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**American Indian**

Spring 2003

Celebrating Native Traditions & Communities

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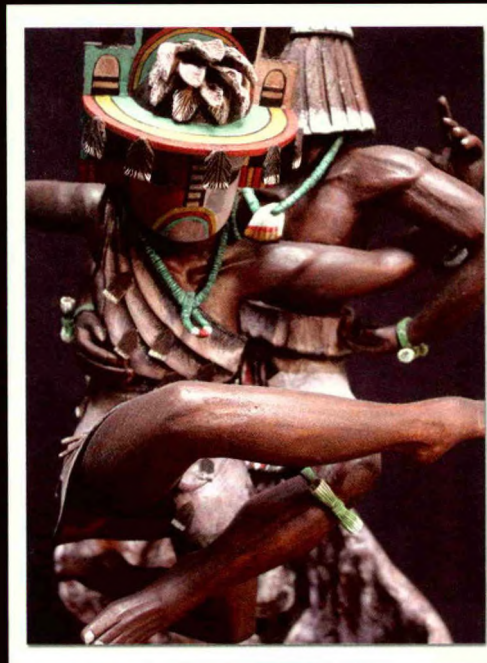
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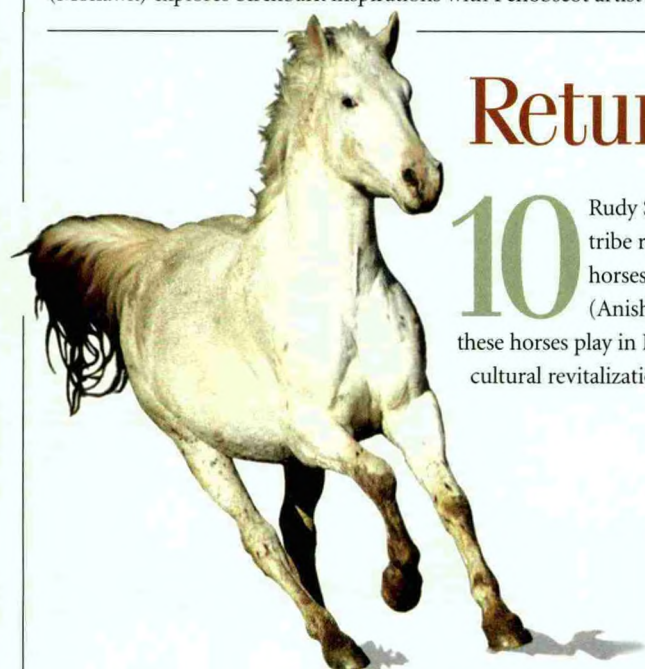
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## Return of the Horse Nation

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*On the cover: My Love, Miss Liberty doll, Cu'pik Eskimo, Chevak, Alaska, 1987. Made by Rosalie Paniyak. Sea-lion-intestine overdress, printed fabric underdress, fur, seal hide, wood, and blue glass marbles. For more on the NMAI's doll collection, see page 24.*

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# NMAI's Department of Public Programs shares the genius of traditional and contemporary Native culture with a rapidly growing audience



The Ganondagan Young Spirit Dancers and ironworker Jerry McDonald (Mohawk) teach young visitors at the GGHC about Iroquois people.

By Helen Maynor Scheirbeck

With the opening of the Mall Museum just two years away, opportunities and responsibilities for the National Museum of the American Indian's Department of Public Programs will expand greatly. The projected visitorship to the Mall Museum – millions of people every year – gives us a way to present the voices and genius of Native cultures to an extent unprecedented in American history. As we plan Native programs at the Mall Museum, we have begun offering programs in the Washington, D.C., area as well as continuing the programs at the George Gustav Heye Center in Lower Manhattan.

Last fall, we worked with cultural institutions to bring Indian talents to the Nation's Capital. Fellow Smithsonian bureaus, such as the American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery, the Smithsonian Associates, and the Hirshhorn, hosted NMAI's dance, music, and lecture programs in conjunction with the Renwick's exhibition, *George Catlin and His Indian Gallery*, and to celebrate November's National American Indian Heritage Month.

Prestigious venues such as the Kennedy Center, the Library of Congress, and the Barns of Wolf Trap also hosted NMAI programs, including the Cellicion Traditional Zuni Dancers and Taos flute player Robert Mirabal. In support of the Library of Congress's Center for the Book, we brought four nationally celebrated Native authors, including Vine Deloria Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux) and Luci Tapahonso (Navajo), to the National Book Festival.

Our publications unit launched a new children's book series, *My World: Young Native Americans Today*, which profiles young Native Americans who share their experiences about growing up in today's world. The first book, *Meet Naiche: A Native Boy from the Chesapeake Bay Area* – written by NMAI Museum Program Specialist Gabrielle Tayac (Piscataway) and photographed

by John Harrington (Siletz) – introduces readers to her 11-year-old nephew. *Edge of Enchantment: Sovereignty and Ceremony in Huatulco, México*, authored by NMAI Senior Curator Alicia Gonzáles with photographs by Roberto Ysaías, is a richly illustrated book of original research about the indigenous people of coastal Oaxaca.

Since the NMAI opened the George Gustav Heye Center in New York City in October 1994, NMAI has shared the history and cultural expression of indigenous peoples with hundreds of thousands of visitors. The NMAI offers programs that cover traditional and contemporary dance and music, the spoken word, drama, film and video, and the written word.

Last spring at the GGHC, the Children's Festival focused on Iroquois culture and coincided with the opening of *Booming Out*, an exhibition about Iroquois ironworkers who helped build the cityscape of New York City. The festival featured the Ganondagan Young Spirit Dancers, who perform Iroquois social dances like the stomp dance. The dancers belong to a troupe developed at Ganondagan, a historic site in New York state, which was one of the largest Seneca villages in the 17th century.

The dancers offered educational programs about Iroquois history and culture. Children made cornhusk dolls and pony-bead bracelets. Cornhusk dolls, unique to the Iroquois, teach lessons about the importance of community. The story of why the dolls are faceless shows the significance of humility, as the Creator is said to have removed a girl's face because she was vain and unhelpful.

In the Discovery Room, families could see a birchbark canoe and a longhouse. Years ago, longhouses housed matrilineal clans composed of mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. Today Iroquois people use longhouses for ceremonial, political, social, and cultural purposes.

Renee Hill (Mohawk) hosted the program *The*

*Teachings of Mother Earth*, in which she used animal puppets and dolls to teach stories like how the bee got its stinger.

The exhibition *Across Borders* illustrated the use of beadwork in Iroquois life. Iroquois beadwork reflects spiritual beliefs, communal values, and a sense of identity. Bird figures are important in the creation story and serve as symbols of spiritual and physical strength. Birds shown with berries hanging from their beaks symbolize abundance or well-being.

A photography exhibit on the daring work of the Iroquois ironworkers gave a sense of how indebted we are to these "skywalkers" for the very structures of urban America. The Twin Towers, the Chrysler Building, and most of New York's tunnels and bridges have all been touched by the skill of the Iroquois. Jerry McDonald, a Mohawk from Akwesasne, spoke about the tools of this vocation. Many of our young visitors got a taste of the skills required as they tried balancing while walking a slim beam a few inches off the floor in the Rotunda. Children had an opportunity to strap on a tool belt and handle a spud wrench, one of the tools used by the Iroquois ironworkers.

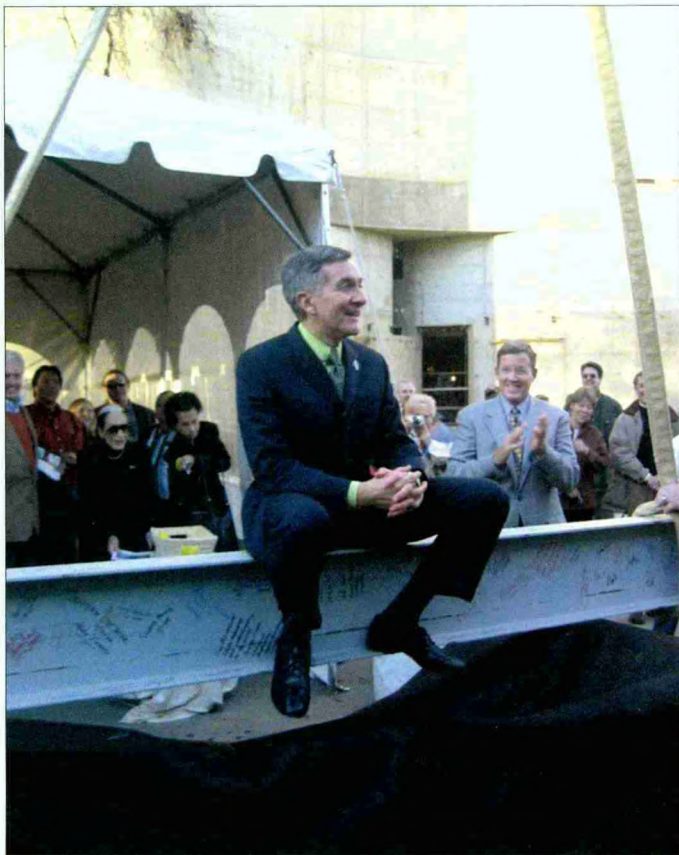
Films and videos – including *Onenhakenra: White Seed, Haudenosaunee: Way of the Longhouse Music*, and *Dance of the Senecas* – were shown during the festival to provide another perspective on Iroquois life. Visitors could touch resource materials and Iroquois dolls.

We are honored to have the opportunity to provide forums that build awareness of the life, languages, literature, history, and arts of the Native peoples of the Western Hemisphere. The traditional platforms for sharing – such as the longhouse or tribal center – keep intact our connections to our language, land, and ancestors. The Department of Public Programs at the GGHC and the Mall Museum looks forward to being a home, or Native place, to continue these traditions. ■

Helen Maynor Scheirbeck (Lumbee) is NMAI's assistant director for public programs.

Photos by Mary Cathryn Roth





NMAI Director Rick West (Southern Cheyenne) climbs aboard the steel beam, which will be fitted into the Mall Museum's 120-foot-high dome.



Photo by Jennifer Lyon

## Topping Out Ceremony Builds Excitement

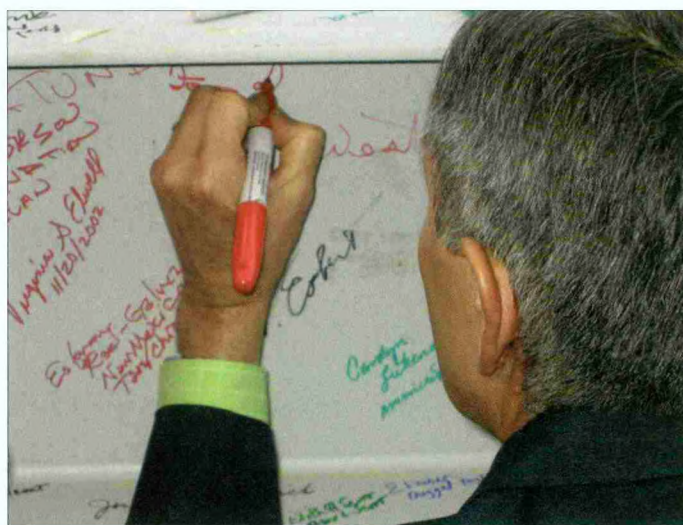
With necks craned skyward, more than 150 board members, donors, staff, and friends of the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) watched as a two-ton steel beam was lifted to the fifth floor of the Mall Museum. This “topping out” ceremony, held on November 20, marked the transition from concrete to steel construction and honored those who have worked on the project from its inception.

Beverly Turner (Table Mountain Rancheria) opened the event with a blessing, followed by remarks from NMAI Director Rick West (Southern Cheyenne), Clark Construction Senior Vice President Bill Magruder, and NMAI design consultant Johnpaul Jones (Cherokee/Choctaw).

Jones noted “the curving skeleton of the building” and its “organic” design in contrast to the linear architecture of the National

Mall. He explained the building’s connection to four distinct worlds – the natural world, with plants, stone, wood, and celestial references woven into the interior; the animal world, through wetlands that will attract wildlife; the spirit world, in a place created to honor ancestors and perform ceremonies; and the human world, with oral traditions sustained in circular gathering spaces both inside and out. “Above all, this is a place to celebrate our living culture,” he said. “The design is a solution – where American Indian beliefs were not left out. It is a solution that represents us.”

The topping-out ceremony dates back thousands of years and spans many cultures, explained Debra Nauta-Rodriguez, NMAI project executive. “A topping out is traditionally held when the highest point of a structure is reached, to thank the workers, honor their efforts to reach this



This photo and top left by Leonda Levchuk

The Beam was signed by all attendees, including NMAI Director Rick West.

point, and to wish them well.” Earlier that day, Clark Construction had held a luncheon for its workers, recognizing those in the concrete trade who will be replaced by steel, mechanical, electrical, stone, and masonry trades.

“The celebration held special

meaning for me as one who has worked on each of the NMAI facilities,” said Nauta-Rodriguez. “The transformation from paper to reality that I witness every day is a reminder that it takes many voices and talents to design and build this museum.”

- Tanya Thrasher



# Songs of Worship Keep Native Languages Alive

Mohawk sisters (l-r) Sandra Sault, Michelle Hill, Linda Hill, Shelda Johnson, Sherri Martin, and Karen Williams inside St. Paul's Kanyengem Anglican Church.

Light November snow falls on a 150-year-old church on the Six Nations Reserve in southern Ontario. Inside St. Paul's Kanyengem Anglican Church, six women stand together before the altar as they have done for almost 30 years. This morning,

they lend their voices to a National Museum of the American Indian project called *Christian Songs in Native Languages*. Known locally as the Martin girls, the women sing Christian hymns in Mohawk, their ancestral Native language.

"In some communities, these

hymns are the only way a Native language is preserved and heard," says Howard Bass, NMAI public programs producer. Bass has traveled across the continent from North Carolina to Minnesota – with plans for Alaska and the Southwest as well – to record for a CD compilation to be released by Smithsonian Folkways in 2004.

Terence Winch, NMAI head of publications, visualized the project in 1995. So far 200 songs and hymns have been recorded in approximately 12 sessions, with another 10 pending, from Native communities across the United States and Canada such as Cherokee (Qualla Boundary), N.C., Kaneohe, Hawaii, and Lawton, Okla. "This project communicates something central to the museum's mission: that Native people continue to practice their culture and speak their languages in a contemporary and vital sense," says Winch. "Most people don't know these languages still exist, but here they are."

The Martin sisters are aware of the fragile state of indigenous languages in the hemisphere and the importance of passing on the hymns to younger generations, to continue the tradition they learned as young women in the early 1970s. "Some of the elders in the community sing along with us if they know the song," says Michelle Hill, the

youngest sister. "They can understand our words, and it's very emotional for them to hear because very few people can understand or speak the language anymore." Bass acknowledges the rapid rate of language loss among Native Americans as one of the significant driving forces behind the project.

"The recordings we have made thus far offer a cornucopia of incredible music that is heartfelt, beautiful, and genuine," says Winch. "Even if you don't come from a Native American or Christian background yourself, you still feel its impact and beauty."

The Martin sisters practice once a week in the church that has been a special place to them since their father, Sheldon Martin, tended the grounds. "We usually sing the Mohawk hymns at funerals and wakes," says Karen. "We sing when we can't talk," she says about the time they sang at the funeral of their mother, Edna. "It lifts us up and helps us heal. Our songs can be prayers."

The collection will include a booklet with biographical information about the singers and the role of hymns in Native music and in Native language preservation. Please visit the Web site [www.AmericanIndian.si.edu](http://www.AmericanIndian.si.edu) for updates on this and other recordings available from the NMAI.

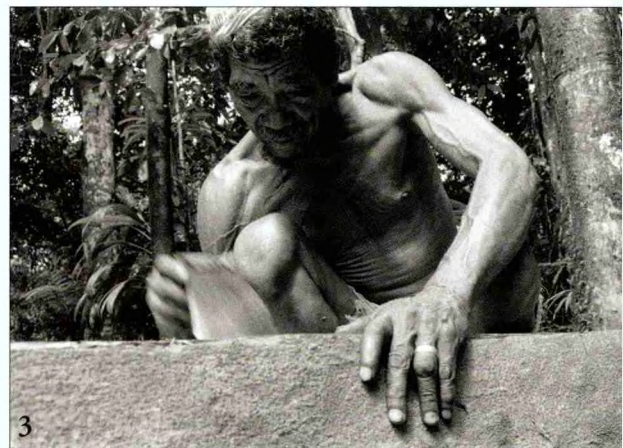
- Jason Ryle



## NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL FEATURES NATIVE WRITERS:

Author Vine Deloria Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux) with Helen Schierbeck, (Lumbee) NMAI Assistant Director for Public Programs, at the 2nd National Book Festival on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol, October 12, 2002. NMAI sponsored appearances by Native writers Luci Tapahonso (Navajo), Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve (Lakota Sioux), Cynthia Leitich Smith (Muscogee/Creek), and Yu'pik storyteller Chuna McIntyre. The festival, attended by over 40,000 people, was sponsored by the Library of Congress and First Lady Laura Bush.





## Exhibit Sheds Light On Taino, Carib Cultures

The exhibition *The New Old World: Antilles – Living Beyond the Myth* features photographs and diary entries by Marisol Villanueva, who has documented the Taino and Carib peoples of the Caribbean since 1999. The indigenous cultures of the Antilles were almost eradicated within decades after Columbus landed at Guanahani (San Salvador). Native communities persevere today in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, the Cuban Sierras, and on the islands of Dominica and Trinidad. “These photographs represent a significant contribution to the study of Caribbean society and challenge the myth of indigenous extinction that often characterizes its history,” says Panchito Ramirez (Taino) in the book *Panchito: Cacique de Montaña*, edited by Jose Barreiro (Taino).

Villanueva’s photographs, displayed alongside personal statements by community members, documents the preparation of casava bread, canoe making, knitting, weaving, and local ceremonies. The experience has touched Villanueva’s life. “It has been an amazing experience to work with tradition keepers and ordinary people in their fascinating day-to-day ways of living,” Villanueva says. “These people are proud and enthusiastic to share their culture and traditions with the rest of us, and they wish for us to know that they are an existing, living part of our mosaic of cultures and not just a part of history.”

This exhibition marks the first phase of Villanueva’s long-term curatorial project of *The New Old World*. Three additional phases – which she hopes to have completed exhibiting within three years – will appear at venues outside the NMAI

and will focus on the Southwestern United States, Mexico and Central America, and South America. “Because the National Museum of the American Indian is committed to strengthening the voices of Native people throughout the hemisphere, we are very pleased to present this exhibition, as it vividly illustrates the survival of indigenous people and traditions of the Antilles,” says Museum Director W. Richard West (Southern Cheyenne) about the exhibition.

*The New Old World: Antilles – Living Beyond the Myth* runs until spring 2003. For more information please visit the Museum’s Web site at [www.AmericanIndian.si.edu](http://www.AmericanIndian.si.edu).

– Jason Ryle

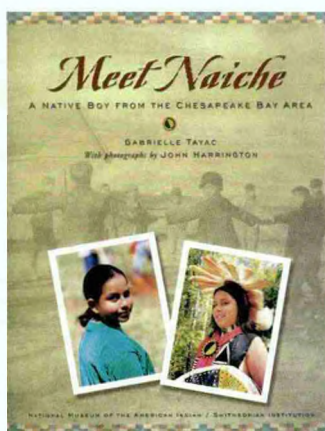
1. Waitukubuli (Dominica) diary – Charles is 64 years old, he is a very amiable person. He assisted me during the hour-long trek through the forest to reach the spot where

they work. it is not an easy trail, and everyday he crosses over from the other side of the mountain, which adds another hour long walk before climbing up to the place where we are now. Here they work, carving wood all day. 2. Kiskeya (República Dominicana) diary – Weaver Tejedora 3. Waitukubuli (Dominica) diary – Canoes are made from a rubber tree. The tree is felled and if it is too big, it is used for two canoes. The contour of the canoe is delineated with coal before the carving work begins. Little by little the carving begins. All the work takes place in the same forest where the tree has been carved. 4. Cuba (Cuba) testimony – Panchito: “I have my community. Not to say that it is a developed community, but it is true that we all live like the five fingers in a hand, that know how to join themselves.”\*

Photos by Marisol Villanueva



# My World: Young Native Americans Today



**M**y World: *Young Native Americans Today*, a series of children's books sponsored by the National Museum of the American Indian, sheds light on the lives of Native American children today. Each book focuses on one child and is written by a relative of that child. The first book in the series, *Meet Naiche*, introduces readers to Naiche Tayac, a Piscataway boy who lives in Maryland. Written by Dr. Gabrielle Tayac (Piscataway), Naiche's cousin and an NMAI program specialist, and photographed by John Harrington (Siletz), the book follows a weekend in Naiche's life. Tayac says Naiche was selected by the NMAI in order to pay homage to the Piscataway tribe and acknowledge their traditional territory, which is near the site where the new Mall Museum is being built.

"We wanted non-Native American children to get interested in someone like Naiche and to start to ask questions," Tayac says. "There is a lack of basic information on Native Americans. Sometimes when I tell children that I live in Washington, D.C., some of them think I live in a tipi because I am a Native American." Tayac hopes this series will clear up misconceptions children have of Native Americans.

*Meet Naiche* also gives Native American children an opportunity to identify with Naiche. The book explores Naiche's everyday life, such as attending public school and riding a bike, and highlights aspects of his Native American cultural and family life. The book mentions the Piscataway history in the Chesapeake Bay area and follows Naiche and his family as they pre-

pare for the springtime Awakening of Mother Earth ceremony. One of his tasks at this ceremony is to crumble dried tobacco leaves with his grandfather, Billy Tayac, chief of the Piscataway Nation.

Published by Beyond Words Publishing, Inc., *Meet Naiche* is available for \$15.95 at major bookstores. Different tribes and regions were chosen for the books to illustrate the diversity of Native American people and their culture. Three books have already been planned for the series. The next book, *Meet Mindy: A Native Girl from the Southwest*, written by former NMAI Training Coordinator Susan Secakuku (Hopi) and scheduled for release in spring 2003, will feature Melinda Secakuku (Hopi/Tewa), the author's niece.

- Jeremy Brascoupe



## Reception Marks Edge of Enchantment Opening

Left: José Efigenio Hernández Ramírez, mayor of Huatulco, bestows a gift to Salvador Beltrán del Río, consul general of Mexico, at the opening of the Edge of Enchantment exhibition in New York City.

Top left (l-r): Claudette Brown, director of the Nathan Cummings Foundation, Dr. Alicia Gonzalez, curator for the Edge of Enchantment, and Doña Maria Escamilla Zarete, elder of the Chontal community from San Pedro Huamelula, Oaxaca at the Edge of Enchantment opening. Above right: A rare platinum 1903 print of Chief Joseph (Nez Perce) signed and stamped by famed artist Edward S. Curtis, valued at over \$50,000, was donated to the NMAI collection by the Citigroup Foundation and Solomon Brothers in hopes that other businesses and groups would give works of Native art that would otherwise never be seen by the public. (l-r) Steven Loeb, Solomon Brothers attorney, Dr. Kaufman, former Solomon Brothers partner, W. Richard West, NMAI director, John Haworth, GGHC director, Suzanne Lemakis, Citigroup Foundation curator and Stephanie Hochman, assistant vice president Citigroup Foundation.



# Return of the



*Rudy Shebala's Nez Perce horses were used for the Grand Entries at Wy-Kan-Ush-Pum powwow, formerly known as "Jammin' for Salmon," which took place at Tom McCall Waterfront Park in Portland, Ore., in August 2002.*



# Horse Nation



**R**udy Shebala ambles through the stable in Lapwai, Idaho, and looks in on his babies – Yellow Jacket, Halhelooya, and Nez Perce Glory. They are the new generation of Nez Perce horses, the cherished result of careful thought, breeding, prayer, and ceremony. The Nez Perce word for horses is *sikem*, but they have a special name for the spotted horses they traded for – *maumin*. The story goes that these horses came from a trade with the Mormons. Whatever their origins, the Nez Perce horses were remarkable.

The Nez Perce call themselves *Neemoopoo*, but they are known to most of us as the Nez Perce, the name that French trappers gave them in reference to their dentalium-shell nose rings. Lewis and Clark's party, half famished and sick with dysentery, came upon Nez Perce territory in September 1805. The Nez Perce welcomed them, supplied them with food, and stabled the explorers' horses while the legendary delegation canoed to the mouth of the Columbia. Meriwether Lewis wrote about the Nez Perce horses, noting that some of them were varied in color, or "pied." "Their horses appear to be of an excellence, they are lofty, elegantly formed, active and durable, in short many of them look like fine English coursers and would make a figure in any country."

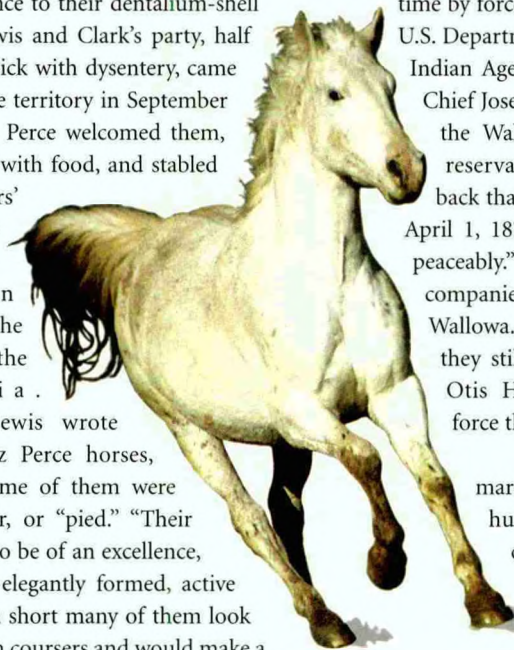
The Wallowa Valley, near present-day Joseph, Ore., is a land of rivers, meadows, and mountains. Settlers eyed the land, and by 1863 a treaty was presented to the Nez Perce that would take away three-fourths of their land and leave them a small reservation at Lapwai. Chief Joseph appealed to Washington, and

some land was returned to the Nez Perce.

But because of pressure from settlers and gold seekers, the land was taken again, this time by force. In early January 1877, the U.S. Department of the Interior ordered Indian Agent John Monteith to move Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce out of the Wallowa Valley and onto the reservation. Monteith reported back that he had "given Joseph until April 1, 1877 to come on the reserve peaceably." He also requested that two companies of cavalry be sent to the Wallowa. Two months later, when they still had not left, Gen. Oliver Otis Howard was instructed to force their removal.

So began a long nightmare for the Nez Perce. Seven hundred and fifty women, children, and elders and 2,000 horses set out for Canada, seeking what they thought would be freedom. They were pursued by 2,000 soldiers led by General Howard and a group of cavalrymen led by Col. Nelson Miles.

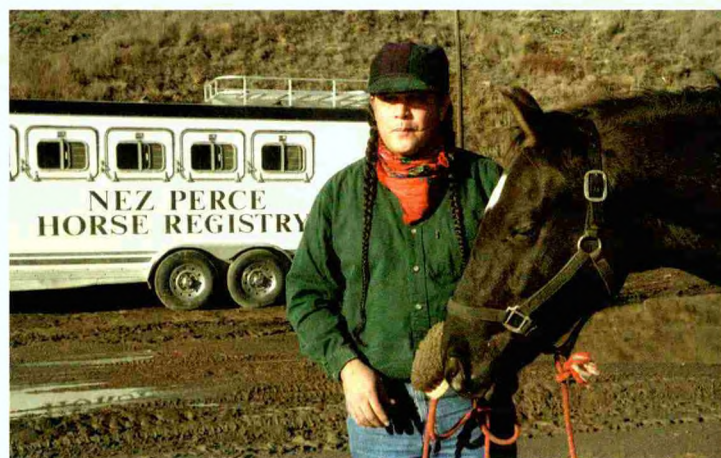
The Nez Perce chiefs led their people and their horses on a 1,700-mile odyssey to escape the cavalry. They were forced to fight the soldiers at Battle Ridge, on the south fork of the Clearwater River (near present-day Stites,



Story by Winona LaDuke • Photos by Wil Phinney



In 1994 the Nez Perce tribe, with the help of Shebala (below, center) and others, launched a horse program known as the Young Horseman's Program, in which Nez Perce youth learn Nez Perce history as well as horse care and breeding, and work to redevelop the Nez Perce horse herd.



Idaho). Their families were ambushed in the Big Hole Valley (10 miles west of Wisdom, Mont.), where more than 60 people, mostly women and children, were killed and many more wounded. Yet the Nez Perce continued their arduous path south, crossing the Continental Divide at Bannock Pass, coming out near Leadore, Idaho, then traveling east to West Yellowstone National Park, only to be attacked again at Canyon Creek, Mont., by Col. Miles coming in from Lakota Territory. Just 30 miles south of the Canadian border, the flight ended. After five days of fighting in bitterly

cold weather and snow, the Nez Perce came to an agreement with Col. Miles and Gen. Howard, believing they would be allowed to go home. Instead, only a small band, under the leadership of Subchief Whitebird, escaped and found sanctuary in Canada under the protection of Sitting Bull.

The Nez Perce were scattered like leaves in the wind – many were sent to prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., and then to the internment camps in Tonkowa, Okla., where many perished during their eight years of imprisonment. The *maumin* horses of the Nez Perce

came to be called the Appaloosas, named after the Palouse Valley in the heart of Nez Perce territory. No horses left the Bear Paw battlefield with the Nez Perce, however. Most of the horses were killed; a few were taken home as war booty by the soldiers or given to the settlers in the same valleys the Nez Perce had cherished. Some of the Nez Perce were allowed to return to their reservation at Lapwai, but Joseph and his band were considered too dangerous and sent to live in exile in Nespelem, at the Colville Reservation in Washington state. An agency physician reported that Joseph died there in





1904 of a broken heart.

With the loss of much of their traditional lifestyle came also the loss of their ability to breed their treasured horses. Although a few Nez Perce were able to recover some of their horses and resume breeding, the bulk of the Nez Perce breeding program became dormant. The name "appaloosa" was appropriated with the birth of the Appaloosa Horse registry in the 1930s, a creation of non-Indian horsemen who over time had come to hold some of the horses of pied coloration.

But the Nez Perce did not forget their horses. A century after the Battle of the Bear's Paw, the Nez Perce began developing a special new horse breed. Shebala (Navajo) had married into a Nez Perce family (the Lamtama or White Bird band) many years ago. In 1994 the Nez Perce tribe, with the help of Shebala and others, launched a horse program known as the Young Horseman's Program, in which Nez Perce youth learn Nez Perce history as well as horse care and breeding, and work to redevelop the Nez Perce horse herd. The program is considered a national model. This past summer marked the second year in a row in which three dozen or more Ojibwe kids from the White Earth Reservation were part of the Young Horseman's Program.

Then came the Nez Perce Horse Registry. Started in 1995 and formalized in 1998, the registry developed a new breed of horse, the Nez Perce horse, which combines traits and strands woven together by two distant communities. When Shebala started the horse program, he took in four types of mares as the foundation: the Arabian/Appaloosa, the Thoroughbred/Appaloosa, the Quarterhorse/Appaloosa, and the Appaloosa/Appaloosa. Shebala then chose the traits of a breed called the Akhal-Teke to join with the 50 mares to produce the horse of the Nez Perce future.

The Akhal-Teke horse of Turkmenistan is thought to be the most ancient horse in the world – there is evidence of its existence since 3000 B.C. The horses are said to have originated in the Nissa region, at that time the capital of the Persian state now called Turkmenistan. The horses are from the Akhal oasis in the Turkmenistan desert, home of the Teke people. The Akhal-Teke, according to Shebala, is known for its "stamina, athletic ability, purity of breed, and loyalty to rider." The Akhal-Teke have a unique look: they have a double-lidded eye and a prominent forehead with a sleek,



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**“The Nez Perce** are known internationally and historically as horsemen and horse breeders. Now that the Nez Perce are in the modern day and age, this is one way we can contribute to this modern horse industry, while helping our community and keeping the Nez Perce ancestors’ horse-breeding tradition alive.”

thoroughbred-like body and a large chest. They are built for endurance running. Like other seasoned horse breeders, Shebala felt that these characteristics would combine well with those horses he and the Nez Perce had found to begin a new breeding program.

The Akhal-Teke horses are extremely rare, with fewer than 300 of them in the United States and a registry of only about 3,600 internationally. Journalist Ike Boone tells how difficult it is to pry an Akhal-Teke from that part of the world: “In 1999, in Ashgabat, the only Akhal-Teke auction in the world, over 80 horses were offered for sale. Only two were actually sold – a four-year-old stallion named Karar for \$100,000 and a weanling for \$25,000. It is not easy for a Turk to part with one of these horses.” That rarity is one reason why it is so amazing that the Nez Perce found these horses and began the new breeding program with them.

The story goes that there was a Minnesota breeder of the Akhal-Teke whom Shebala happened upon. “We were looking to buy a mare, and we got in contact with him,” Shebala remembers. “He says come and see me, and he makes us an offer.” Hans Sprandel, a German immigrant, had been raising Akhal-Teke horses with his brother. Hans offered to donate four stallions, two mares, and three geldings to the Nez Perce Horse Registry. Shebala was amazed at the offer. “I couldn’t believe our fortune. I remained composed and sat there. I called the tribal council and we got those horses.” He continues, “At that time, there were only 2,000 Akhal Tekes in the world, and they rarely get out of Turkmenistan.” And so the Akhal-Tekes came to Lapwai.

“Pretty soon everybody started to come around to see them,” says Shebala. “We offered an introductory breeding for \$90. Some of our people went for it right away.” Shebala says that

they want a breed of horse for which people will remember the Nez Perce. “The Nez Perce are known internationally and historically as horsemen and horse breeders. Now that the Nez Perce are in the modern day and age, this is one way we can contribute to this modern horse industry, while helping our community and keeping the Nez Perce ancestors’ horse-breeding tradition alive.”

There is another story of the Nez Perce and a horse – the story of the friendship between Charles Erskine Scott Wood and Chief Joseph. Wood was Gen. Howard’s aide-de-camp and the man who recorded Chief Joseph’s handing-over-the-rifle speech. At that time, no words could bridge the grief of that moment or stop the American military and its actions. In the years following the forced removal of the Nez Perce, Wood was troubled by the Nez Perce history, calling the war against the Nez Perce “morally reprehensible and unjust.” Wood left the military, settled in Portland, and became a lawyer who advocated for the Nez Perce survivors. He also began a relationship with Nez Perce Chief Joseph.

In 1892 he began sending his son, Erskine Wood, to summer with Joseph on the reservation. It was at the end of the second summer with the Nez Perce that the young Erskine, under instruction from his father, asked Joseph if there was, in the words of his granddaughter Mary Wood, “a gift he could offer Joseph in return for the hospitality he had extended to young Erskine.” Joseph replied that he would like a fine stallion to improve his herd, but Erskine never conveyed that message back to his father. He looked upon Joseph as such a great man that he thought he deserved much more than a horse and thought this was too small a request.

Mary Wood, a law professor at the University of Oregon, recalls that her grandfather, the young Erskine, lived to be 104 and over the years he felt great regret that he had not passed Joseph’s words on to his father. This memory spurred the Wood family to action in the 1990s.

Mary Wood and her twin sister, Becky Wood Hardesty, wanted to honor Joseph’s request. They researched the pedigrees and papers of more than 500 Appaloosa stallions, narrowed the choices down to a dozen, and presented the information to the Nez Perce. After much deliberation and consultation, a handsome black-and-white stallion named Zip’s Wild Man was selected.

In 1997 the Wood family descendants met Keith Soy Red Thunder, the closest living





descendant of Joseph (from Nespelem, Wash.) and other Nez Perce at Wallowa Lake. Nez Perce Elder Horace Axtell led the ceremony on July 27, 1997, to honor the relationship and the gift of the horse. Nez Perce journalist Beth Piatote Hege recalls his words: "It was a great feeling, especially when that beautiful horse was introduced. In our time, we had a lot of these beautiful horses, and now they can revive and grow among our people again. It was touching to my heart to see this with my own eyes and to hear the words spoken by the Woods family and by the Nez Perce people."

Zippy, as the horse is known by Soy Red Thunder, today lives in Nespelem, Wash., and has sired many new Nez Perce Appaloosas.

Through all these years, there has been a recovery of the spirit and an honoring of the ancestors who lost their lives and are remembered by the Nez Perce. In the late 1990s the National Park Service approached the Nez Perce to begin a commemoration at the battlefields of the Nez Perce war, including White Bird and the Big Hole National Battlefield. Shebala remembers the conversation. "There was an annual event hosted by the National Park Service on the anniversary of the battle. They had army re-enactments and the Park

Service wanted to know if we would bring horses out to the Big Hole Field. Some 60 to 90 Nez Perce lost their lives there, and ultimately this was a turning point for the Nez Perce. I didn't think it was right to parade there. I asked our elders what to do.

"One elder woman remembered a ceremony they used to have at Umatilla. It was a longhouse memorial on horses, called an 'empty-saddle ceremony,'" Shebala recalls. "They would bring the horses into the longhouse, and a well-known speaker would talk for the family. It's an old ceremony. They led their horses back after the battle, and then led them around. It became a custom a year after the warriors died, to bring the riderless horse out, with the war bonnet and leggings, and have a ceremony."

It was after much deliberation and prayer that Shebala and the elders came up with a plan. Shebala made a staff of 90 eagle feathers to commemorate those lost at the battle at Big Hole. Then, "I said to the kids, 'I want to have young guys paint the horses.' They painted them with hail designs and lightning marks on the legs. Then we dressed the horses up and put trappings on them. Jessica Red Heart had most of the trappings. We brought five stal-

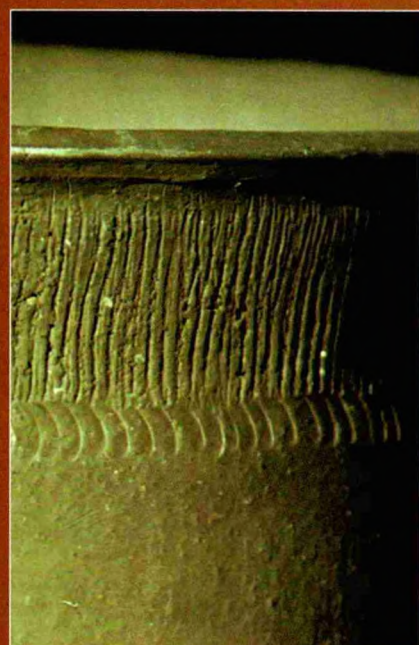
lions there for that ceremony. We have had pipe ceremonies since 1997. A veteran walked out in front, Allan Moody. We followed him around three times, and then we traveled around one more time and led the horses up the hill. These horses had blankets on them. Then we called out the names of those present, and the blankets were given away."

With this custom, the Nez Perce youth in the horse program remember their ancestors and honor both the horses and the people. Each fall, the Nez Perce hold the Empty-Saddle Ceremony. There is no recipe for healing your hearts or your community when you have suffered a great loss. Today the Nez Perce remember all that has happened to them, and they nurture their lives with new growth, new foals, and healing. ■

*Winona LaDuke (White Earth Anishinaabe), pictured above with Rudy Shebala, is a writer and community organizer who plans on raising some Nez Perce horses, because they are amazing. She lives on the White Earth Reservation in northern Minnesota with her family and 10 horses.*



# GIFTS FROM THE EARTH



Many of the cultural beliefs of Native Americans emanate from the value they place on earth and its natural resources. An acute awareness of the necessity of these resources for human survival permeates these cultures and is often expressed in artistic endeavors. Utilizing the very materials found in their natural environments, from wood to stone,

Native artists create a diverse and vibrant art movement with cultural and artistic ties to generations past. Richard Peterson (Dakota/Assiniboine) meets weavers who create intricate baskets from cornhusk; Ojibwe potter Carrie Ortiz talks with Jason Ryle (Anishinabe) about her clay works; and Nance Ackerman (Mohawk) explores the inspiration behind the bark creations of Penobscot artist ssípsis.





# Mary Kane

## Cornhusks

by Richard Peterson

**A**s a little girl growing up on the Nez Perce Indian Reservation in northern Idaho in the 1920s, Mary Kane (Nez Perce) remembers best the time spent with her mother in the kitchen. When her mother, Ellen (Nez Perce), set aside her cornhusk weaving projects on the table to tend to food cooking on the wood stove, Kane would make her move. "I would watch her weave and then when she left, I would sit in her chair and take over from where she left off," recalls Kane, 83, who continues to weave despite recent illnesses. She is among a handful of weavers in her tribe who carry on the tradition.

Cornhusk is a common form of weaving found among the Plateau tribes in the northwest United States, including the Umatilla, Yakama, Nez Perce, Walla Walla, Salish, and Palouse. These tribes, known for cornhusk hats and bags, are mostly situated along the Columbia River in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Historians say weaving has been

an important part of the tribes' past. The watertight bags were used for food storage and as trade items. Tribes from as far away as the Crow and Shoshone in the Montana and Wyoming area traded beads, corn, and other items for the bags. Archaeologists in Oregon have been able to carbon-date embroidered, twined basketry to about 9,000 years ago, according to the book *Cornhusk Basketry of the Columbia Plateau Indians* by J.M. Gogel.

Most cornhusk bags were pillow-sized and stored such things as dried meat, salmon, and roots, says Marjorie Wahleneka (Cayuse/Umatilla/Palouse/Warm Springs), assistant director of the Tamastlikt Cultural Institute in Pendleton, Ore. "In the old days they were filled with dried roots and given from a bride's family to a groom's family during a wedding ceremony."

Cornhusk weaving is time consuming, says master weaver Jenny Williams (Nez Perce/Omaha), a 51-year-old school administrator in Lapwai, Idaho, who teaches cornhusk weaving to middle school and high school students. Before the first layers of thin, delicate

cornhusk are woven, a lot of hard work goes into the preparation, she says. The inner fibers of the dogbane plant, more commonly known as Indian hemp, are taken from the inside of the twiglike plant and woven into long twine. Williams says the process is tedious. The inner layers of cornhusk, the ones closest to the kernels, are gently pulled from the cob and dried. "It's the sixth layer you want because it's very fine and you're able to do delicate work," she explains. By using a "fake embroidery" technique, the wet husk is wrapped around the outside of the hemp and secured with the dogbane. Cornhusk is dyed with natural materials, such as cattail or roots, to make colored designs.

She says a trip to the local grocery store is probably the easiest way to find cornhusk. "I saw a big bin of corn at the store and people were throwing the husks away," Williams says. "I couldn't stand it. I grabbed a bag and started filling it. You could say I was dumpster diving."

Inspired by Nez Perce weaver Rose Frank, a master weaver and aunt of her husband, Dwight (Nez Perce), Williams learned to weave



cornhusk about six years ago. She has won awards from the Northwest Native American Basketweavers Association for bags and hats, which feature sturgeon, condor, and butterfly designs as well as the traditional geometric patterns.

During the 20th century, yarn and other materials began to appear on cornhusk work. But Williams makes it a point to use only natural materials in her work. "When we were put on reservations we had to compromise. Weavers were not near the usual sources of natural materials to make these crafts," she says. Over the past century, farmers have repeatedly sprayed pesticides on plants like dogbane because they were considered by non-Indians to be noxious weeds, Wahlenka says. Since gathering plants for weaving is harder these days, weavers who use all-natural products are considered master weavers. The all-natural materials "enhance the product and make it more valuable," she says. All master weavers designated by the Northwest Native American Basketweavers Association use all-natural materials in their products.

Master weaver Mary Kane, a Lapwai resident who now lives in a convalescent home in nearby Lewiston, Idaho, says the designs on a bag sometimes revealed the family a person belonged to. "My family's work had more triangles on it," says Kane, who was recognized for her lifetime of work when she received the 2002 Governor's Award in Idaho for Excellence in Folk and Traditional Arts.

There are several hundred weavers among the Plateau tribes, but among the Nez Perce, only six or seven people weave continuously, says Anne McCormack (Nez Perce), cultural arts coordinator for the Nez Perce tribe. "There are more women out there who can do it but don't have the time. If a family needs items for a giveaway, then they weave," she says. A giveaway is a memorial in which items are given in honor of a newly named family member or a deceased family member. Weaving is one of the oldest art forms, and the goal of the tribe is to find more master weavers for each generation of tribal members, she adds.

For younger weavers, working with cornhusk is a chance to discover their culture from a different perspective, says Jess Nowland, 22, a Cayuse/Wasco/Umatilla from Pendleton, Ore., who began weaving two years ago and now works at the Tamastslíkt Cultural Institute as a center interpreter. He attends weaving classes where tribal elders tell stories while students weave projects. Nowland also spends time researching designs. His goal is to recreate an

old-style bag with all-natural materials hand-gathered on the reservation. "I just want to see what our ancestors went through," he says.

As a child, Wahlenka recalls giving her first

woven item to an elder in the family, as is the tradition among her tribes. "In turn they would share their knowledge and experience," she said. "They became like a mentor." ■



Photos by Mary Annette Pember

# Carrie

by Jason Ryle



Carrie Ortiz brings clay from the Leech Lake Reservation near Bemidji, Minn., for her work as a potter while she studies in Arizona. She's worked for the past two years to complete her master's degree in American Indian studies at the University of Arizona in Tucson. As an intern at the Arizona State Museum, she works to complete a 10-foot fiberglass pot for an exhibition called *The Pottery Detectives* opening in March 2003. This object – large enough to walk through – is meant to draw people into the exhibit. Traditional pottery was never this large, says Suzanne Grisct, curator of collections at the ASM and Ortiz's supervisor. "As an archaeologist, it's exciting to see new versions of Woodland pottery," Grisct says. "It's fantastic that this type of pottery still exists in the present and not just in what we call 'prehistory.'"

Today Ortiz is part of a movement to revitalize Woodland pottery. "Pottery was an integral part of Ojibwe life," she says. "Not only were the pots incredibly utilitarian and hygienic but they also played a role in our society." Widespread pottery production in the Woodlands area ended during the 1600s, when black kettles were traded with the Ojibwe for furs. These iron pots were more durable than clay. "Pottery is a very important part of our history that the Ojibwe or anyone else know very little about," she explains. "We need to know our history to know who we are. Pottery making is what our ancestors did; making and using the pottery maintains a direct link to our past."

Ortiz first made pottery in high school. In the early seventies, she moved to New Mexico to attend the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. "I was more of a bronze and clay sculptor at first," she says. "My early pottery would become sculptural in shape rather than anything resembling pots."

New Mexico proved to be a turning point for the artist. She met her future husband, Jim Curtis Ortiz (San Juan Pueblo/Taos), and settled with him in the San Juan Pueblo. Although Pueblo potters have gathering and construction methods that are similar to the Woodlands techniques, Ortiz felt uneasy making Pueblo pottery. "I learned the Pueblo pottery methods while I lived there but I never felt comfortable making it," she says. "I could replicate what they were doing but never felt at ease, and I realized that it was because it wasn't mine – it wasn't Ojibwe."

Ortiz and her family moved back to Bemidji in 1987. She befriended Christy Kain and Grant Goeltz, two archaeologists working for the Leech Lake Reservation, who knew Woodland pottery history. From their academic instruction, Ortiz learned the basic traditional elements of making pottery, including where to harvest the clay, how to decorate it, and how to fire the pots, and she experimented with the medium to find her own style.

Ortiz used traditional designs, like decorating with seashell dentates, and fired them on hot coals by an open fire, an Ojibwe technique she continues to use. She began making little figures coming out of the clay because "our people are emerging; it's like a rebirth of our culture and traditions after they have not been practiced or taught for decades." Her pots are smaller than the traditional versions, approximately 18 inches in diameter, because she says they are more "fine art" than utilitarian.

She started teaching Woodland pottery techniques in the mid-1990s to students living on various reservations in northern Minnesota and in inner-city Minneapolis.

Ortiz collects clay just after the spring, before the roots have had an opportunity to permeate the clay. "I love making pottery and working with clay," she explains. "It's very therapeutic for me. I love the smell, the way it feels, and to see the beauty that comes out." Like Michelangelo, she sees herself as a guide to the art form that reveals itself the more she works it. ■



"We need to know our history to know who we are. Pottery making is what our ancestors did; making and using the pottery maintains a direct link to our past."

# Ortiz



# Birchbark ssípsis

by Nance Ackerman



Photos by Nance Ackerman

It was the story of the Abenaki that inspired ssípsis to create *The Turtle Shield*. She put down her paintbrush, picked up her knife, and began to etch. The artist, who had been painting with watercolors for 20 years, became interested in etching when she developed a curriculum for the school on her home reserve on Indian Island, near Bangor, Maine. Birchbark etching had a place in her people's history – the Penobscot had etched their hunting and fishing stories into birch canoes. *The Turtle Shield* was her first and largest step into etching, and ssípsis felt she was just a messenger; the story she told is not her own. The Penobscot, along with the Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, and nine other northeastern tribes are all part of the historic Wabanaki Confederacy. She felt the tragic story needed to be told, and *The Turtle Shield* was her way of telling it.

The 8-by-4-foot shield, made up of 13 large plates of birchbark trimmed with sweetgrass, is shaped like a turtle's back. The turtle refers to Turtle Island – the Native concept of the origins of North America. On the panels are etched haunting faces, dancing women, and the snakes of the caduceus – the Greek symbol of medicine – weaving throughout the shield to become the two branches of the Penobscot River. "The snakes are associated with Western medicine, but to us, the black and white snake roots are healing roots," she explains. "They become the river and wind through the shield, like streams of energy."

The tale of *The Turtle Shield* is a dark one. It chronicles the victims of the inhumane medical practices conducted by Henry Perkins, a zoologist at the University of Vermont,

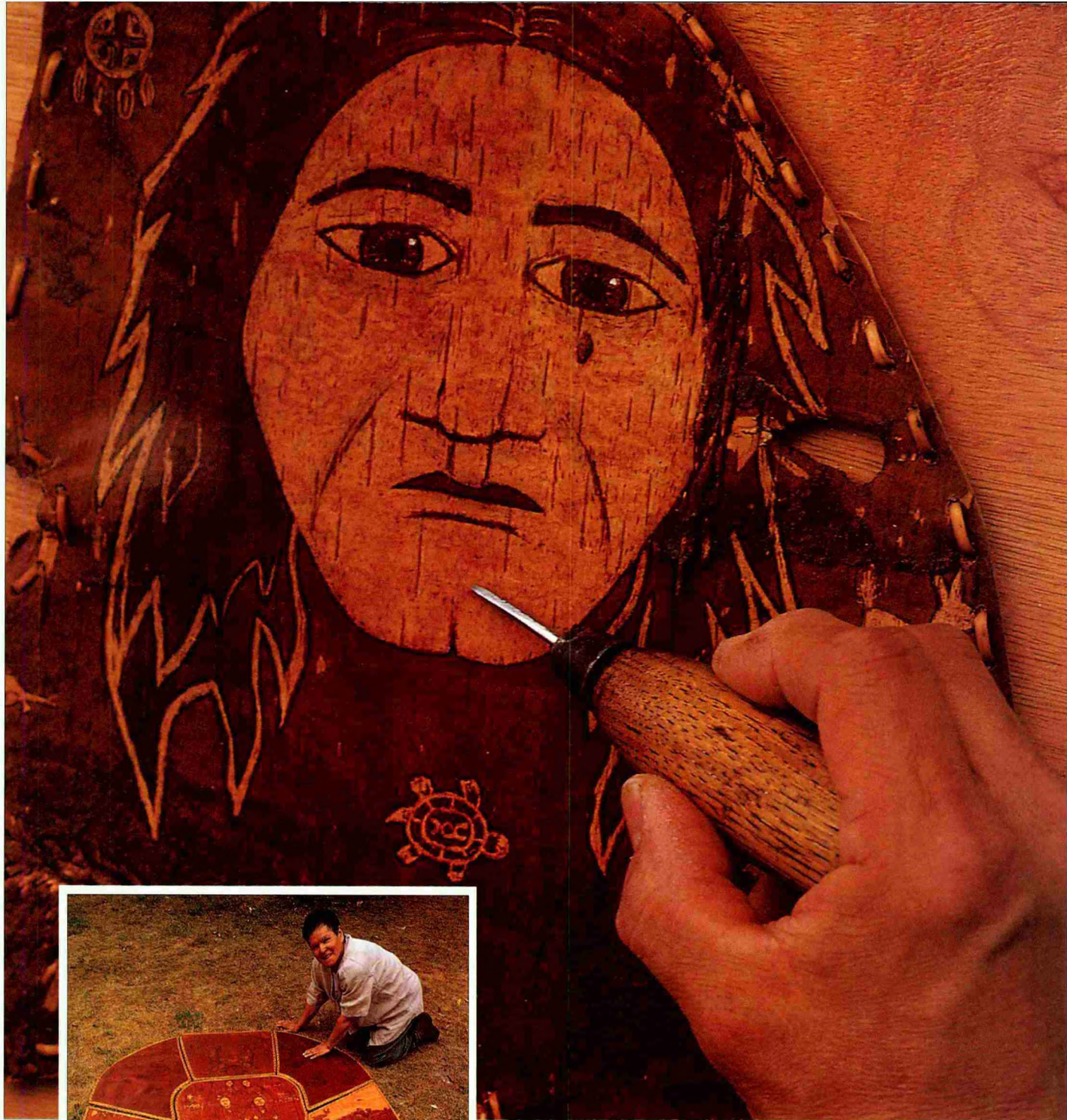
throughout the state in the 1920s and '30s. Perkins' work stemmed from the Eugenics Movement, based on the theory of improving the human population through selective breeding. Among the people Perkins targeted were Native Americans, and particularly the Abenaki. Homer St. Francis, an Abenaki elder, was quoted in a 1999 *Boston Globe* article, saying that eugenic sterilizations were just one of the ways that the state deprived the Abenaki people of their rights. Abductions and murders, he said, were others. St. Francis knew of many Abenaki families who had no children, and he assumed this was the consequence of their state-supported sterilization program. The Abenaki were forced to live a nomadic life, and many hid their language, ceremonies, and customs so as not to be targeted by the eugenicists. Their culture was thus essentially wiped out.

Now 61, ssípsis was born on Indian Island, north of Bangor, Maine. In 1988 she came to live on Penobscot Nation land near Eustis, Maine, after she lost her husband to cancer and her four children had grown up and moved out of their home in Gardner. She lives deep in the woods, without electricity or running water. "There is freedom here. You burn your candles, your fires, cut your own wood." She likes to work by candlelight. "It casts a perfect shadow," she smiles. "Nature provides me with all I need – with the tools and materials – to create my art. In the winter, I snowshoe into the woods. I don't harm the trees. The bark is taken with respect so it will not kill the tree. I make offerings of tobacco to the spirits that maintain the root systems."

*The Turtle Shield* has been sold to Gedakina, a Native organization in Woodstock, Vt. There, people will be able to see the tragic story through ssípsis' etchings and ask the questions that need to be asked.

Her hands touch one of the panels of the shield, where the Abenaki women are dancing in the shadow of the snakes – two medicines – one that haunts their past and one that may heal their future. "I etched the shield to restore the memories... to help the healing. To bring them home." ■







# TV of a Different Color

By Jason Ryle

“**T**hat’s one good BINGO!” exclaims Misty Lowery (Inuk), the popular caller on *Bingo and a Movie*, a weekly show on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. The world’s first national television station for Native peoples, APTN broadcasts the show, one of its biggest success stories, to more than 8 million homes across Canada. “We’re moving fast and furiously,” says Jim Compton (Saulteaux), director of programming. “Our latest schedule continues to push the boundaries of television in Canada and around the world.”

Launched September 1, 1999, and headquartered in Winnipeg, Man., APTN fills a void in the Canadian broadcasting landscape by offering programming that showcases positive Aboriginal role models and stories, says Deanie Kolybabi, director of strategic communications and marketing.

“*Bingo and a Movie* raised the network’s exposure and gained a regular following among Natives and non-Natives alike,” Compton says about the show, which combines the broad appeal of *Bingo* with a Native-themed movie.

Now in its fourth year, the network’s programming features shows produced by Native people. More than 70 percent of APTN’s approximately 75 weekly prime-time programs originate in Canada, with 60 percent of the shows broadcast in English, 25 percent in French, and 15 percent in a variety of First Nations languages including Inuktituk, Ojibwe, and Cree. Eighty percent of APTN’s workforce and producers are of First Nations background.

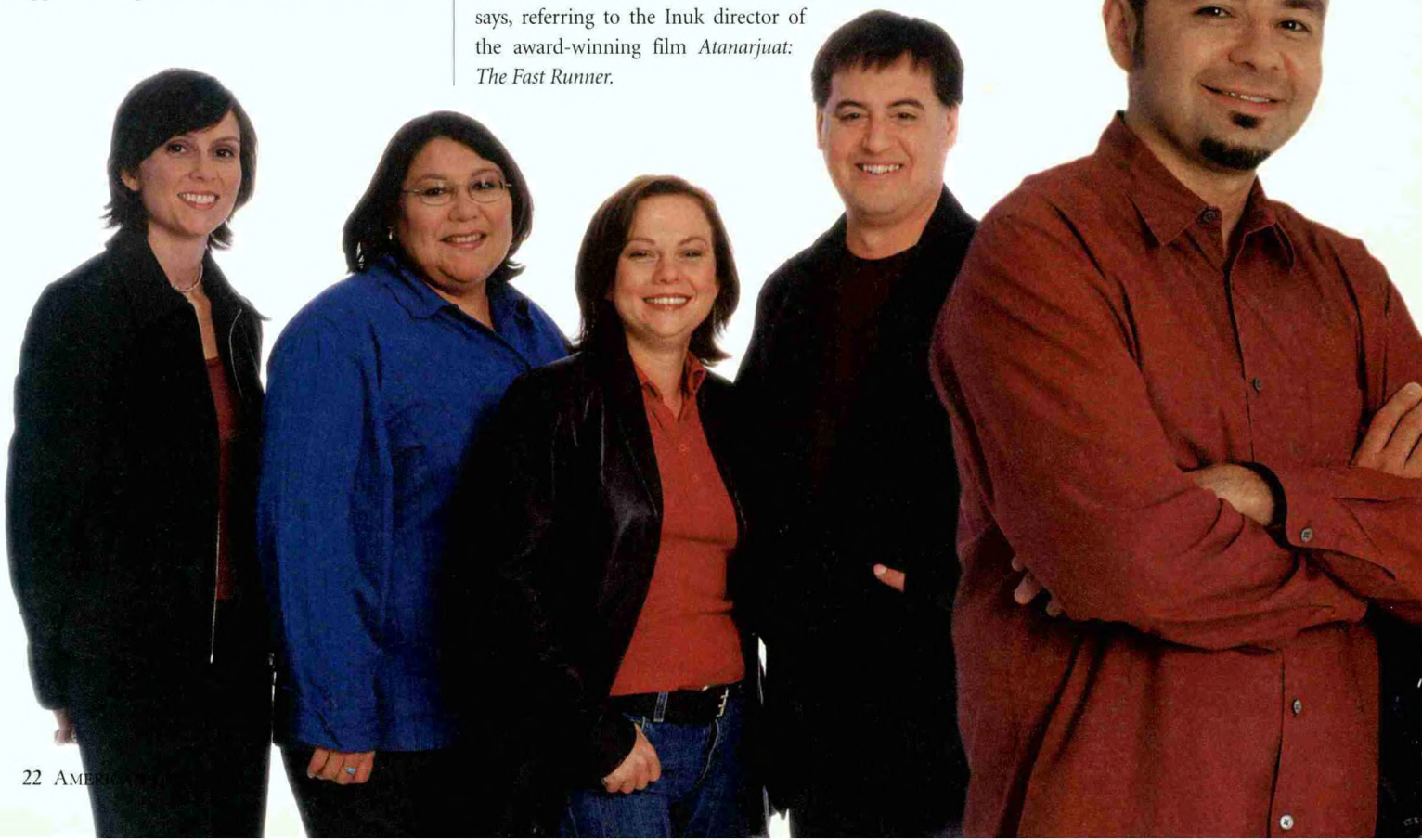
“The First Nations broadcast community is young,” Kolybabi says. “There are a handful of experienced Aboriginal writers and producers in North America. Each one of our productions – especially those helmed by non-Aboriginals – must have room for the mentorship of an Aboriginal person in a significant capacity, be it technical or in production.” For this reason, the network created the APTN Foundation, an organization whose sole purpose is to expand the Native broadcast community via three areas of focus: to educate Aboriginal youth about potential careers in broadcasting, provide graduating broadcasting students with internships, and upgrade the skills of midcareer Aboriginal producers to global broadcast standards. “We could foster the next Zacharius Kunuk,” Kolybabi says, referring to the Inuk director of the award-winning film *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*.

For its current season and for the foreseeable future, the network’s schedule targets the youth market. Compton says that the Aboriginal youth population bracket – ages 13 through 34 – is one of the largest and fastest growing demographics in Canada.

“One of our earliest successes came with *The Seventh Generation*,” Compton adds. Produced in Toronto by Jennifer Podemski (Saulteaux) and Laura Milliken (Chippewa), whom Compton calls “two of our most exciting and talented young producers,” the program showcases the talents and accomplishments of Native youth across Canada. Podemski, also an accomplished actress, says that “we are the Seventh Generation,” alluding to a traditional Ojibwe belief that speaks of the resurgence of Aboriginal peoples and cultures seven lifetimes after Columbus.

## TV WITHOUT RESERVATIONS

On another Toronto set, the floor director counts down, the lights dim, and Lucie Idlout (Inuk) walks onstage. Idlout hosts *Buffalo Tracks*, a variety talk show and one of the





network's most-watched programs. Her monologue takes a witty look at life in Toronto and in Iqaluit, Idlout's hometown in Nunavut. "Up north our dogs are big and they work," she says. "We use them for long-haul trips. Down here you'll find lapdogs whose photos are right next to those of family members. One time someone brought a lapdog home and it got free. Now you see dogs with big bodies and little legs . . . we use those for short-haul trips."

Guests like actor Adam Beach (Saulteaux), Olympic gold medalist Alwyn Morris (Mohawk), and Academy Award-nominated director Atom Egoyan have spun yarns with Idlout. "*Buffalo Tracks* is the Johnny Carson show 20 years later with our own flair," says producer Gary Farmer (Cayuga), a well-known actor.

Another APTN star, David Wolfman (Lillooet), blends humor with cuisine as he stirs up award-winning Aboriginal-fusion dishes like mustard pork and roast rabbit with moose. On *Cooking with the Wolfman*, the master chef and his co-hosts offer step-by-step instructions on how to prepare meals with a Native twist.

Recently APTN launched *The APTN National News*, the first daily news program committed to Native peoples. "The news program is the most exciting aspect of our new schedule," Compton says. "It's an historic event."

The show's slogan – "History would have been told differently if our reporters had been there" – gives insight into a new era for First Nations people.

Anchors Nola Wuttunee (Cree) and Rick Harp (Cree) along with reporters from all regional points in Canada present a never-before-seen national Aboriginal news perspective. Neilson ratings for the last week in November indicated that the viewership almost tripled from the show's launch a month earlier.

#### SHARING OUR STORIES WITH ALL CULTURES

The network's origins date back to 1983 when the Canadian government created the Northern Native Broadcast Access Program, a cooperative broadcasting system that evolved into Television

Kolybabi stresses that the network's value crosses cultural, professional, and geographical borders. "The value for the Aboriginal viewer is evident. However, APTN has great value for the non-Aboriginal viewer," she explains. "This network is an incredible medium to communicate Native perspectives and to educate people about the rich and diverse history and lives of the First Nations and indigenous people worldwide."

APTN executives hope to enter the U.S. market. "There is a bit of a 'footprint' broadcast along the U.S.-Canadian border, meaning some American viewers can receive our signal, but other than that, the States still lack a national network for Native peoples," says Compton. "APTN is a winner for everyone involved." ■

*Jason Ryle (Anishinabe), from Toronto, Ont., is a frequent contributor to American Indian.*

*For additional information on the network, visit its Web site at [www.aptn.ca](http://www.aptn.ca).*

*The APTN News team (l-r): Trina Roache, Maureen Googoo, Karyn Pugliese, Ken Williams, Rick Harp, Nola Wuttunee, Cheryl McKenzie, Bruce Spence, Vera Houle, Donna Smith and Naomi Clarke.*



**"Each** one of our productions must have room for the mentorship of an Aboriginal person in a significant capacity, be it technical or in production."

Northern Canada in 1991. TVNC's success during the early 1990s spawned the idea for a national Native station, a move that the network's board of directors set into motion in 1997. The first step was to seek a license from the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, an independent agency responsible for regulating the nation's broadcasting and telecommunications systems. Two years later, the commission granted a license to the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, and broadcasting history was made.







# Small Spirits

From whimsical toys to sacred objects, NMAI's diverse and beloved doll collection is a treasure trove of cultural insights

By Mary Jane Lenz

Some of the most recognizable and beloved objects in the National Museum of the American Indian's collections are the hundreds of dolls from the Arctic, the Great Lakes, the Great Plains, Mexico, Peru, Chile, and the Brazilian rain forest. From its early years, the National Museum of the American Indian has been enriched by a series of acquisitions of dolls—play dolls made for or by children, dolls used in curing or for ceremonial purposes, dolls made as tourist souvenirs, and dolls created as art forms and coveted by collectors. From the most humble toy fashioned of sticks and cloth scraps to the exquisitely dressed replica of a woman in her finest regalia, each doll gives us a glimpse into a particular cultural world, like the Navajo, Cree, or Tapirape—and into the mind of an individual maker, perhaps a grandmother reflecting on the past, a child fashioning a plaything, or an artist creating a gallery piece.

When the Mall museum opens in 2004, two floor-to-ceiling exhibition cases outside the Resource Center will be filled with a dazzling variety of dolls, such as 2,000-year-old pottery dolls from Mexico, 19th-century Iroquois cornhusk dolls, Seminole dolls in colorful patchwork, and a Kiowa doll in a toy cradleboard. Many of these dolls will be featured in *Small Spirits*, an NMAI book scheduled for publication in time for the 2004 museum opening. The book provides an overview of the doll collection and discusses the many meanings of dolls in Native communities throughout the hemisphere.

Four dolls slated to be on display in the Mall museum are included in *Small Spirits*. The first is a pair of powwow dancers made by Oglala Lakota artist and activist Cecelia Fire Thunder of Pine Ridge, S.D. They are dressed for the women's traditional cloth competition, one of a series of events seen at powwows today. Shells, beads, and

elk teeth adorn the dresses made of blue or red trade cloth in this category. In the traditional dance styles of the Northern Plains, women dance at the outer edges of the dance circle, taking small steps and maintaining a modest demeanor. The dancers often carry a dance shawl, a decorated handbag, and an eagle-feather dance fan. The dolls replicate

fashioned of sealskin. Miss Liberty's robe is made as a sea-lion-intestine overdress, perhaps intended to shelter her from the rain, and she gazes out through eyes made of two large blue glass marbles. Miss Liberty's whimsicality and gentle humor are characteristic of dolls from Chevak, and several other examples will be on view in the exhibition. We hope that visitors will find delight and enlightenment in this assemblage of dolls from north, south, east, and west. ■

Mary Jane Lenz is a museum specialist in the Curatorial Department of NMAI.



dignified Lakota women like Cecelia Fire Thunder.

The Department of The Interior recently transferred its Indian Arts and Crafts Board (IACB) doll collection to the NMAI. One of the dolls is a Navajo woman made by artist, author, and singer Kay Bennett (1922-1997). Bennett (Navajo) created the doll's head by using a technique she learned in Afghanistan, pressing wet felt into a plaster-of-paris mold. The full skirt and velvet blouse, a style inspired by the clothing worn by wives of the 19th-century Army officers at Fort Sumner, has become traditional wear for Navajo women today. Sequins represent the silver ornaments and buttons, another part of the traditional garb.

Another IACB piece, made more as an art object than a toy, is a soft sculpture titled *My Love, Miss Liberty*. Made by Cu'pik Eskimo dollmaker Rosalie Paniyak of Chevak, Alaska, it is intended as a tribute to the Statue of Liberty, complete with a torch made of fur and a book







*Far Left: Navajo woman doll, Sheep Springs, N.M., Ca. 1965.  
Made by Kay (Kaibah) Bennett, 1922 - 1997, Felt, cloth, sequins, and beads.*

*Center: Woman dancer dolls, Oglala Lakota, Pine Ridge Reservation, S.D., Ca. 1990.  
Made by Cecelia Fire Thunder (Tawachin Waste Win), b. 1946. Hide, feathers, cloth, glass and metal beads, shells, pigment, yarn, porcupine quills, silk ribbon, and metal tacks.*

*Above: My Love, Miss Liberty doll, Cu'pik Eskimo, Chevak, Alaska, 1987.  
Made by Rosalie Paniyak. Sea-lion-intestine overdress, printed fabric underdress, fur, seal hide, wood, and blue glass marbles.*

Photo by Mary Cathryn Roth. Indian Arts and Crafts Board Collection, Department of the Interior, at the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution.



# Coyote's Place

Hi, everybody!  
I'm visiting my Taino and  
Carib friends in the  
Caribbean.

**W**hen the Spanish landed on the Caribbean Islands in 1492, the Taino and Carib people were the first people they met. The Spanish thought they had landed in India and called the Taino and Carib people "Indians." The Taino live on the larger islands of Cuba, Dominican Republic/Haiti, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico. The Carib live on the smaller islands of St. Lucia, Dominica, and Trinidad.

Taino and Carib people fish in the open sea and the rivers and lakes of the islands. The fishermen used to travel in large dugout canoes made from a tree called *ceiba*. These canoes could hold up to 150 people. People still make these canoes, but today most fishermen use motorboats. Many Taino and Carib methods of fishing are still used today. One method uses a net called a *nasa*.

The fisherman walks out into the water, throws the net out, then drags it along the bottom to catch fish. Another way to fish is to sprinkle the juice of the poisonous *guayiga* plant into the water. The juice stuns the fish, causing them to float to the surface where the fishermen easily catch them.

The islands have many fruits and vegetables. One popular fruit is called *yayama*. You may know it as the pineapple. Many think this fruit comes from Hawaii, but it comes from the Caribbean. Taino and Carib people eat a vegetable called *yuca*. There are two kinds of *yuca*. One has brown skin and is usually eaten after it has been boiled.

The other has yellow skin and is very poisonous. This variety of *yuca* is used to make bread called *casabe* - but don't worry, the bread is not poisonous.

CENTRAL  
AMERICA

CUBA  
JAMAICA

HAITI

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

PUERTO  
RICO

DOMINICA

ST. LUCIA

TRINIDAD

SOUTH AMERICA

By Jorge Estevez

Edited by Shawn Termin & Johanna Gorelick





## Meet My Friend Doña Altagracia

**D**oña Altagracia (Taino) lives in a village in the Dominican Republic. She makes *casabe* bread. First, she peels the skin off the *yuca*. Next, she grates the *yuca* with an instrument called a *guayo*. The poisonous pulp, known as *catibia*, is placed in a strainer called a *cibucan*.

All of the poison is squeezed out. When the pulp dries, it becomes flour. The flour is spread on a griddle called *buren*. Within 15 minutes, Doña Altagracia turns the flour into *casabe* bread.

## MUSIC! MUSIC! MUSIC!

**T**he Taino and Carib love music of all kinds – including the salsa and the merengue. These popular styles of music have some Taino and Carib influences. Taino and Carib musical instruments have influenced many instruments used today. Maracas and guiros, for example, are made from a gourd called *higuero*. Maracas are rattles made from gourds with little stones placed inside. The guiro is a similar instrument, except that it has a rough design on the outside of the gourd. A small stick is rubbed across the design to make sounds.

ANSWERS: 1. d, 2. f, 3. e, 4. g, 5. h, 6. c, 7. b, 8. a.

### WORD for WORD:

Many Taino words are incorporated into the English language. Can you match the English words with the Taino words?

ENGLISH	TAINO
1. Tobacco	a. Canoa
2. Hammock	b. Guayaba
3. Hurricane	c. Maisi
4. Barbeque	d. Tabacu
5. Savannah	e. Uracan
6. Maize	f. Hamaca
7. Guava	g. Barbacoa
8. Canoe	h. Sabana

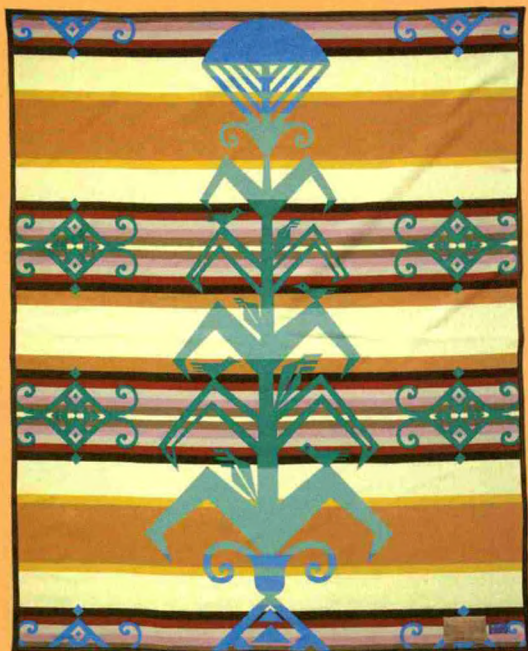
\*See bottom of page for answers



Maracas and guiros



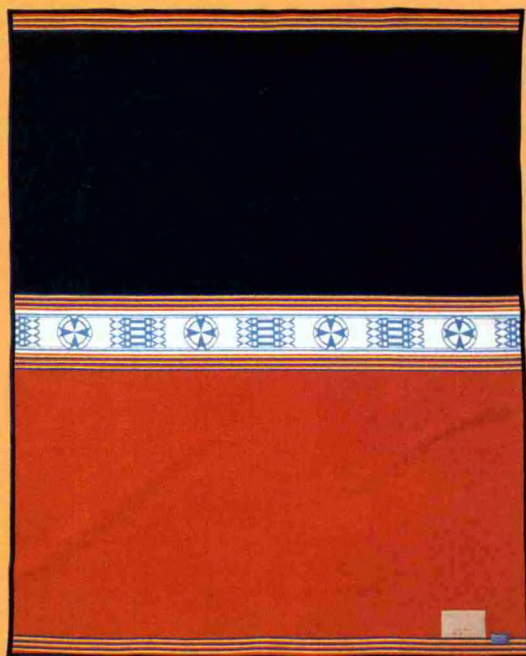
FOUR ARTISTS. FOUR BLANKETS.  
A SINGLE VISION.



TREE OF LIFE  
by Tony Abeyta



TRIBUTE TO MY GRANDMOTHER  
MARY EBBETS, ANISLAGA  
by George Hunt, Jr.



DAY AND NIGHT ROBE  
by Arthur Amiotte



WAH-SHA-SHE  
by Wendy Ponca

**AMERICAN INDIAN  
COLLEGE FUND**  
EDUCATION IS STRENGTH

The Hope series blankets are designed by renowned American Indian artists to help promote native cultures. A limited edition of 1200 blankets of each design, signed and numbered, is available for purchase. This series will close soon; order now to ensure that your favorite blanket is available. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the American Indian College Fund, which supports more than 30 tribal colleges and universities. To learn more, log on to [www.collegefund.org](http://www.collegefund.org), or call 1-800-880-5887.

THE LIMITED EDITION HOPE SERIES



# CALENDAR of EVENTS

FEBRUARY/MARCH/APRIL 2003

## EXHIBITIONS



Photo by Arturo González de Alba

### GREAT MASTERS OF MEXICAN FOLK ART FROM THE COLLECTION OF FOMENTO CULTURAL BANAMEX, A.C.

Through March 15, 2003

Featuring more than 600 masterworks from all 31 states of the Mexican Republic, this exhibition offers a comprehensive view of the most exceptional contemporary folk art of Mexico. Nearly 200 master artists draw from their ancestral traditions, dating back more than 1,000 years in some cases. The artists employ a vast array of materials, including clay, wood, straw, leather, feathers, silk, cotton, metals, and stone. This traveling exhibition is organized by Fomento Cultural Banamex, A.C., and has been made possible by the generous support of Banamex Citigroup, Corona Extra, CONACULTA (National Council for Culture and Arts), Tequila Herradura, and Aeromexico. A catalog is available in the museum shop for \$85.00.

### THE EDGE OF ENCHANTMENT

Dec. 14, 2002 - summer 2003

This exhibition presents people from Native communities of the Huasteco-Huamelula region of Oaxaca, Mexico, speaking passionately about their lives, families, histories, beliefs, and dreams.

### THE NEW OLD WORLD, ANTILLES: LIVING BEYOND THE MYTH

Through April 13

This exhibition of photographs by photographer Marisol Villanueva explores the contemporary lives of Taino and Carib communities living in the Caribbean.

### TWELVE ARTISTS

April 2003 - Nov. 2004

This 18-month exhibition series will feature a changing selection of works from 12 contemporary Native American artists who represent the succeeding generation of art begun by George Morrison (1919 - 2000, Grand Portage Band of the Lake Superior Ojibwe) and Allan Houser (1914 - 1994, Warm Springs Chiricahua Apache), two major figures of 20th-century Native American art. All 12 knew Morrison or Houser personally or indirectly and were influenced by their example as successful creators or through their careers as educators. Like Morrison and Houser, the artists draw from a variety of influences, both within and outside art schools and universities, and they have established reputations as groundbreakers in new directions of contemporary art and Native American art history. In April, the exhibition series will open with the work of Kay Walking Stick (Cherokee) and Rick Bartow (Yurok-Mad River Band). Other artists in the series will include Joe Feddersen, Harry Fonseca, Hachivi Edgar Heap of Birds, George Longfish, Judith Lowry, Nora Naranjo Morse, Shelley Niro, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, Marie Watt, and Richard Ray Whitman. The artists in the exhibition represent the Arapaho, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Colville, Cree, Flathead, Hamowi-Pit River, Hawaiian, Mohawk, Mountain Maidu, Nisenan Maidu, Pueblo Santa Clara, Seneca, Shoshone, Tuscarora, Yuchi, and Yurok cultures.

## PUBLIC PROGRAMS

### NATIVE SOUNDS DOWNTOWN - GRAMMY FEST CONCERT

Feb. 6, 7 p.m., Auditorium

The Recording Academy GRAMMY Fest celebrates Native artists in a winter Native Sounds Downtown concert featuring JANA, Lumbee recording artist. JANA was honored at the 2002 NAMMY awards with the Song of the Year for her rendition of Led Zeppelin's Stairway to Heaven. This event is an official part of NY GRAMMY Fest 2003.

### TAINO HISTORY AND SURVIVAL: PAST AND PRESENT

Feb. 7, 2 p.m.

March 28, 2 p.m.

April 11, 2 p.m.

Education Classroom, second floor  
Jorge Estevez (Taino) will discuss his cultural history using slides and objects.

### STORYBOOK READINGS: FROM THE SHELVES OF THE RESOURCE CENTER

Second Saturday of every month  
Resource Center, 2nd floor, 11 a.m.

Join us for storybook readings featuring stories about the Native Peoples of the Western Hemisphere. For children of all ages.

### SISTER NATIONS: NATIVE WOMEN WRITERS

March 4, 6 - 7:30 p.m.

Mumford Room, James Madison Building, Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave., SE, Washington, D.C.

Contemporary Native women writers including book editors Laura Tohe (Navajo) and Heid E. Erdrich (Ojibwe), and poet Karenne Wood (Monacan), discuss and celebrate the complex roles of Native women in the modern world. Cosponsored by the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress, the program is presented in conjunction with the publication of a new anthology of Native women writers, *Sister Nations*

(Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2002). Book signing and reception follows the program. Call (202) 707-4700 for more information. Free.



Photo courtesy of 21st Century Speakers, Inc.

### WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH LECTURE WITH WILMA MANKILLER

March 6, 6 and 7:30 p.m.

Auditorium

Wilma Mankiller (Cherokee) became the first woman chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma in 1985. She is a renowned spokesperson on Native American and women's rights issues and author of *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People*.

## THE ART of STORYTELLING

Feb. 15 - 16 and 18 - 22

Orientation Room, Education Classroom, and Auditorium

Experience the tradition of oral history as Native storytellers share stories from their cultures.

### STORYTELLING WORKSHOP

Feb. 15 - 16, noon

Education Classroom, second floor  
Make a clay storytelling doll in this hands-on workshop.

### SEMINOLE STORYTELLING

Feb. 18 - 20, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Orientation Room, first floor  
Cultural historian and storyteller Carol Cypress (Seminole Tribe of Florida) shares stories from her culture.

### STORYTELLING WORKSHOP

Feb. 18 - 20, noon

Education Classroom, second floor  
Look at several clay pieces in the Great Masters of Mexican Folk Art exhibition and discuss the stories or mythologies for which they are made. Children will have time to create their own stories.

NMAI Theater presents:

### ZUNI MEETS APPALACHIA

Feb. 20, 6:30 p.m.

Feb. 21, 2 p.m.

Feb. 22, 2 p.m.

Auditorium

Zuni Meets Appalachia is a lively performance of stories and music from two unique traditions - Native America and Appalachian Mountain. The performance features Idiwanan An Chawe, a Zuni-language theater from the Pueblo of Zuni in New Mexico, and Roadside Theater from the coalfields of eastern Kentucky.

Feb. 24 - 25, 10 a.m. and noon

Carmichael Auditorium, National Museum of American History, Behring Center, 14th Street and Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, D.C.

Idiwanan An Chawe, a drama group from Zuni Pueblo, and the Appalachia-based Roadside Theater combine forces to explore the similarities of their diverse cultures through stories and song. 10 a.m. programs are for school groups; noon programs are open to schools and the general public. For further information call (202) 287-2020, ext. 137. Free.



Smithsonian  
National Museum of the American Indian





Celebrate Women's History Month with a talk given by Irene & Guillermina Aguilar (above), featured artists in Great Masters of Mexican Folk Art. They will discuss the creative influences of their familial and Zapotec traditions in their ceramic art.

## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH DISCUSSION WITH THE AGUILAR SISTERS

March 6 and 7, 2 p.m.  
Great Masters of Mexican Folk Art gallery, second floor  
Celebrate Women's History Month with a talk given by Irene and Guillermina Aguilar, featured artists in Great Masters of Mexican Folk Art. They will discuss the creative influences of their familial and Zapotec traditions in their ceramic art.

## JOANNE SHENANDOAH

April 4, 7:30 p.m.  
Baird Auditorium, National Museum of Natural History, 10th and Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, D.C.

Award-winning singer and composer Joanne Shenandoah (Oneida), in performance with Diane and Leah Shenandoah. Cosponsored by the Smithsonian Associates. For ticket information, call (202) 357-3030 or visit [www.residentassociates.si.edu](http://www.residentassociates.si.edu). NMAI members receive discounted tickets.

## FILM & VIDEO

### ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Ring Auditorium  
Independence Avenue at 7th Street SW, Washington, D.C. (Metro stop: Smithsonian)

In cooperation with the Hirshhorn Museum, NMAI presents award-winning Native American productions as part of the District of Columbia's annual film festival. Admission is free and no reservations are required. For more information please call (202) 342-2564. Hosted by Elizabeth Weatherford, head of the NMAI Film and Video Center (FVC) and Barbara Gordon, film coordinator of the Hirshhorn Museum.

March 13, 8 p.m.  
**EMERGENCE** (1981, 14 min.). United States. Barbara Wilk. An animation tells the story of the events leading to the entrance of the Diné onto the surface of the earth through a number of underworlds. Sacred colors, the cardinal directions, sacred plants, and the sacred mountains of the people's lands inhabited by the sacred beings evoke the harmony and spiritual meaning of the Navajo environment.

**THE RETURN OF NAVAJO BOY** (2000, 52 min.). United States. Jeff Spitz. When an obscure 1950s film called Navajo Boy turns up, it leads a contemporary Navajo family to recall its history as the subject of still photos and movie images and the impact of nearby

uranium mines. The encounter sets in motion a chain of events that leads to the return of the family's long-lost little brother.

March 14, 8 p.m.  
**Works are in Native Mexican languages and Spanish with English subtitles.**

**VIDEO MÉXICO INDÍGENA** (2002, 10 min.). Mexico. Ojo de Agua Comunicación. An overview of the dynamic indigenous video producers and organizations in the states of Oaxaca and Michoacán in Mexico.

**VIKO NDUTE/WATER FESTIVAL** (1995, 22 min.). Mexico. Emigdio Julián Caballero (Mixtec). An examination of a rainmaking ritual and its significance for a Mixtec community in Oaxaca.

**GUÍA TOO/POWERFUL MOUNTAIN** (1998, 53 min.). Mexico. Crisanto Manzano Avella (Zapotec). In this portrait of the cloud forest ecosystem of his native Sierra Juárez region of Oaxaca, the videomaker shows the arduous way of life of those who live there and work the soil. The energy and vitality of the mountain environment resemble a living entity existing in an ongoing relationship with its human inhabitants. Washington, D.C., premiere of the 2003 national touring festival Video México Indígena/Video Native Mexico.

## ART TALK

March 14, noon  
Video Viewing Room, second floor  
Artist Duane Slick (Mesquakie/Winnebago) will conduct a visual lecture based on his work in the American Indian Community House Gallery exhibition Four in One.

## CELEBRATING THE CONTINUANCE OF INDIGENOUS CARIBBEAN CULTURES

March 22, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
March 23, 1 - 4 p.m.  
Museumwide  
Join us for a day of lecture, dialogue, and demonstrations featuring Taino and Carib leaders and community members from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Trinidad, and Dominica.

## WORDCRAFT CIRCLE DAY

April 5, noon to 5 p.m.  
Museumwide  
Celebrate Native writers in a day of workshops, poetry readings, storytelling, and discussions. Participants include Suzanne Rancourt (Abenaki), Eric Gansworth (Onondaga), Valerie Red-

Horse (Cherokee/Sioux), Naomi Caldwell (Ramapough), Paxton Riddle (Cherokee), Midge Dean Stock (Seneca), and Elizabeth Theobald Richards (Cherokee).

## BEADING BASICS

April 10, 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.  
Education Classroom, second floor  
Learn the basic beading technique of the lazy stitch and use the flat stitch to make a rosette in this hands-on workshop taught by Amy Tall Chief (Osage). Please note that the beads are small, and this beading requires good eyesight. Enrollment is limited. Advance registration required. Please call (212) 514-3714. Materials fee is \$12 (\$10 for members). Age 12 and up.

## CURATOR LECTURE: TWELVE NATIVE ARTISTS

April 24, 5 p.m.  
Collector's Office  
Kay Walking Stick (Cherokee) and Rick Bartow (Yurok-Mad River Band) are the first to be featured in Twelve Native Artists.

## 2003 NATIONAL VIDEO TOUR

### VIDEO MÉXICO INDÍGENA/VIDEO NATIVE MEXICO

Award-winning indigenous video from Native production organizations in Mexico - Ojo de Agua Comunicación, EXE Comunicación, and the Centros de Video Indígena - in Oaxaca and Michoacán. Screenings will be in Washington, D.C., New York, Wisconsin, Illinois, New Mexico, and California at universities, videotheques, museums, film festivals, and Native American and Latino cultural centers. This tour is part of an exchange that included a 1998 tour of Native American filmmakers from the United States, organized by NMAI and screened in 15 Native communities and cities in southern Mexico. The 2003 Video México Indígena tour has been made possible with support from the Latino Initiatives Fund, administered by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives. For the up-to-date program and schedule, visit [www.nativenetworks.si.edu](http://www.nativenetworks.si.edu) and go to FVC Programs.

April 3, 6 - 8 p.m., Auditorium, GGHC  
Reservations recommended. Call (212) 514-3737 or e-mail [fvc@si.edu](mailto:fvc@si.edu). For up-to-date program information, visit [www.nativenetworks.si.edu](http://www.nativenetworks.si.edu) (English) or [www.redesindigenas.si.edu](http://www.redesindigenas.si.edu) (Spanish) and go to FVC Programs.

## NEW YORK PREMIERES:

In indigenous languages and Spanish with English subtitles. The videomakers will be present to introduce their works.

**YAH GAAL BIAA/THE SOAP TREE** (2000, 22 min.). Mexico. María Santiago Ruiz (Zapotec) for the Centro de Investigación, Experimentación y Desarrollo Indígena/Center for Indigenous Research, Experimentation and Development. A group of Zapotec women from San Pedro Quiatoni in Oaxaca reinstate the use of "soap tree" bark (yah gaal biao) to wash their clothes, reducing the use of expensive commercial detergents that pollute the environment.

**NUESTRO PUEBLO/OUR PEOPLE** (2000, 27 min.). Mexico. Juan José García (Northern Sierra Zapotec). Produced by Ojo de Agua Comunicación. Panoramic view of daily life in the Zapotec community of Santiago Zochila in the northern mountains of Oaxaca, where community organization and institutions have played an important role in preserving the Zapotec way of life.

**LO' HIL KIN /THE TAUNT FIESTA** (2000, 18 min.). Mariano Estrada Ramos (Tzeltal). The Taunt Fiesta, held five days before Ash Wednesday, is a Carnival celebration in Bachajón, Chiapas, in which a traditional version of a long-ago encounter between opposing forces brings the community together.

\*Preceded by the video Miramos y Expresamos/Our Views and Expressions, a short overview of the development of Native media in Mexico.

This program has been made possible with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.



## DAILY SCREENINGS

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

Video Viewing Room, second floor

## EL CORAZÓN INDÍGENA/THE NATIVE HEART

Jan. 27 - Feb. 9

**SACRED GAMES** (1988, 60 min.).

United States. Thor Anderson.

Ceremonial warfare and community rituals mark the traditional New Year for Maya Indians of San Juan Chamula in Chiapas, Mexico.

## NATIVE HOME

Feb. 10 - April 27

Feb. 10 - 23

**QUEST FOR THE CARIB CANOE**

(2000, 50 min.). United Kingdom.

Eugene Jarecki. Produced for BBC-TV, Bristol. In a voyage to rediscover their ancestral heritage, Carib Indian artist and activist Jacob Frederick and others from his community sail nearly 1,000 miles in a hand-built canoe from their home on the island of Dominica in the British West Indies to South America.

Feb. 24 - March 16

**EMERGENCE - THE RETURN OF NAVAJO BOY**

See previous descriptions of these two films.

Presented in cooperation with the 2003 Environmental Film Festival in the Nation's Capital, March 12 - 20.

March 17 - 30

**KAHO'OLAWA** (1997, 57 min.).

United States. David H. Kalama Jr. (Native Hawaiian). A chronicle of a year-long effort by Native Hawaiians to recover their sacred island Kaho'olawe, which had been used as a military

bombing range. As the film shows, the struggle often took the form of traditional Native Hawaiian oratory, dance, and ceremony. Presented in cooperation with the Hawaiian Cultural Foundation's Hawaiian Film Festival in New York, March 20 - 23.

March 31 - April 27

**VIDEO MÉXICO INDÍGENA 2002**

**VIKTO NDUTE/WATER FESTIVAL**

**GUIA TOO/POWERFUL MOUNTAIN**  
See previous descriptions of these three films. Part of the 2003 NMAI national touring festival Video México Indígena/Video Native Mexico. Works are in Native Mexican languages and Spanish with English subtitles.

No screening at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday,

April 3. See Video México

Indígena/Video Native Mexico.

## ESPECIALLY FOR KIDS

Daily at 11 a.m. and noon

Video Viewing Room, second floor

Jan. 27 - Feb. 9

**POPOL VUH** (1989, 57 min.). United

States. Patricia Amlin. The great Maya creation epic is told through animation adapted from ancient Maya pottery and books.

**THE IROQUOIS** (1993, 30 min.).

United States. Henry Nevison for the Indians of North America series.

Interviews with contemporary Iroquois are featured in this brief history of the Six Nations since the arrival of Europeans.

**ONENHAKENRA: WHITE SEED**

(1984, 20 min.). United States. Frank Semmens for the Akwesasne Museum.

Mohawks from the Akwesasne Reservation in New York tell the story of the origins of corn and demonstrate its continuing importance to the Iroquois people today.

Feb. 10 - 23

**AGUAS CON EL BOTAS** (1994, 10

min.). Mexico. Dominique Jonard. In Spanish. An animation by Nahua children of coastal Mexico tells the story of their town and their relationship to the sea turtle.

**SKYWALKERS AND IROQUOIS WOMEN: THE THREE SISTERS AND THE GREAT LAW OF THE**

**IROQUOIS** (1998, 34 min.). United States. Pat Ferrero. Produced by the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. Three videos on Iroquois life feature interviews with ironworkers and consider the role of women in Iroquois culture and the spiritual teaching of the Great Law of Peace.

**LAS OLLAS DE SAN MARCOS** (1992,

11 min.). Mexico. Teófila Palafox (Ikoods). Women of a Zapotec village in Oaxaca make large ollas, or clay pots.

Feb. 24 - March 16

**KLUSCAP AND HIS PEOPLE AND CREATION** (1992, 12 min. total).

United States. Produced by the Indian Island Intermediate School, Maine. Two animations by Penobscot children tell of the creation of the world, people, and animals.

**AGUAS CON EL BOTAS**

See previous description.

**TOKA** (1994, 24 min.). United States. David Wing and Cyndee Wing. An exciting form of stickball is played by Tohono O'odham women and girls of Arizona.

**RARAMURI: PIE LIGERO** (1994, 10

min.). Mexico. Dominique Jonard. Drawings and voices of Raramuri Indian children from northern Mexico bring to life a traditional ball game.

March 17 - 30

**SHARING ONE EARTH** (1993, 20 min.). United States. Produced by the Indian Island Intermediate School, Maine. Penobscot and non-Indian students share in a cultural exchange and filmmaking project.

**RARAMURI: PIE LIGERO**

See previous description.

**TOTEM TALK** (1997, 22 min.).

Canada. Annie Frazier-Henry (Sioux-Blackfeet-French). Computer-animated clan totems teach urban youth the importance of their Northwest Coast Native culture.

March 31 - April 27

**POPOL VUH**  
**THE IROQUOIS**

**ONENHAKENRA: WHITE SEED**  
See previous descriptions of these three films.

### 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 5 p.m.  
For information, call 212-514-3767.

### WEB SITE:

Have you visited the NMAI Web sites?  
<http://www.AmericanIndian.si.edu>  
<http://www.conexus.si.edu>



**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. Rachahd Garguilo, Calendar Editor.





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\*About the image: Circular Haida slate dish inlaid with bone. Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia, Canada. Photo by Katherine Fogden. 19.3518.





Ched Wetz, a division manager at Muskogee Regional Medical Center, looks at a stone which may have been intended for placement in the Washington Monument.

## Monumental Contribution

The creation of the Washington Monument's stone obelisk and temple were made possible by generous support from across the nation – including Indian country

By Martha Davidson

The Washington Monument, the giant obelisk on the National Mall, was constructed between 1848 and 1884 to honor George Washington, Revolutionary leader and first president of the United States. For nearly three decades, nearly all funds for the project came from private sources, until Congress appropriated money in 1876 to resume construction, which had ceased during the Civil War. Contributors included American Indian nations and foreign countries as well as municipalities, unions, civic associations, and fraternal orders.

The desire to create a monument to Washington originated in his own lifetime, but it was not until 1833, after several failed attempts by Congress, that some citizens formed a group for

that purpose. As the Washington National Monument Association (WNMA), they appealed to the public through letters and ads. They invited architects to submit designs for the monument and chose one by Robert Mills. His obelisk-and-temple design was later modified to its final form.



Laying the cornerstone, on July 4, 1848, was an event of national importance. Attending dignitaries included representatives of the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Stockbridge nations. Some of them wore medals that George Washington himself had presented to their forefathers as symbols of their agreements with the new nation. The Cherokees carried a bound copy of an address by Washington and a silver pipe

that he had given one of their chiefs.

The Cherokee and Chickasaw nations contributed generously to the building fund. The

Select Committee of the WNMA recorded: "The Cherokee and Chickasaw nations of Indians... deserve to be honored for their very liberal donations of money."

In March 1850, a Chickasaw delegation delivered a gift of \$200 to the committee in a ceremony marked by patriotic speeches, and the delegation received a framed picture of the monument. Their chief, Pitman Colbert, had proposed the donation, hoping that the Chickasaw name would be inscribed in the monument to perpetuate their respect and remembrance of George Washington.

Many names were inscribed there in the form of memorial stones. The WNMA solicited these stones – of a prescribed size and bearing the name of the donor – from all the states, and later from other sources, to be installed in the interior stairwell of the obelisk.

The Choctaw, Cherokee, and Creek nations also wanted to contribute memorial stones. In October 1849, a military officer on the Texas border informed the WNMA that members of the Choctaw nation "would be extremely gratified if permitted to furnish a stone."

There is no record that the Chickasaws or Choctaws ever produced those stones, but Cherokee and Creek memorial stones do exist. The National Council of the Cherokee met at Tahlequah, Okla., in October 1849 and authorized Principal Chief John Ross to send "a suitable block of Cherokee marble" to the Washington Monument "as an offering of the Cherokee Nation." A block was cut, of Oklahoma sandstone rather than marble, 42 inches by 16 inches, and inscribed "Cherokee Nation 1850." It was inserted into the west wall of the stairwell about halfway up the obelisk sometime after 1880.

The Eastern Band of Cherokees, too, considered donating a stone. A letter in the National Archives documents a December 1883 visit by James Taylor, acting as their representative, to discuss the donation with Horatio King of the WMNA. There is no further evidence, however, of a stone from the Eastern Band.

A white marble slab, 43 inches by 18 inches, was inscribed by the Muskogee Creeks, "This stone intended for Washington Monument. Muskogee Nation. May the 26th 1850," but it never reached its destination. Instead, to commemorate the 1932 bicentennial of Washington's birth, the Lions Club in Muskogee, Okla., incorporated it into a memorial bench. Surmounted by another slab, the Muskogee memorial stone now sits outside a regional medical center. ■

Martha Davidson is a freelance writer and picture researcher based in Washington, D.C.





# Reuben Snake Jr. – A Leader by Example

By Karen Lincoln Michel

My uncle came to me in a recent dream. I was walking up a hill when I met an imposing oak tree. Its broad, leafy branches reached out in the breeze, as if welcoming me. But it was the peculiar roots that caught my attention: They were snakes, protruding out of the ground with their heads blending into the bark of the tree's base. My initial reaction was wonder, not fear. I was taught to revere snakes by my mother, Ruby Lincoln, who was born into the Snake Clan of the Ho-Chunk people of Wisconsin and Nebraska. In the dream, I considered the tree sacred. Upon awakening, I recognized the image as that of my late uncle, Reuben Snake Jr., who had passed away nine years ago.

To many who knew him, this Nebraska Winnebago man was a powerful leader, an influential activist, and a humble man of God. To me, he was a source of strength as solid and enduring as a mighty oak.

My uncle helped me get my first job out of college in 1981, teaching graphic arts courses and running a student print shop on the Winnebago Indian Reservation in northeastern Nebraska where he lived. It was then that I got to know my mother's Snake Clan brother. He was the tribal chairman, and our paths crossed frequently through work and church.

He had distinguished himself as a national figure by defending Native American rights. A decade earlier he had led the charge on behalf of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The corps attempted to gain control of tribal land that had become Iowa soil due to rerouting of the Missouri River. The tribe defeated the corps in federal court and won a claim of more than 600 acres of land, on which the tribe now operates a casino.

This example – along with news that my uncle had organized a successful economic boycott against white-owned businesses in a town neighboring the reservation – caught the attention of the American Indian Movement. He eventually served as its national chairman in the early 1970s, overseeing the group's occupation of Mount Rushmore and planning of the historic Trail of Broken Treaties. Closer to home, my uncle focused his attention throughout the '70s and '80s on making his tribe among the first to move toward economic self-sufficiency by planning and establishing profitable tribe-owned businesses. In the

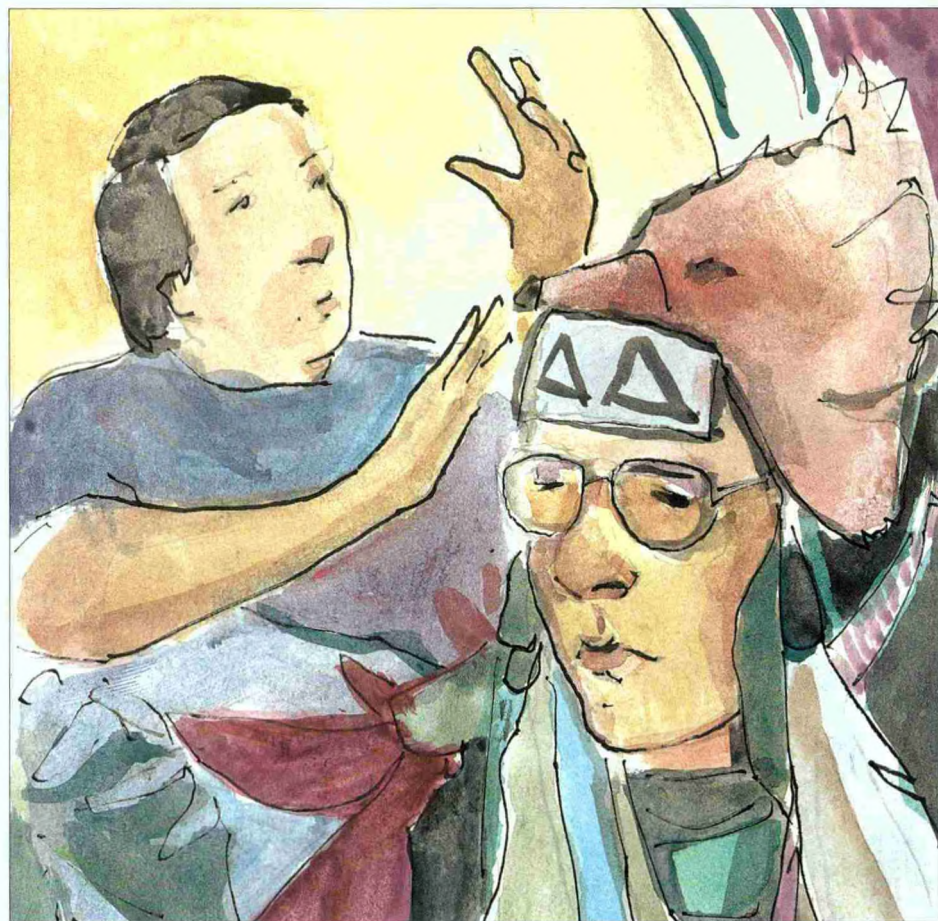


Illustration by Travis Shilling

mid-1980s, he served as president of the National Congress of American Indians, an organization whose mission is to educate the public and the federal government about tribal self-government, treaty rights, and a broad range of federal policy issues affecting tribal governments.

What struck me most about my uncle was his humility. He had powerful gifts he used to help his people, but he would never use his gifts for personal gain. He had a commanding presence and a stately eloquence that made politicians and decision makers stop and listen. He united people from divergent backgrounds and inspired them to work together for positive changes on behalf of Native people. He lived a very simple existence, and his family went without many comforts. He once told me he didn't want a big house or material wealth because he didn't want any more than what his people had. "I want to live as my people live," he said.

We worshiped together through the Native American Church and understood one another through use of our holy sacrament, peyote. I knew his spirit. He shared his wisdom with me, but I learned more by watching him. Through his actions he demonstrated how to put God first in

life, and how to love humankind. He showed me the importance of kindness, generosity, respect, compassion, humility, and forgiveness. Sometimes we shed tears together, but most of the time we joked and laughed. He brought me much joy and happiness. And when I was married in 1990, he performed the wedding ceremony.

Perhaps the greatest lesson I received was one he never articulated. I saw him as a seeker of truth. When he saw injustice against Native people, he pursued it until the wrong was righted. He died in 1993 before seeing the fruits of his last great work: securing protection for the sacramental use of peyote through amendments to the *American Indian Religious Freedom Act*. The legislation was signed into law more than a year after his death.

My uncle was a man who looked within before he attempted to uncover human injustice elsewhere. As a journalist, I practice that lesson every time I do my job. I seek the truth by first finding it within myself. ■

*Karen Lincoln Michel (Ho-Chunk) is a freelance writer and columnist in the Chicago area.*

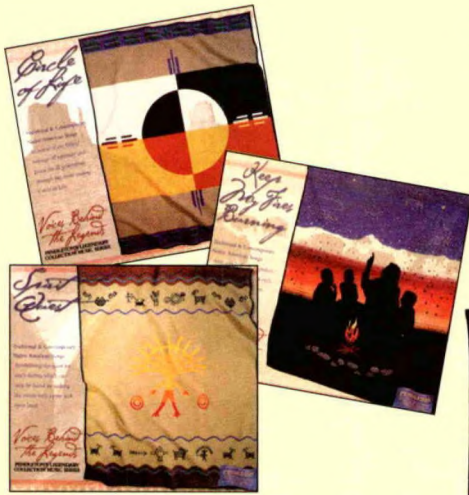


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