

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES COMMISSIONER GENERAL
CANADIAN WORLD EXHIBITION, MONTREAL, 1967
800 VICTORIA SQUARE, SUITE 2022
MONTREAL 3, P.Q., CANADA. AREA (514) US 1-1776

THE AMERICAN SPIRIT

Situated on the mezzanine level of the United States Pavilion, this exhibit contains a wide variety of objects, ranging from dolls, decoys and cowboy hardware to 19th century inventions and memorabilia from presidential elections. The objects shown here were made by Americans for many different purposes; as a whole, they reflect the ingenuity, variety, and vitality of the American Spirit.

1. INDIAN ADORNMENT

In their special ceremonies and in their everyday life, the first Americans adorned themselves with items fashioned from available materials - bear claws, porcupine quills, bird feathers, etc. This exhibit contains silver necklaces by the Zuni Pueblo; gold bracelets by the Navajo; feather headdresses by the Yurok; beaded belts by the Koasati; baskets from the Hupa; dance feathers from the Karok; etc.

2. AMERICAN INGENUITY

The devices displayed in this area are for use in the home and range from cherry pitters and apple parers to sewing machines and fly traps. Most of them were created in the 19th century by inventive Americans. Included here are turn-of-the-century washing machines, can openers, foot warmers, grape seeders, mouse traps and string bean slicers.

3. SANTOS

This exhibit of wooden sculptures of Christian saints is an example of a folk art which dates back to the 16th century in Puerto Rico and the 18th century in the Southwestern United States - regions populated by the Spanish colonists and their descendants. Isolated in remote areas, they created these devotional figures for their homes and modest chapels. Santos in this exhibit are from The Taylor Museum collection in Colorado and from the private collection of Miss Francisca Bou.

4. BIRD DECOYS

First created by the Indians to attract wild fowl, decoys are a unique and functional American folk art. Fashioned from reeds, canvas, bark, paper as well as wood, they are manifestations of the ingenuity which men have used to take advantage of nature's bounty. Shown in this exhibit will be a flying Brant, a flying Black Duck, a flying Bluebill and a variety of sitting decoys and shore birds.

5. DOLLS

Whether carved from a block of wood by a pioneer father of the 1800's, or painstakingly created by today's artists, the American dolls in this exhibit have brought joy to children and adults alike. Shown here are the cloth "Kewpies" of 1925; the "Columbian Exposition Rag Doll" of 1893; wooden dolls with metal springs from the Schoenhut Company of 1872; Martha Thompson's porcelain "Laughing and Crying Twins" of 1956; and a display of "Raggedy Anns" created 50 years ago by the American cartoonist Johnny Gruelle.

6. QUILTS

The pieced quilt was born of the stern necessity of the colonial woman to salvage all scraps of material. The quilts shown in this exhibit were all made in 1966 for the Pennsylvania Folklife Festival by women who no longer face such austerity, but who carry on the quilting tradition as a creative outlet.

7. COWBOY HARDWARE

Even on the open range, where cowboys pitted their strength and endurance against the elements, there was an outlet for personal expression, as the spurs, stirrups, rowels and branding irons in this exhibit indicate. A special feature in this exhibit is a parade saddle (which took 14 years to make) inlaid with silver and gold decorative scenes of Indians and the flora and fauna of the Rocky Mountain Region.

8. POPULAR MUSIC

On display here will be a range of instruments belonging to famous American performers who express in their music - whether it be folk songs, country music, rock and roll, or the newer folk-rock — the exuberance of the American Spirit. Included in the exhibit will be the guitars of Burl Ives, Peter, Paul and Mary, The Kingsmen, Theodore Bikel, Sonny James, Odetta, Jay and the Americans, Elvis Presley and The Beachboys.

9. CAMPAIGN MEMORABILIA

About 180 years of free Presidential elections are represented by the campaign items in this exhibit. Shown here is a rare collection of torches used in the campaign parades of the mid-19th century; examples of some of the earliest campaign mementos such as flags, scarves, posters, aprons, banners, stickers, pillow covers, cigarbands, noisemakers and a Lincoln tin stovepipe hat, a souvenir of the 1860 Inaugural Parade.

10. AMERICA THROUGH ITS HATS

A baseball player's cap, the cowboy's ten-gallon hat, a businessman's fedora - these and almost 300 other types of headwear, worn by men of different regions, occupations and personalities are on view here. These hats testify to the enormous diversity and the countless activities of the American male population.

11. FOLK ART

Mounted on low concrete pedestals, near the entrance to the film theatre, will be a series of relatively large scale folk art items, chosen on the basis of their uniqueness and beauty.

- a. baseball player: a wooden sculpture used as a storefront figure by a 19th century sporting goods manufacturer.
- b. totem pole: this 32 foot totem pole is the work of the Haida Indians of Alaska.
- c. weathervane: this 10 foot high Indian weathervane of copper was named after the Delaware Indian chief, Tamanard.
- d. granite eagle: this 4 ½ ton granite eagle perched on the facade of New York City's Pennsylvania Station for over 50 years until 1963 when the building was demolished.
- e. cast iron panel: this spandrel fascia panel was originally on the facade of the Gage Building in Chicago, designed by Louis H. Sullivan in 1898.
- f. guideboat: this 15 foot long Adirondack Mountain guideboat of spruce and cedar was created by American craftsmen in the 19th century.
- g. weathervane: for more than 130 years, this 14 foot high wrought iron weather vane indicated the Adirondack winds from a sawmill roof in Wavertown, New York.
- h. wooden desk: this wooden desk, patented in 1874, is a self-contained office on wheels, complete with letter drop, filing compartments, and drop-front writing surface.
- i. tavern signs: these 16 tavern signs were used throughout New England during the 19th century.