

CPS SOURCE bySunday

In the mid 1800s, when the eastern half of North America was on the verge of civil war and westward expansion was seeing the migration of Euro-Americans into "uncharted" territory, the Native American people of the pueblos were creating what would one day be recognized as an iconographic symbol of pueblo culture - the Kachina doll.

What is a Kachina? Kachinas are spirit beings that are believed to act as liaisons between humans and the religious realm in Pueblo societies. Hundreds of different kachinas represent a variety of animals, plants, and nature. Kachinas are believed to visit the various pueblos from winter solstice in late December until the first ripening of corn in July. During this time, men perform traditional dances and ceremonies while wearing the masks and costumes that represent the individual kachinas.



#2015-10-006

"Cold-Bringing Woman" Kachina
Hopi, late 20th century
cottonwood

Kachina dolls are carved wooden figures that are made to represent the dancers who portray Kachinas in public ceremonies. The dolls are given to Pueblo children to teach the identities of the various kachinas and the symbolism of the dancer costumes. They are traditionally carved from cottonwood tree roots and painted and adorned according to their function.

By the late 1800s, the artisan carvers found that Kachina dolls had become a trade commodity among Euro-Americans, and their production became a source of income.

In modern times, Kachina dolls are still used as teaching tools in Pueblo societies, but they are also recognized as artistic works and are sold as such to outsiders. The Hopi are particularly well-known for their Kachina carvings.



#1987-0020

Mudhead Kachina
Hopi, 1980
cottonwood, yam



#2015-10-010

Koshari (First Mesa Clown)
Hopi, late 20th century
cottonwood



#2015-10-056

Politaqa (Butterfly Man) Kachina
by Ronald Honyouti
Hopi, late 20th century
cottonwood

EXPLORE

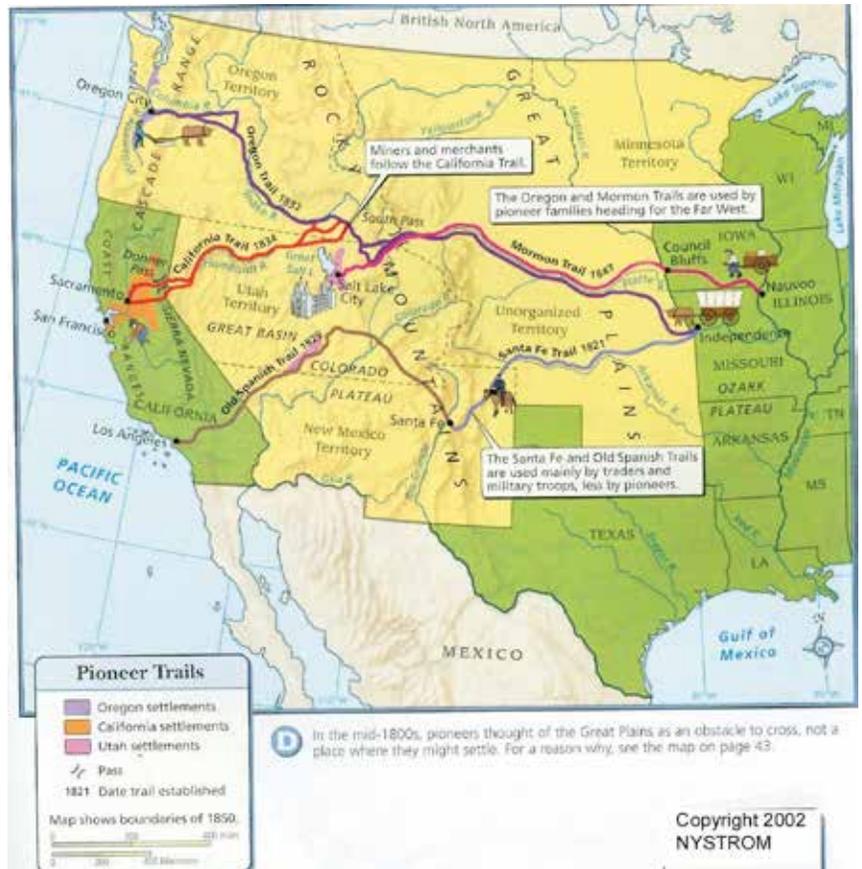
To see more artifacts, visit the Museum of Anthropology's online databases:

<https://anthromuseum.missouri.edu/?q=online-databases>

Database search words:
Kachina, katsina, Hopi, Southwest

Tips for Using the Museum Databases

- Log in as a "Guest."
- Enter search terms into one or more fields and click the "Perform Find" button in the status area on the left-hand side of the screen.
- Use the book icon in the status area to move from one record to another in the found set.
- Click on the magnifying glass icon to return to find mode and perform additional searches.
- When finished working with a database, please be sure to click the "Log Out" button in the status area to close your session.



Trade routes, such as the Sante Fe Trail passed by pueblos and allowed cultural material to be easily accessed by traders and pioneers.

Historic Route 66 follows some of these original routes from the 1800s, and has many "trade-posts" stationed along it where motorists can buy tourist trade goods, including Kachina dolls.

