, between the tribal communities and the Museum to establish a balance of the practices and concerns of these entities for the storage, treatment, handling, publication, presentation, exhibition, and disposition of collections in the possession of the museum which are associated with tribal communities” (cited from NMAI Traditional Care and Sensitive Materials Definitions). In short, every object is treated sensitively, with respect to its “‘life force’ or ‘living spirit’ that can affect human beings in a positive, negative or passive way” (cited as above).

This whole process then reverses itself at the CRC. “The beauty of this system is that when the truck arrives full of objects, the information

has already been downloaded from computers at the CRC,” Nietfeld says. “We get a computer printout before we open up the kivas – we know exactly what’s in there.”

“This is the chance of a lifetime, to see this collection as it goes by. Nobody’s ever going to have this chance again. I just don’t see the NMAI collections ever moving en masse over that distance,” Nietfeld says. “Moving a collection of this size is a double whammy logistically; so is filling a museum of this size. Doing them at the same time has really challenged staff – it’s certainly not been dull!” ■

Liz Hill (Red Lake Band of Chippewa) writes from Washington, D.C., where she has a business specializing in public relations.

Family Reunion

“Native people talk about these artifacts as their ancestors. I remember some Blood women who had come in to repatriate some medicine bundles. They were overcome with emotion. For some, it’s like seeing long-lost relatives.”

Several years ago, Athena LaToca (Lakota/Ojibwe) began receiving the *Smithsonian Runner* in the mail. The *Runner*, now defunct, was a publication that focused on American Indian programs and activities at the Smithsonian, with a special emphasis on the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). “I wasn’t involved with Native activities,” says LaToca, 31, who at the time was a recent college graduate with a degree in fine arts who was busy starting a career in Chicago. “I think I was just unaware of Native America,” she says. “However, I was aware of my heritage and my family... I just never thought so much about it then; there was no context to consider.

“When I started receiving the *Runner* in the mail and reading about NMAI, I started thinking that maybe I should go to New York City — this had been a dream of mine since I was a little girl. Being from Alaska, I was always fascinated with the older cities — the architecture, the sense of history and place of gathering for centuries — the culture of the city,” says LaToca. “New York was always talked about as being a unique city where anything could happen. I liked the idea of experiencing some-

thing, going somewhere completely different than what I knew or was used to.

“Maybe I’ll just pack up and check out this museum,” LaToca said. She arrived in Manhattan and got her first taste of the NMAI at its biennial Film and Video Festival. LaToca volunteered at the festival. During her spare time, she could be found sketching in the NMAI’s galleries. From that point on, she was hooked. “I said I would do anything to work there — even maintenance work, because I was so interested in knowing and understanding more,” LaToca says. “As an artist, I was interested in getting more involved with the collection.”

That was in 1995. LaToca began volunteering and picked up various small work contracts at the NMAI. She began her current job as a museum technician with the collections move department in July 1999 and has found that new worlds have opened up for her. Her enthusiasm and desire to delve into other indigenous cultures and art have taken her on personal journeys to Australia and New Zealand, which she visited for three months in the spring of 1999. LaToca visited museums in both countries and had many varied experiences, includ-

ing assisting with packing up a collection of Aboriginal art at the South Australia Museum in South Adelaide and learning about Maori culture at the National Museum of New Zealand in Wellington.

Over the years, LaToca has worked with numerous Native groups that have visited the NMAI. Her work in the Museum’s public programs department brought her into contact with Native peoples from across the hemisphere: indigenous people from Bolivia and Ecuador; Navajo weavers from Arizona; Blackfoot people from Canada; and Yup’ik people from Alaska.

LaToca is struck by the importance that Native communities place on preservation of cultural material. “Native people talk about these artifacts as their ancestors,” LaToca says. “I remember some Blood women [from Canada], who had come in to repatriate some medicine bundles, were overcome with emotion. For some, it’s like seeing long-lost relatives. Sometimes they’re not even sure what [an object] is because it’s been lost for so long.”

LaToca sees digital photography as a way to increase accessibility to the collection for Native people. “By doing this, elders who are not able to travel can look up certain material for research purposes and other kinds of work,” she says. “There have been elders who have health-related reasons for not being able to come in and see the collections,” she continues. “It would have been great to have had the means to allow them to see the artifacts from their homes.” This is a priority for NMAI, and plans call for this type of direct image accessing to be available to all researchers in the future. — LH

CALENDAR *of* EVENTS

DECEMBER 2001 - JANUARY 2002



Photo by Mark R. Harrington

An Onondaga family portrait, 1907. Ontario, Canada. From Spirit Capture (see Exhibitions listing below).

dialogue between Native and non-Native peoples. More than 300 stunning examples of beadwork are on display - including clothing, moccasins, souvenir pincushions, and beaded picture frames - dating from the mid-19th century to the present. The exhibition is organized and circulated by the McCord Museum, Montreal, and the Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University, N.Y., in collaboration with the Kanien'kehaka Raotitiohkwa Cultural Center, Kahnawake, the Tuscarora Nation community beadworkers within New York state, and the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. No catalog is available.

Through Spring 2002

ALL ROADS ARE GOOD: NATIVE VOICES ON LIFE AND CULTURE

Twenty-three Native American selectors from throughout the Western Hemisphere chose more than 300 objects from the Museum's collection to display for their artistic, spiritual, and personal significance. A catalog is available in the museum shop for \$29.95.

PLEASE NOTE:

Owing to the World Trade Center tragedy, many public programs have been cancelled or postponed at the Heye Center at press time. To receive the latest information about the Heye Center's Public Programs, please call (212) 514-3888.

EXHIBITIONS

Through July 21, 2002

SPIRIT CAPTURE: NATIVE AMERICANS AND THE PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGE

This exhibition explores the meaning of photographic images of and by Native Americans in order to communicate Native perspectives on the cultural history and experiences of Native peoples during the past 150 years. Photographer, subject, and viewer are considered as the exhibition seeks to privilege the understandings of the people in the photographs, while examining the roles and motives of those who created the images. Drawing upon the National

Museum of the American Indian's photo archive of approximately 125,000 images, the exhibition was curated by Richard W. Hill Sr. (Tuscarora) and Natasha Bonilla-Martinez. A catalog is available in the museum shop for \$29.95.

Dec. 9, 2001 - May 19, 2002

ACROSS BORDERS: BEADWORK IN IROQUOIS LIFE

Exploring the artistic, cultural, economic, and political significance of beadwork in the lives of Iroquois people, this traveling exhibition also examines the fascinating ways in which beadwork has been used to cross cultural boundaries and create a



Mohawk beaded pincushion, ca. 1900, Caughnawaga, Quebec.

Photo by Katherine Fogden



Smithsonian
National Museum of the American Indian



Photo by Pamela Dawey

Above: A set of cornhusk dolls, ca. 1930, made by Louise Printup Kennedy (Seneca), Tonawanda Reservation. Cornhusk dollmaking is just one activity offered as part of the workshop, Iroquois: Past and Present (see listing on this page).

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

WORKSHOPS AT THE NMAI

IROQUOIS: PAST AND PRESENT

This workshop, designed for educators, will focus on the history of Iroquois culture and the structure of its society, as well as on Iroquois life in contemporary times. An Iroquois-style cornhusk dollmaking activity is included. All participants will receive a copy of the new gallery guide, *Haudenosaunee: People of the Longhouse*. For further information, please contact Paul Betancourt at (212) 514-3714.

Dec. 8, noon-4 p.m.

Jan. 3, 4:30-8 p.m.

Education Classroom, 2nd Floor

Jan. 10 and 12

LEATHER CEDAR POUCH WORKSHOP

Joan Henry (Cherokee/Apache) leads a two-part, two-day workshop in which she will instruct participants on making leather cedar pouches. There is a \$15.00 materials fee (\$12.00 for Museum members). For ages 12 and up. Reservations required. For more information or to make a reservation, call (212) 514-3714.

Jan. 10, 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

Jan. 12, noon-4 p.m.

Education Classroom, 2nd Floor

Jan. 24 and 26

IROQUOIS-STYLE RAISED BEADWORK WORKSHOP

In collaboration with the McCord Museum of Montreal, artist Dolores Contre Migwans (Anishinabe), Center for Aboriginal Programs coordinator, and a guest beadworker will conduct a two-part, two-day workshop that will instruct participants in Iroquois-style raised beadwork. On Thursday evening, they will introduce participants to basic beading techniques. On Saturday, the workshop will focus on the raised beadwork style of the Iroquois. There is a \$10.00 materials fee (\$8.00 for Museum members). For ages 12 and up. Reservations required; call (212) 514-3714.

Jan. 24, 4:30-7:30 p.m.

Jan. 26, noon-4 p.m.

Dec. 1

WORLD AIDS DAY

The NMAI joins museums around the world in recognizing Day Without Art. An object in the gallery will be shrouded in black as a visual demonstration to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS. The American Indian Community House will provide information and discuss with the public the challenges facing Native communities in their efforts to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS.

Noon-3 p.m.

Rotunda

Dec. 6

ACROSS BORDERS: BEADWORK IN IROQUOIS LIFE

Curatorial Dialogue

The NMAI, in collaboration with the Canadian Consulate, presents a curatorial panel discussion of the Across Borders exhibition. Hear behind-the-scenes stories about the development of this unique exhibition, including the difficulties and rewards of working in an "across border" collaboration. Panelists include Kanataktakta (Mohawk), executive director, Kanien'kehaka Raotitiohkwa Cultural Center, Kahnawake; Kate Koperski, curator of Folk Arts, and Dr. Sandra Olsen, director of the Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University; Moira McCaffrey, director, Curatorial and Research Service, McCord Museum; Dr. Trudy Nicks, curator of Ethnology, Royal Ontario Museum; Dr. Ruth Phillips, director, Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia; and Dr. Jolene Rickard (Tuscarora), assistant professor, University of Buffalo.

5 p.m.

Auditorium

FILM/VIDEO

DAILY SCREENING SERIES

Programs start at 1 p.m. Repeated Thursdays at 5:30 pm.

Video Viewing Room, 2nd Floor

HAUDENOSAUNEE - PEOPLE OF THE LONGHOUSE

Dec. 8-Jan. 6

THE GREAT LAW OF THE IROQUOIS

(1998, 13 min.) Pat Ferrero for the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh. Iroquois elders explain the use of the wampum belt in ceremonies and for treaty making.

IROQUOIS WOMEN: THE THREE SISTERS

(1998, 10 min.) Pat Ferrero for the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. A portrait of three Clan Mothers pays tribute to the strength and equality of women in Iroquois society.

HOUSE OF PEACE

(1999, 29 min.) Cathleen Ashworth. Produced by G. Peter Jemison (Seneca) for the Friends of Ganondagon. A video recreates the tragic story of the 17th-century Seneca town Ganondagon, and documents the recent construction of a traditional longhouse on the site in upstate New York.

ADDRESS:

National Museum of the American Indian Smithsonian Institution, George Gustav Heye Center One Bowling Green, New York, NY 10004

MUSEUM SHOPS:

For special-occasion shopping, jewelry by Native artists, books, and children's gifts are available in the Museum shops located on the gallery and ground floor. Open daily 10 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. For information, call 212-514-3767.

WEB SITE:

Have you visited the NMAI Web site? <http://www.americanindian.si.edu>

Jan. 7-31

THE GIFT

(1998, 49 min.) Gary Farmer (Cayuga). The importance of corn is explored along a path leading from Iroquois communities in the United States and Canada to Maya communities in Chiapas, Mexico.

ESPECIALLY FOR KIDS

A film and video series for all ages. Program starts at 11 a.m. and noon. Video Viewing Room, 2nd Floor

Dec. 8-Jan. 6

HAUDENOSAUNEE: WAY OF THE LONGHOUSE

(1982, 13 min.) Robert Stiles and John Akin. The philosophy and life of the Iroquois, or Haudenosaunee, focusing on the Mohawks of the Akwesasne Reservation.

MUSIC AND DANCE OF THE SENECA

(1980, 11 min.) Seneca Nation of Indians with the New York State Education Department. Kids learn from Seneca educator Midge Dean about musical instruments and how to do a Seneca social dance.



Students at the Albuquerque Indian School, a home economics class of seventh to ninth graders, 1938. From Spirit Capture (see Exhibitions listing on first page of the Calendar for details).

PATH OF OUR ELDERS

(1986, 20 min.) Shenendoah Films. Traditional Pomo elders pass on traditions of song, dance, and weaving.

ALICE ELLIOTT

(1975, 11 min.) Richard Lair. The famed Pomo basket maker Alice Elliot, who was born in 1886, talks of her life as a weaver.

Jan. 7-31

ONENHAKENRA: WHITE SEED

(1984, 20 min.) Frank Semmens for the Akwesasne Museum. Mohawks of the Akwesasne Reservation share their views on corn and show the making of traditional corn soup and cornhusk dolls.

PAULINA AND THE CONDOR

(1995, 10 min.) Marisol Barragan. An animation tells the story of an Aymara girl who leaves her mountain home to live in the city.

TOTEM TALK

(1997, 22 min.) Annie Frazier-Henry (French-Sioux-Blackfoot). Computer-animated clan totems put urban youth back in touch with their Northwest Coast heritage.

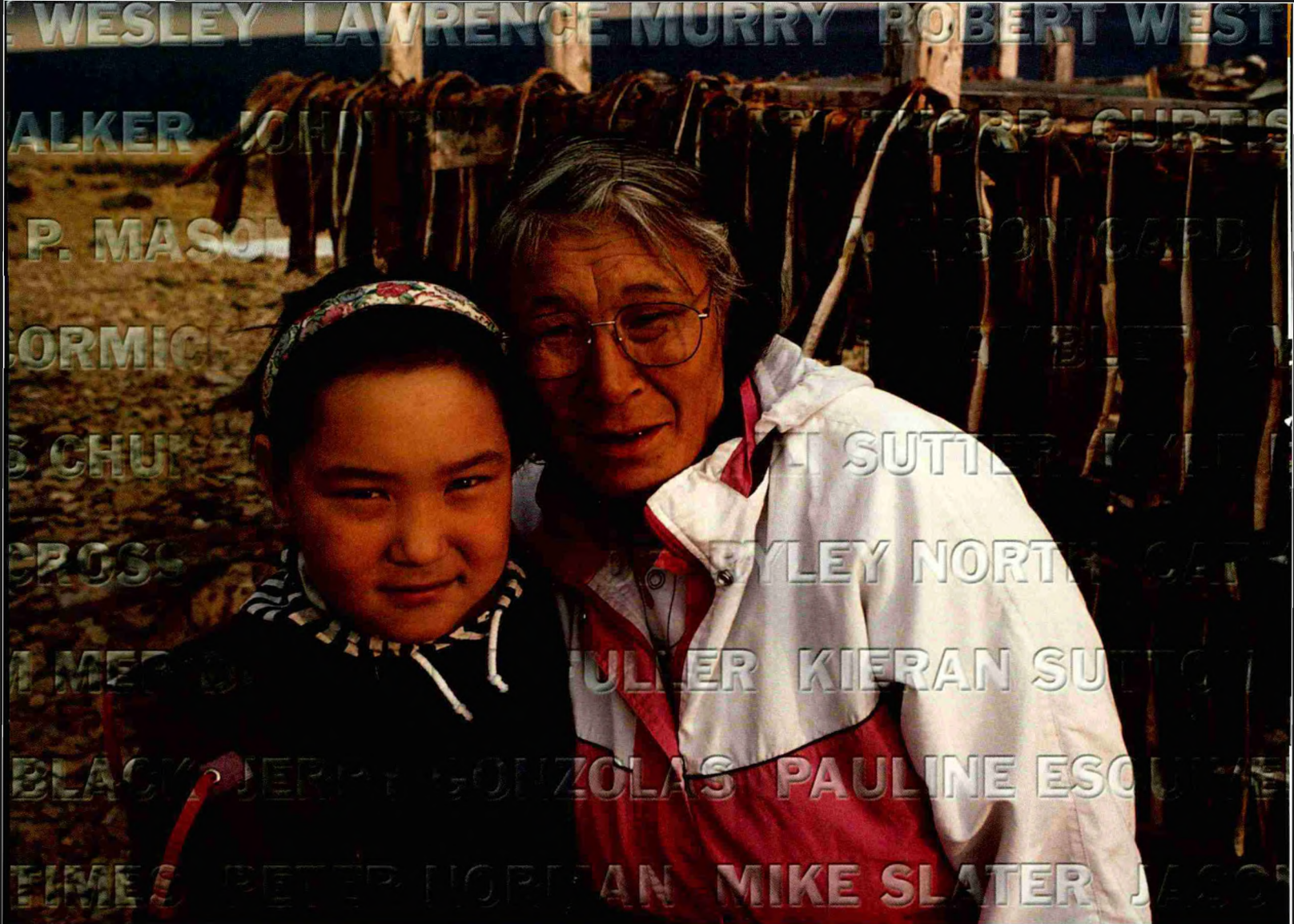
BOX OF DAYLIGHT

(1990, 9 min.) Janet Fries for the Sealaska Heritage Foundation. The Naa Kahidi Theater of southeast Alaska presents the Tlingit story of how Raven brought daylight to the world.



LOCATION: The NMAI Heye Center is located at One Bowling Green in lower Manhattan. Subway: 4 & 5 to Bowling Green or N & R to Whitehall Street. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day, except December 25. Thursdays to 8 p.m., made possible by grants from the Booth Ferris Foundation. Admission to the museum and all public programs is free. To become an NMAI Charter Member, call 1-800-242-NMAI (6624).

The George Gustav Heye Center is located at One Bowling Green, New York, N.Y., and is open daily, except December 25, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m., and, through the generosity of the Booth Ferris Foundation, Thursdays until 8 p.m. Admission is free. All programs are subject to change. For membership information, call (800) 242-NMAI. For program updates, call (212) 514-3888. Produced by NMAI, One Bowling Green, New York, N.Y. Tara O'Keefe, Calendar Editor.



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Historic Move Reunites Objects

By Mary Jane Lenz

New discoveries are being revealed as the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) collections move from New York City to the Cultural Resources Center (CRC) in Suitland, Md. George Gustav Heye's collecting passion encompassed more than objects. The NMAI holds photographs (more than 125,000 images, ranging from daguerreotypes to digital photos) and several thousand paintings and drawings. Many of these items were brought to the CRC in the same boxes, folders, and file cabinets in which they had been housed for years in dark, cramped quarters. With more space and more staff at the CRC, a few of these items are being cataloged for the first time.

All of these paper treasures have their own stories to tell.

The stories reveal themselves in different ways. Visitors from Native communities doing research in the photo archives have identified friends and relatives in the photographs. Hupa visitors from California, selecting images from the photo archives for the Mall exhibits, noticed that the photographer had combined regalia from two separate Hupa ceremonies. These bits of information have become part of NMAI's collection records.

Sometimes discoveries in the collections are serendipitous. This past spring, Alan Bain, a longtime Smithsonian archivist temporarily assigned to NMAI, came across a 1750 manuscript copy of a 1584 document that refers to Montezuma and Cortes. It appears to be a deposition presented by Joaquin Montezuma, in which he asks to be excused from paying tribute to the landowning Cortes family. Montezuma argues that his family should be exempted from paying tribute to the Cortes family because of serv-

ices given by his grandfather to Hernando Cortes in 1584.

Bain brought the manuscript to Dr. Alicia Gonzalez, an NMAI curator who does fieldwork in Oaxaca, Mexico. Dr. Gonzalez's intern, Adelina Suzan Morales, is transcribing the document from Spanish to English. The condition of the manuscript is being assessed by paper conservators in collaboration with the NMAI Conservation Department. Gonzalez is working with specialists from Oaxaca to understand the historical significance of the manuscript.

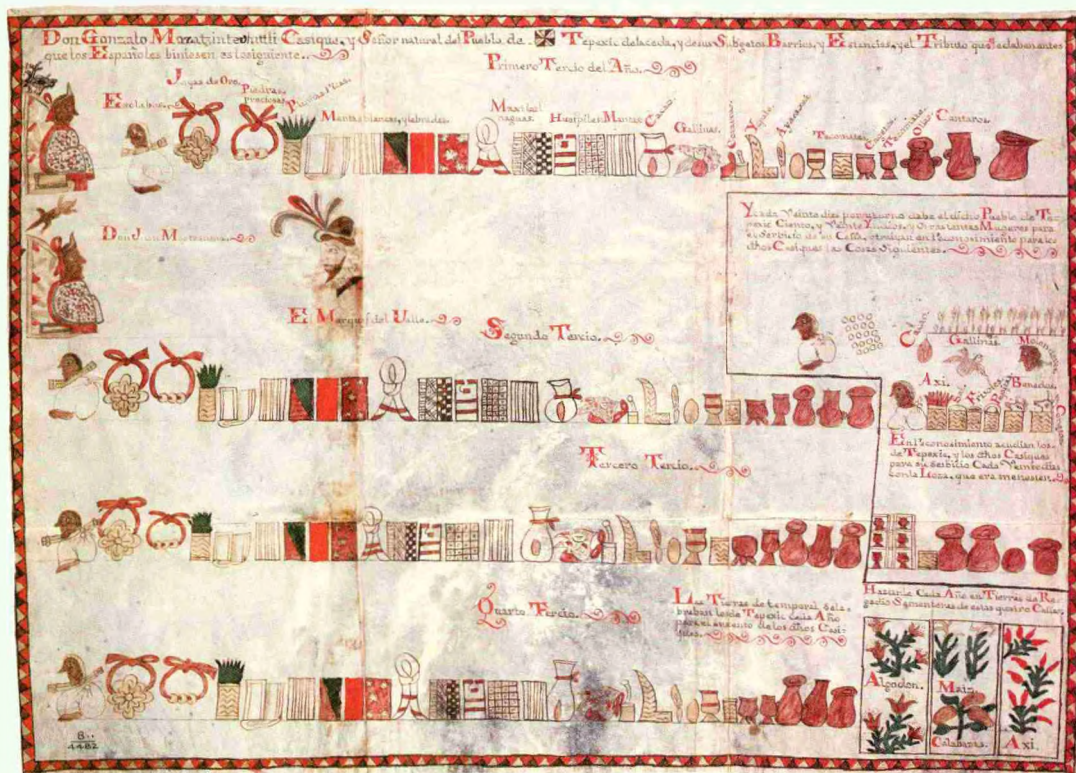
In a related discovery, Veronica Quiguango, of the Collections Department, came across a painting on parchment while selecting Nahua objects in preparation for a visit from Nahua community members in Mexico. The painting, believed at first to be from the 16th century, is a pictorial listing of the various goods that would have been given to a ruler by his subjects, the same custom described in the manuscript. The tribute painting was examined by the scholar Carmen Cook de Leonard in 1959 and

declared at that time to be a copy (perhaps from the 19th century) of a 16th-century original, with the same general date as the manuscript.

Bain researched the old annual reports of the Museum and found that Heye had acquired both pieces around 1920 as a single gift from trustee James B. Ford. But because the painting was placed in the object collections and the manuscript was filed in the archives, the connection between them was lost. Because of the collections' move and Bain's alertness, the painting and the manuscript have been reunited.

As the collections are being prepared for the move to the Cultural Resources Center, the CRC staff also prepares for new discoveries, new insights, and greater understanding of the cultural and historical meanings of this marvelous assemblage. ■

Mary Jane Lenz is a museum specialist in the Curatorial Department at the Cultural Resources Center and is working on a history of George Gustav Heye and the Heye collection.



This Nahua painted tribute record from the 1600s is a pictorial listing of the various goods that would have been given to a ruler by his subjects, a custom described in a manuscript discovered by Alan Bain.

Photo by Carmelo Guadagno



Kiowa Artists Learn a “New” Old Way

An object in the NMAI collection helps Theresa and Danieala Vickers revive traditional Kiowa dressmaking techniques.

by Pat Nietfeld

Last January, the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) reopened its collections to researchers. The collections had been closed for almost two years while staff began the move of more than 800,000 objects from the Research Branch in the Bronx, N.Y., to their new home at the Cultural Resources Center (CRC) in Suitland, Md. Twenty-nine researchers used the collections in the first six months of 2001. Two of those researchers, Theresa Carter (Kiowa) and her daughter Danieala Vickers, came to the CRC to examine the Museum’s Kiowa collection. As beadworkers and regalia makers in Anadarko, Okla., both women wanted to study Kiowa beaded objects.

Carter was awarded a 2001 fellowship in the NMAI’s Native Artist Fellowship Program. During the two years the collections were closed, NMAI’s Native Artist Fellows were unable to study NMAI’s collections and relied on other museums in New York City and Washington, D.C. Carter was one of the first fellows to use the NMAI’s collection after it reopened. At the Research Branch, Carter would have had to spend several days in the claustrophobic Plains “vault” as staff pulled items from metal shelving jam-packed with objects. She would have had to stand and examine the objects in the dark aisles. After the Kiowa collection moved to the CRC, Carter and Vickers were able to examine all of the Museum’s Kiowa garments and beaded objects, on well-lit tables, in less than a day.

They made discovery after discovery about beadwork designs, techniques, and color patterns, looking at about 200 objects. I saw Carter’s eyes light up when I took a woman’s deerskin dress off the shelf. Accessioned by the Museum in 1909, the dress was folded in a taped-up garment box with several other dresses at the Research Branch. In its new home at the CRC, it rested unfolded in a textile cabinet with its shoulders padded to prevent creasing. Carter’s excitement grew as she examined the dress. I noticed that she paid close attention to the skin “apron” attached to the waist of the dress’s skirt. Many Kiowa dresses are made in two pieces — a skirt and shirt connected by thongs.

Carter explained the importance of this find to me. In Oklahoma and in NMAI’s photo

archives, she had seen Kiowa women wearing dresses like this in turn-of-the-century photographs. Carter had tried to make dresses like those she had seen, but she couldn’t figure out how the “apron” was constructed or attached.

She couldn’t see the design in the photographs because a cloth sash tied around the waist under the apron obscured the view. Carter had been attaching the apron to the shirt, but now she saw it was sewn right to the top of the skirt and folded over the sash. With this discovery, she was eager to get home and start making dresses in this “new” old way.

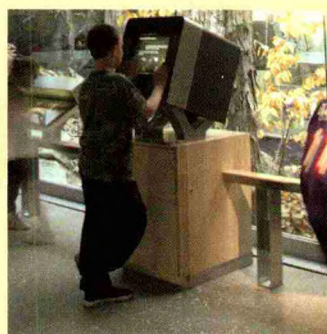
The Kiowa dress is just one of almost 4,000 objects that researchers have looked at since the collections opened again last January. As the collections move to the CRC, the Museum’s objects become accessible as never before. No longer do researchers have to excavate items from overstuffed drawers or peer into the dark corners of the Research Branch; staff members no longer test their equilibrium as they retrieve objects from high shelves in narrow, dim aisles by balancing them on their heads. Instead, the objects can spread out, breathe, and receive the respect and care they have deserved for so long. ■

Pat Nietfeld is the collections manager at the National Museum of the American Indian.



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Discover a wealth of current and historical works on the histories and cultures of indigenous peoples north of Mexico, including Canada, Alaska and Hawaii. Both adult and children's collections, open to scholars, students, and the public.

Special Events

Immerse yourself in the rich heritage of America's indigenous peoples by participating in popular presentations that draw on Native American music, dance, theatre, film and visual arts, as well as seasonal festivals and celebrations.

"One of the best anthropological museums in the United States."

ANTHROPOLOGY TODAY



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THE WASHINGTON POST



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To receive information about the Honor Wall, simply fill out the coupon on page 28 of this magazine and mail it to: NMAI, Honor Wall Project, P.O. Box 23473, Washington, DC 20026-3473. Or visit our Website at www.nmai.si.edu. Or call 1-800-242-NMAI (6624).



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