

RAIN

Native Expressions from the American
Southwest

Rain themes

- Representations of clouds, rain, and water
- Representations of animals associated with water
- Representations or sounds of phenomenon associated with rain such as lightning and thunder
- Materials that are associated with water animals such as shell
- Materials that are the color of water such as turquoise
- Cultural associations: Ancestral People, Hopi, New Mexico Pueblos, Tohono O'odham, Diné, Indé.

Ancestral Pueblo Signs of Rain

Ancestral Zuni
Pinnawa Glaze-on-white bowl,
1350-1450 CE

A specialist in the production of glazeware pottery made this bowl. Stylized butterflies are painted on the interior and birds on the exterior, two creatures that are on historic and contemporary Zuni ceramics. Analysis of the clay and glaze used in this pottery indicates that there were only a few sources for this pottery among the nine protohistoric villages along the Zuni River and its tributaries.



Ancestral Hopi
Sikyatki polychrome bowl
1400-1625 CE

This bowl features a terraced cloud shape surrounded by stars or dragonflies.



1 | Ancestral Hopi, Sikyatki polychrome bowl, A.D. 1400-1625

This bowl features a terraced cloud shape surrounded by stars or dragonflies.

2 | Ancestral Hopi, Jeddito black-on-yellow bowl, A.D. 1300-1450

By firing their ceramics with coal, ancestral Hopi potters produced highly fired, durable pieces that were very popular and traded widely among Pueblo people.

3 | Otowi Pueblo, Tsankawi bowl, A.D. 1500-1600

Located on the Pajarito Plateau in northern New Mexico, Otowi was one of the most important communities of its time. A Hopi advisor Gary Roybal, Puye, said that the Tsankawi were ancestral Puebloan peoples that visited and traded with the Otowi people.

New Mexico Pueblos
Eileen Yatsattie and Cal Seciwa, Zuni
advisors
Gary Roybal, San Ildefonso advisor
Laura Roybal, San Felipe advisor

Mike Bird-Romero
Okay Owingeh
Necklace, 1991

Mike's wife Allison wrote *Heart of the Dragonfly*. In the book she makes the connection between the crosses of the Spanish and ancestral designs such as the double barred cross of Lorraine and the dragonfly associated with summer rains.



Blue Corn Calabaza
San Ildefonso Pueblo
Polychrome Plate, 1970-1977

An Avanyu or horned water serpent with a tongue of lightning and turtles are featured on this plate. In the 1970s, Blue Corn created a version of the historic San Ildefonso polychrome style of painting on ceramics.



Margaret Tafoya
Santa Clara Pueblo
Jar with bear paw, c. 1973

The bear paw references the origin story of Santa Clara Pueblo in which a bear leads the people of Santa Clara to water. According to Margaret Tafoya, the raised element below the bear paw is referred to as a rainbow.



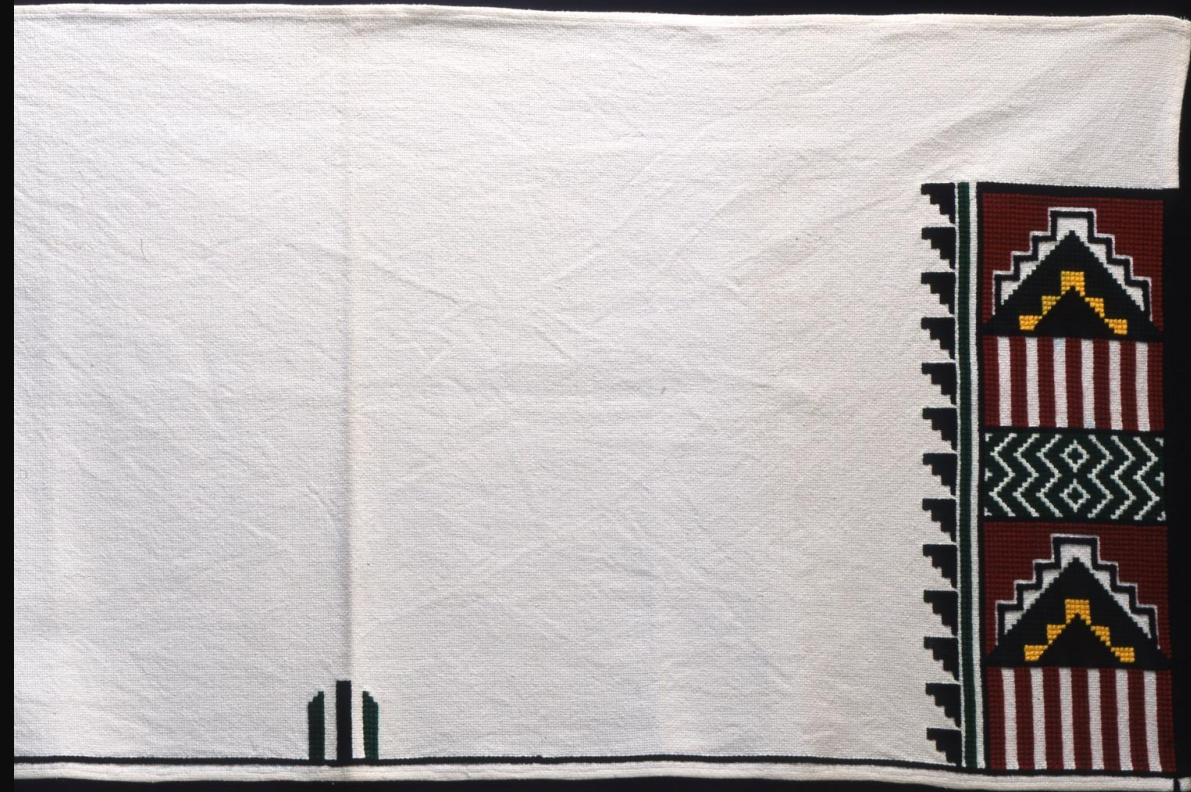
Tesuque Rain God Figurine, c. 1890

This early example of a “rain god” was made before the mass marketing of the figures by Santa Fe merchant Jake Gold between 1900 and 1940. Gold sold them to stores across the country.



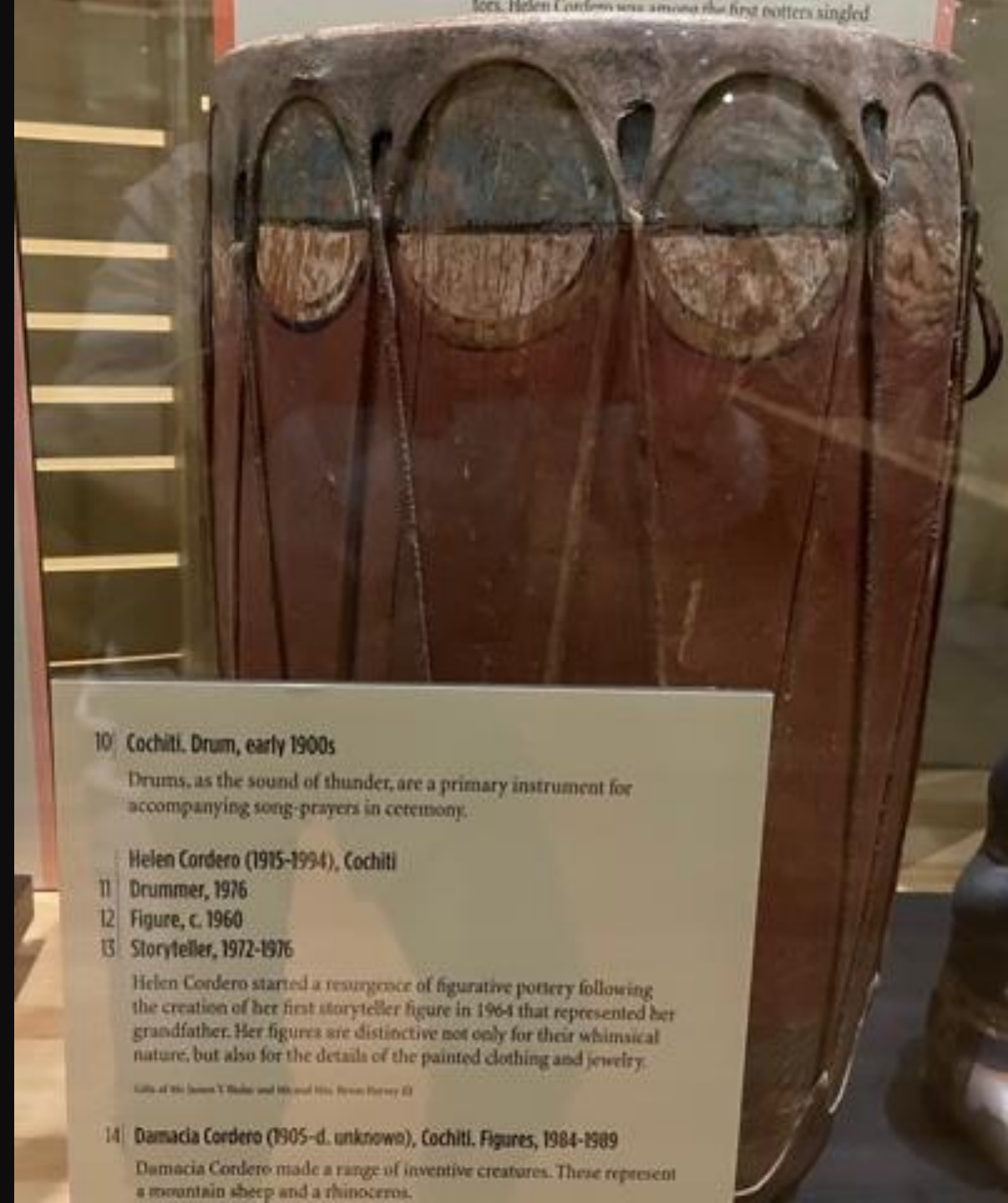
Florence Yepa, Jemez Pueblo Kilt, 2002

Florence Yepa said that this kilt is worn at social and harvest dances. It is a new style done in cross-stitch. It is worn as a kilt by men and over shoulders of women. On the kilt are the stepped clouds, the rain and the lightning. The red represents the sky and the green, the earth.



Cochiti Drum, early 1900s

Drums represent the sound of thunder and the arches formed where the drumhead meets the drum's body have been called a representation of clouds.



Acoma Jar, 1890-1920

Rainbows, associated with rain that nourishes animals and plants, is a frequent design theme of Pueblo pottery. In the HOME label text, Emma Lewis comments on the sweet taste of water from this type of jar.



Josephine, Milford and
Randy Nahohai, Zuni
Jar, 1983

This is a rainbird
design, and it shows
the movement of the
clouds as they are
coming in. Without the
eye the design is one of
swirling clouds.



Leekya Deyuse, Zuni Frog necklace, 1939

This is part of a set. Leekya was known by his first name and is known for his fetish carvings. Eileen Yatsattie said, “We believe when rains come, the frogs fall down from the sky with the rain.”



Mary Kalestewa (Zuni) and
John Hoxie or Roger Skeet
(Diné), Inlay Box, 1948

The water animals, frog and
tadpole, are capped by cloud
“hats” and surrounded by
lightning bolts.





More Zuni water animals—frog and dragonfly.

Hopi

Clifford Lomahaftewa, advisor



Roberta Namingha,
Tewa/Hopi
Crow Mother plaque,
c. 1969

Namingha surrounded Crow
Mother with stylized clouds
and lightning.



Snow Katsina Doll, 1970s

Snow clouds surround the eyes of this Katsina while a rainbow with lightning bolts surrounds his head. He is also wearing a rain sash. He is responsible for bringing cold and winter moisture to the Hopi mesas.



Tino Youvella, Hopi,
Hemis Katsina Doll,
c. 1983

The kopatsoki is in the shape of a cloud and the small feathers also represent clouds. A rainbow is beneath the clouds. The kilt has clouds with falling rain. This is one of the dolls that Clifford Lomahaftewa selected for the RAIN exhibit.

Ray Naha, Hopi

Niman Ceremony at
Walpi Village, c. 1965

The figure in the kilt with
his long hair takes care of
the Katsinam. “He is
shoeless because he is
praying for rain. If he
sees clouds coming, he
will put his shoes on.
Otherwise, he will stay
barefoot.”

Clifford Lomahaftewa



Hopi, Kopatsoki, 1900-1950

The headpieces in the case are from the Butterfly Dance. They are worn by girls in the social dance that is done at the end of summer after the corn has ripened. The entire piece is in the shape of a cloud and three clouds are placed on top with rain symbols below. The sun face flanked by corn completes the theme.



Hopi Rain Sash, early 1900s

The movement of the sash fringe represents falling rain.





Hopi Kilt, c. 1900

The red and white stripes beneath the rain cloud are supposed to represent sun shining through the falling rain.

Joy Navasie, Tewa/Hopi Vase, 1970s

The vase on the right is by the accomplished potter known as Frog Woman. She signed her pieces with a frog. It is a symbol she inherited from her mother and is not a clan linkage.



Hopi Canteen, late
1800s

Water serpents flank a
turtle on the water
carrier that was
collected at the Hopi
village of Polacca.



Victor Coochwytewa, Hopi Buckle, c. 1970

The buckle is part of a set. The bolo tie that is in the set has rain clouds at the tips of the tie.



Diné, Joe Ben Jr., advisor



Lolita Curley, Diné Cradleboard, 1996

According to Arlene Old Elk, the cradleboard surrounds a Diné baby with signs of rain. The head piece that protects the baby's head represents a rainbow and the laces that zigzag across the front represent lightning.

Hosteen Klah, Diné Sandpainting textile, 1921

Considered to be the first textile woven by Hosteen Klah: Whirling Logs sandpainting of the Nightway Ceremony. It includes the Rainbow Guardian and the Mountain Sheep gods who carry on their backs sacks containing black clouds and the fruits of the harvest. Sometimes the center includes the “Water Meeting Place,” a lake on whose shores grow the four sacred plants.





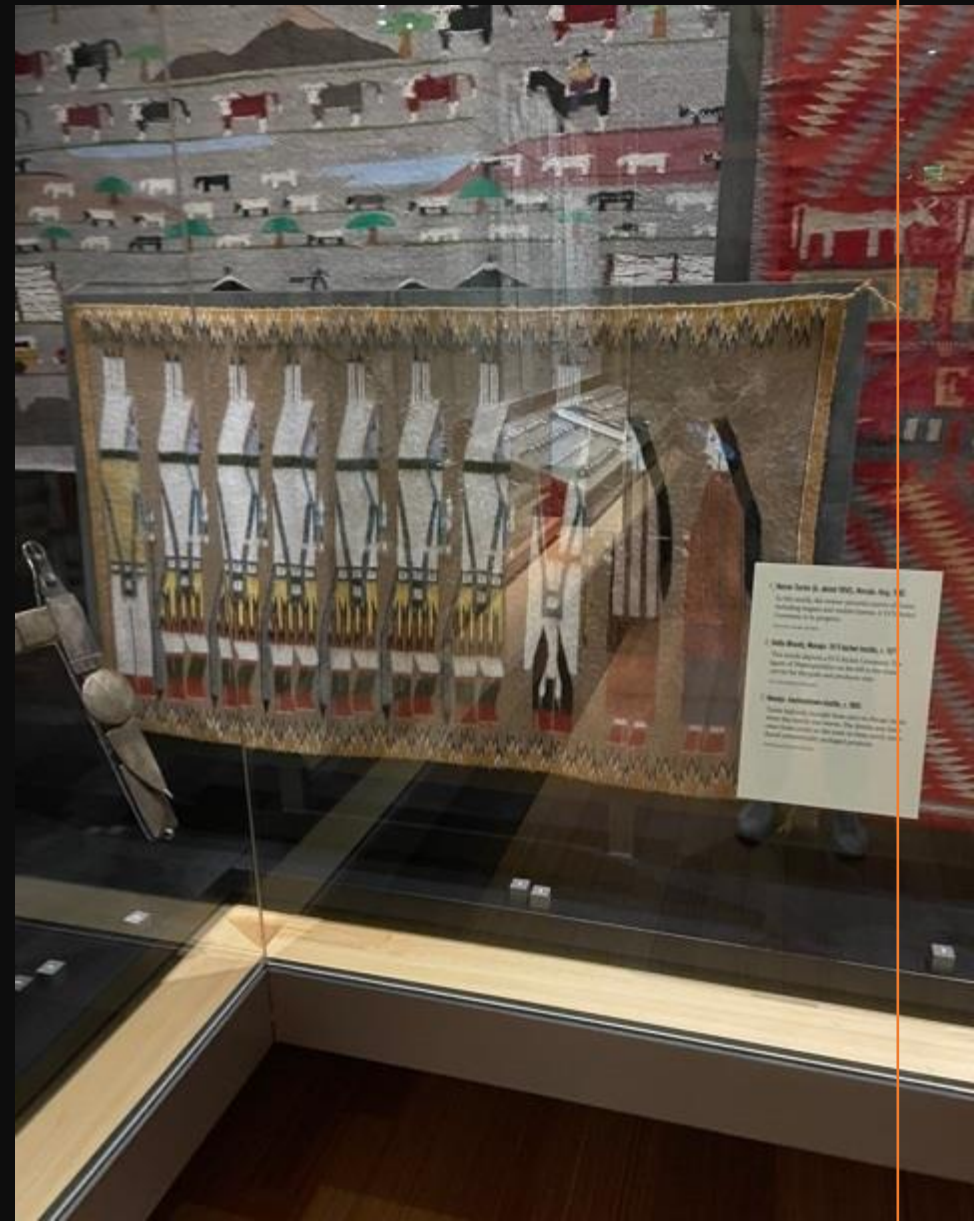
Lillie Touchin, Diné
Storm Pattern Textile, 1986

Lightning connects the four sacred mountains at each corner of the textile. The motifs at top and bottom are often called water bugs in the textile literature.

Della Woody, Diné, Ye'ii Bicheii textile, c. 1977

In this textile Joe Ben focused on the figure at the far left, Water Sprinkler.

Water Sprinkler is the water carrier for the Gods and produces rain. His turkey feathers should be white tipped, symbolizing the turkey as the last one to leave the rising waters of the 4th world in the Creation Story.



Rosie Yellowhair, Diné Emergence Story, 2004

Yellowhair put the tiny figure of turkey into the center about to emerge from the 4th world. She made his feathers tipped with white.



Southern Paiute Diné Ceremonial Basket c. 1900

Paiute weavers have for decades made “wedding baskets” for the Diné. They are actually baskets used in a variety of ceremonies. Joe Ben interpreted the light outer area as daylight, followed by dark, the outer ring as the earth, followed by the rainbow, followed by clouds and mountains. There are a variety of versions of this topic.



Colorado River Tribes

Mohave Cape Necklace, late 1800s

Elder Louise Patch identified this design as turtle shell design with diamond shapes representing the bank of the Colorado River and the elements at the neck representing the river's tributaries.



Annie Fields, Mohave,
Frog, 1964

Another representation of a water animal. This frog represents the figure that brought fire to the Mohave by carrying a burning stick in its mouth.



Indé, Edgar Perry, advisor

Amos Gastina, Apache, Violin, early 1900s

The triangular symbol with
a dot on top was identified
by White Mountain
Apache advisor Edgar Perry
as “rain on the mountain.”



Western Apache, Tus
c. 1850

This tus or pitched water bottle has the “rain on the mountains” design. It was given to the museum by the descendants of Chief Loco a leader of the Warm Springs band of Apache during the Apache wars.



Western Apache, Pictorial basket, early 1900s

The zigzag designs on the basket represent lightning. When asked what symbol he would associate with rain in Western Apache arts, Ronnie Lupe, the chairman of the White Mountain Apache said “lightning.”



Sonoran Desert,
Michael Chiago,
O'odham advisor

Arizona Colony (in Gila River Indian Community), people seem to identify
being from Ft. Yuma. Ft. Yuma people identify me as coming from Maricopa
because I go—both places, meeting relatives, it feels good. It feels like they're
my home." —Nashia Hart Shuman, Pee-Pee Pottery, Gila River Indian Community

...a family remains a community within the larger Káinal' O'oham communities. They continue
family ties to relatives along the Colorado River. They have also continued the traditions of bird song
and the traditions of the Colorado River people. Their traditional clothing, worn for special social
ceremonial occasions, shows that it is their Yuma people.

...the Gila River Indian Community, 1970s. Photo by the author.



Pee Posh, Frog effigy
bowl, early 1900s

1. Pee-Pee Pottery
Bowl with frog, early 1900s
Maricopa, AZ

2. Maricopa Bowl, 1950-1970
Maricopa, AZ

12. Maricopa Bowl, 1950-1970
Maricopa, AZ

13. Sita Redford (1892-1971), Pee-Pee (Maricopa) Bowl, 1947
Sita Redford was one of several Pee-Pee potters who was instrumental in
restoring pottery in 1936. She often taught and demonstrated at the
other museum. Her achievements, she was posthumous at the
Arizona Women's Hall of Fame. This beautiful bowl was
acquired with a 3rd place ribbon at the 1947 Arizona
State Fair.

14. Yolanda Hart Shuman (b. 1971)
This piece is the
... ..



Huhugam Shell Pendant, 650-1100 CE

Many of the pieces in the Huhugam jewelry case have representations of frogs on them. Marine shells were traded into the area. An entire site devoted to shell working has been found.

Laura Kerman, Tohono O'odham, Célkona Ceremony, 1979

This set of clay figures depicts the fall harvest/winter rain ceremony. Some figures carry representations of clouds.



Michael Chiago, Tohono
O'odham, *Rain House and
Saguaro Wine Festival, 2003*

This ceremony has also been referred to as “pulling down the clouds.” It features songs, oratory, poetry and the drinking of saguaro wine. The wine ferments for three days in the rain house shown at the rear of the group. Traditionally crops were planted after the ceremony.



Tohono O'odham saguaro
wine basket, early 1900s

Wine baskets are woven
so tightly that they can
hold liquid. It is from
these baskets that the
wine is drunk in the
summer wine ceremony.



Terrol Dew Johnson, Tohono
O'odham, Contemporary gourd
basket, 2001

The artist has said that the
design of the bear grass in
the basket represents
ripples in a pond caused
when a stone is tossed in.

