

Final revised

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Hopi

*Katsinam*—the Native term for kachinas-- are spiritual beings found in Pueblo cultures. There are more than 400 of these supernatural entities among the various Pueblo tribes including the Hopi. Many of them are strongly associated with rain or water. The beautiful symbols on the face of this katsina doll resemble Hopi petroglyphs of rainclouds. Katsinam are believed to visit villages for half of the year, during which time members of the tribe will perform in numerous sacred ceremonies, impersonating the katsinam. Dolls like this one, however, are not considered sacred. Rather, they are mostly used as teaching tools for Hopi children.

11-1994

Bates

A visit to the Gulf Coast as a child had a profound impact on David Bates. He returned to its freshwater rivers, swamps, bayous, and saltwater bays as an adult to create a whole series of works, including this painting. The fisherman stands on the jetty's rocky outcropping, bringing in his catch using rope instead of a fishing pole. This is a specific method used to catch gar, whose sharp teeth, tough bone structure, and long snout make normal fishing techniques near impossible.

2-1979

Galli

Two *vaqueros*, Mexican cowboys, share a friendly moment while they water their horses in a creek during a misty sunrise. The early morning fog obfuscates the entire landscape, save for the quiet stream in which the two horses stand. The glaring sun behind the two companions is just beginning to break through the haze. In this painting, Galli has used a centuries-old technique, playing with color temperature to signify the time of day. Here he indicates sunrise by painting warmer highlights and cooler shadows throughout the composition. The reflections on the water are a cool gray-green, while the horses and their *vaqueros* are warmed with rosy light.

37-1989

Kitagawa

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there existed a romantic but misguided notion that indigenous cultures had not been "corrupted" by the technology of the modern world. European Modernists created a new visual language to reflect what they saw as a certain purity of spirit and connection to a more primal self. Kitagawa, a native of Japan,

was no exception. He painted these women bathing in a river in or around Taxco, Mexico, where he spent most of his time as a prominent figure in the short-lived Mexican Open Air School. The composition is a fascinating interplay between Japanese and Mexican cultures. In this piece, Kitagawa incorporates artistic styles of Mexican modernism, especially flatness of form and bold line. He also alludes to the Japanese tradition of communal baths, or *onsen*.

47-2005

Laurence

Sydney Laurence captured on canvas for the first time in history the largest mountain on the North American continent, Alaska's Mt. McKinley. Beginning in 1907, the artist traveled on numerous expeditions to portray the mountain, part of an iconic landscape in the last frontier. Depicting the majestic summit rising up above the clouds, he continues a 19<sup>th</sup> century tradition of Western Romanticism. Artists often associated mountains with the sublime, an aesthetic theory describing greatness beyond measure. The indigenous Koyukon Athabaskan people call the mountain Denali, meaning "the great one." The rushing river beneath the peak reminds us of the dual nature of water, at once treacherous and life-giving. Five massive glaciers flow down its slopes, feeding several rivers at the base. The colossal Ruth Glacier is taller from top to bottom than the Grand Canyon is deep.

42-1991

Namingha

Dan Namingha, a member of the Hopi-Tewa Pueblo, uses his traditional Native symbolism and spiritual motifs in much of his work. In this painting, he has not anchored the *katsinam*—the Native term for kachinas-- to any realistic space; rather, they appear to exist in a place without form, playing up their otherworldly, spiritual nature. Thick layers of paint create a dynamic texture, drawing the eye to the multitude of shapes within the composition, particularly the large spiral. This icon represents wind and water. It evokes the cyclical nature of water, evaporating from the earth, rising into the air to form clouds, and eventually returning as rain. Spirals also represent animals associated with water, such as snails and serpents.

15-2008

Mehretu

"Diffraction," an etching from a 3-part series called "Heavy Weather," was composed just two weeks after Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans. This work meditates on the devastating impact of hurricanes. Diffraction occurs when light waves hit an obstacle or narrow opening. Here, the phenomenon takes place on the outermost edge of the composition, splitting unseen waves of white light into separate beams of color. By

contrast, waves of water have a much less predictable quality to them, with tremendous variation in height, shape, and speed. Mehretu depicts these waves in graphic gestural marks set against precise line work and clean geometric shapes, evoking a kind of controlled chaos. Flowing from the tumult in the lower left of the work, energy builds upward across the paper into a massive swell. The wave is barely cresting and threatens to come crashing down into the rest of the composition.

108-1976

Graves

In this interpretation of a rain dancer, local, non-Native artist O.E.L. Graves creates relief a mid-century modern pastiche of Apache, Hopi, Navajo, and Zuni cultures. Many of tribes the artist references in this work lived in hot, arid climates and developed sophisticated irrigation systems for agriculture, as well as elaborate rituals to welcome and celebrate abundant rainfall. The headdress evokes imagery of Apache *gan* dancers, while the long, curving body is reminiscent of Navajo spiritual personas called *yeyi*. The objects held in the dancer's hands refer to Zuni and Hopi *kachinas*, particularly Saytasha and Hututu, the Rain Gods of the North and South. In the left hand are two ears of corn—a staple not only integral to Native American life and economy, but also a highly resilient drought-resistant crop. The plants gripped in the right hand are cattails, wetland plants that symbolize moisture. The birdlike face may refer to the macaw, highly prized for its beautiful plumage, and strongly associated with rain and abundant crops.

12-2007

Yamano

This sculpture utilizes a glass technique invented by Yamano himself. After blowing the glass, while still in its molten form, he rolls it through silver leaf, adhering the paper-thin sheets of metal to the surface of the glass. The artist then scratches his images into the silver. Finally, the surface is plated with copper. Yamano employs these techniques to emphasize the symbolism in his designs. He feels personally connected with the fish motifs in his work, saying, “I am a fish who is always looking for something. I am a fish who cannot stop swimming until my body stops moving. Maybe I will swim forever, like the universe.”