

Study Guide and  
Exhibit Companion  
to



*The World of the  
Kachina*

*Schingoethe Center  
for Native American Cultures  
at Aurora University  
January 2003*

# Types of Kachinas

Kachinas are not all equal. Many different styles exist and provide different types of examples and guidance for the tribe. Each has a particular set of characteristics, and a distinctive personality. When impersonated, a costume, song style, and set of body movements are both repeated and unique. Most Kachinas are considered benevolent friends, although some are clowns and still others punish wayward Hopi people. The major Kachina types are:

**Chiefs:** Those who take part in nine-day ceremonies.

**Runners:** Those who race with the men during spring dances.

**Clowns:** Those who offer comic relief during the dances.

**Guards:** Those who protect Kachinas and punish the unruly clowns.

**Ogres:** Monster types who punish the wayward.

**General styles:** Animals, plants and other natural forms living and non-living.

# Chief Kachinas

Chief Kachinas are the most clearly defined group of spirits. A Chief Kachina is a supernatural being that is affiliated solely with a particular clan or related clans. Only a specific person within the kinship clan can impersonate the Chief Kachina. Chiefs usually appear during the important nine-day ceremonies and never in common plaza dances. The masks and costumes used to personify these Kachinas can be refurbished from time to time, but never changed or replaced. They are considered very sacred and are entrusted only to the matriarch of the clan.

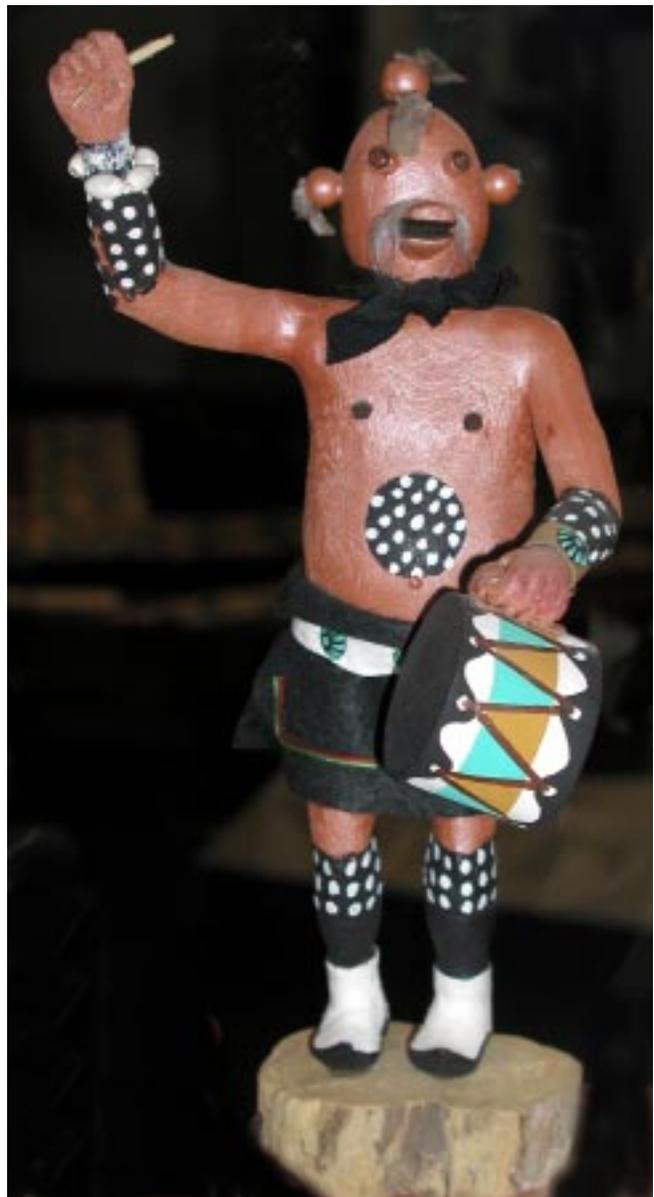
The term Chief Kachina refers to the fact that these Kachinas are the most important, not that they are leaders. Chief Kachinas, such as Eototo and Aholi, appear only at specific times and never dance in groups. Their masks are usually simple and are kept permanently. The privilege to keep and to wear the masks is inherited.



1989.6.95  
Eototo/Chief Kachina by Raymond Parkett

## Runners

In the late spring these Kachinas hold running contests with the Hopi men. They enter the village and challenge the men by prancing up and down and making short practice runs. If the man wins the race, the runner gives him a gift. If, however, the man loses the race, the runner punishes him by such antics as plastering him with mud, cutting his hair or whipping him with a yucca leaf whip. Each runner has a specific punishment associated with him. The races are thought to encourage rainfall and it is a great honor to participate. The runners repay the villagers for their cooperation by sending water for germinating crops.



1999.13.4 Koyemsi (Mudhead) Kachina, by  
Arnold Avayo (Hopi)

# Clowns

Clowns provide improvisational entertainment during the intermissions of a dance. Performing as a group or individually, they satirize Hopi life by illustrating improper behavior.

Clowns also hold special religious rank. They act as drummers and announcers during ceremonies, as well as being the only people able to touch a Kachina dancer. They will often repair the costumes of Kachinas if they become torn or untidy during a dance. Clowns are believed to have supernatural powers, which allow them to serve as priests and cure diseases. Mudheads and Koshares are the two major types of clowns. Mudheads are earth colored with knobs on their heads and Koshares are black and white striped. Koshares are often depicted doing activities that one should not emulate, such as gluttony.



1996.1.11 Glutton Koshare with watermelon, by Joe Charo, Jr. (Jemez Pueblo), c. 1980.

## Guard Kachinas

Guards may also be called warriors. When they appear individually they function as policemen, enforcing actions or preventing entrance to a ceremony. When they appear as a group they are functioning as warriors, as in the Powamu Procession. In this role they surround the more sacred Kachinas as a small but ferocious army of fearsome creatures. Warriors are also known to attack the clowns when their behavior gets too raucous. They beat the clowns with switches and douse them with water. Warriors bear symbols of war and bravery in remembrance of times when the Hopi defended themselves against hostile attacks.



1999.13.1 Wuyak-kuita (Guard) Kachina,  
by Gary Hayah (Hopi Pueblo)

## Ogre Kachinas

Ogres are responsible for disciplining children. During a major ceremony at a certain time of year the Ogres travel from house to house, led by the ugly hag, Soyoko, and confront the children with their misdeeds. The Ogres then threaten to take the child back to their world and devour them. Each child's relatives defend him/her against the Ogres' claims but the child must still atone for misdeeds by giving gifts or performing certain tasks. Through this drama, children are taught the importance of cooperative effort and that they can depend upon their elders to protect them from danger.



1989.6.116 Miniature Ogre Kachina

# General Kachinas

General Kachinas, for lack of a better term, include all the other representations: animals such as antelope and mountain sheep; reptiles; insects, like the butterfly; natural phenomena like clouds, sun and thunder; and plants such as food crops, like squash and corn. Women Kachinas, impersonated by men, and Kachin-manas, the female counterparts of several Kachinas who appear in one-day dances, are also considered general Kachinas.



1989.6.17 Yohozro Wuhti  
(Cold Bringing Woman) Kachina.  
by Joe and Ruth Lameman  
(Navajo), 1982.

# Origin of Kachina Spirits

To understand Kachinas, one must first understand their origin. Although stories vary, the accepted idea is that at one time the Kachinas lived with the Hopi people but due to some catastrophe, the Kachinas had to return to the Spirit World, where they now live. To continue contact with the Kachinas, the Hopi kept the masks and costumes and developed the custom of impersonating them in rituals as a way of communicating. By doing the various ritual dances the people could obtain blessings, usually in the form of rain, but also in well-being, curing and fertility. Kachinas are not meant to provide a realistic representation, but rather the essence or spirit of the plant, animal, reptile, insect, or natural phenomena that they represent.

A Kachina has three aspects: the supernatural spirit beings, who assist the Hopi people by bringing rain and other needs; the masked impersonators of the Kachina Spirits, who appear in Kiva and Plaza ceremonies, also called dances; and the small dolls carved in the likeness of the masked dancers. Kachinas are not considered Gods but are the spirits of both animate and inanimate objects in the natural world. As supernaturals, they can hear the prayers of the living and carry them to the deities.

Kachina dolls are not playthings or curios, but rather a form of religious art, used to instruct the children. The men secretly carve these small wooden images of cottonwood root and give them to the children as a means of teaching the children about the more than 250 Kachina spirits.

# Time Line

**10,000 B.C.** First native peoples come to live in the American Southwest

**A.D.900's** Early Pueblo peoples are trading for seashells, parrot feathers and other items. There is also evidence of the bow and arrow, pottery, masonry, and other cultural development

**950-1000** Pueblos begin to migrate to the Rio Grande valley in present-day New Mexico

**1050-1300** Anasazi culture reaches the height of its development

**1275-1300** In a mass migration of Anasazi people the Four Corners area is vacated

**1400** Athabascan-speaking people (Apaches and Navajos) arrive in the Southwest

**1500s** Spanish explorers wander the Southwest in search of gold

**1540** Francisco Vasquez de Coronado encounters the Pueblos

**1581** A group of Spanish missionaries returns to the Southwest to attempt to bring the Pueblos under their influence

**1598** Don Juan de Ornate takes control of New Mexico as a colony: Franciscan missionaries are assigned to seven pueblos

**1598-1680** Spanish missionaries attempt to Christianize the Pueblos and bring them under the control of religious authorities

**1610** Spain formally claims all the Southwest, including Pueblo land, as a colony of the New World

**1680** In the massive Pueblo Revolt, the Pueblos and other Native Americans drive the Spanish from the Four Corners area

**1692** The Spanish retake the region, except for Hopi lands

**1811** Spain grants the Pueblos full rights as Spanish citizens and eliminates special protection for Pueblo lands

**1821** Mexico wins independence from Spain and takes control of New Mexico, including Pueblo lands

**1822** The Santa Fe Trail is blazed, bringing traders and American goods to the Pueblo people

**1824** The United States establishes the Bureau of Indian Affairs

**1848** The Mexican War concludes with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; Mexico cedes the Southwest to the United States

**1850** The United States officially claims New Mexico as a territory, granting no legal protection to Pueblo lands

**1864-1868** Navajos are imprisoned at Fort Sumner (Bosque Redondo), bringing an end to raids on Pueblo lands

**1880s** Railroads reach New Mexico and Arizona, bringing traders, settlers, and tourists fascinated by Pueblo culture

**1908** President Theodore Roosevelt authorizes the Blue Lake region to become part of Carson National Forest in New Mexico

**1912** New Mexico becomes the forty-seventh state in the Union

**1924** The U.S. Congress approves the Pueblo Lands Act; Native Americans born in the United States, including Pueblos, are declared citizens

**1934** The Indian Reorganization Act recognizes tribal governments

**1950s** Pueblos and other native peoples successfully resist a federal relocation program intended to integrate them into urban society

**1970** President Richard Nixon approves the return of 48,000 acres of the Blue Lake region of Carson National Forest to the Taos Pueblos

**1980** Celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of the Pueblo Revolt

# Ceremonial Calendar

There are seven major Kachina ceremonies performed at regular times of the year. They fall between the winter and summer solstices. Each is led by one of the chief Kachinas and includes eight days of secret rites with a public dance held on the ninth day. All ceremonies include prayer, offerings, song and dance to implore the Kachina spirits to visit the village and bring blessings in the form of rain and abundant crops.

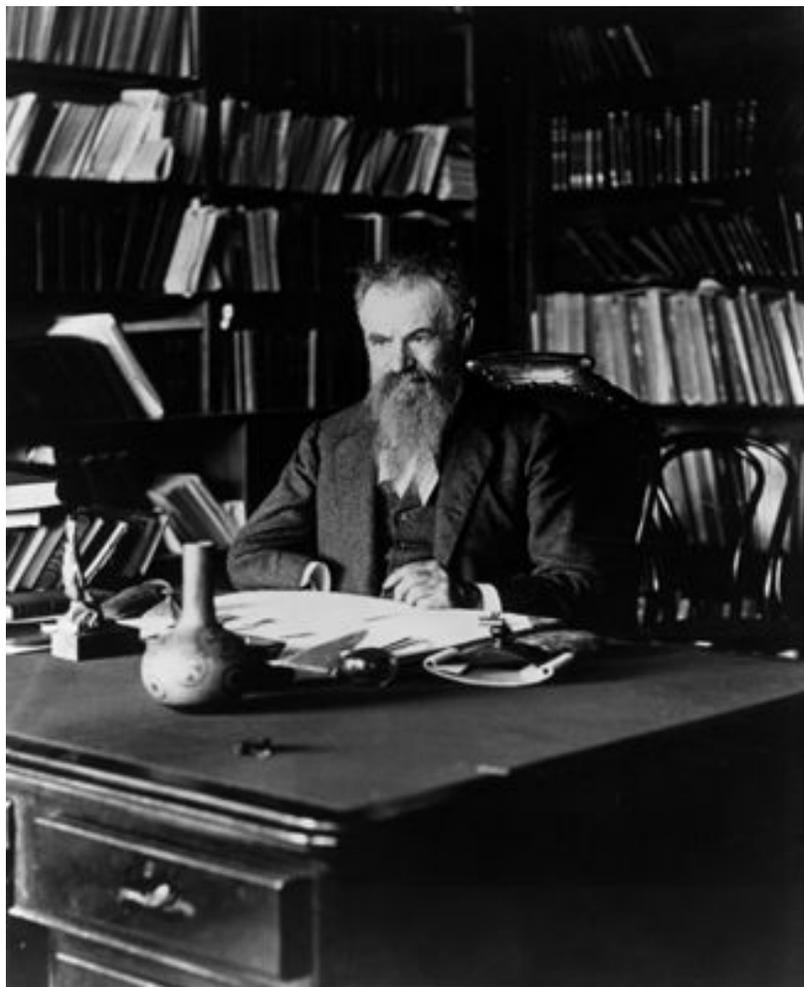
The Snake Dance and the Flute Ceremony alternate years and are performed during the month of August. The rest of the calendar year is filled with social or non Kachina dances.



# About the Bureau of American Ethnology

Established by Congress in 1879, the Bureau was a department within the Smithsonian Institution. It was, according to its first annual report, charged to carry out “anthropologic researches among the North American Indians.” And that is what it did, for nearly a hundred years. The Bureau was established at a time when Native American populations were undergoing rapid change from relocation, military action by the United States, and assimilation into white culture. In many cases, the Reports issued by the Bureau provide the only detailed descriptions we have of the culture, customs, and language of many Native American groups. Although anthropology was not fully developed as a science, the Bureau brought together many careful researchers who made painstaking studies of many aspects of Native American cultures, especially in the west and southwest.

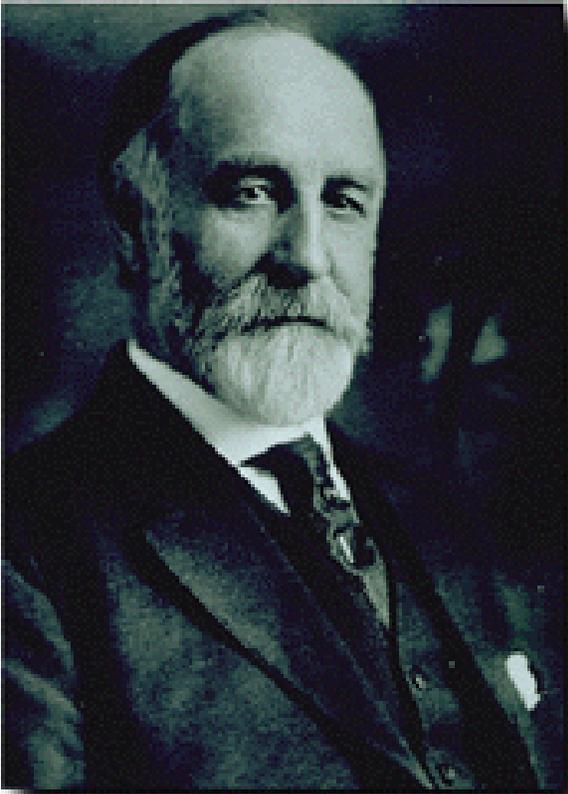
The first director of the Bureau was John Wesley Powell who was, incidentally, the uncle of the famous Aurora violinist Maude Powell. Powell, who was largely self-taught, was a professor of geology at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington, Illinois, and, despite having lost an arm at the Battle of Shiloh, participated in a number of lengthy and strenuous expeditions to the west after the Civil War. The Schingoethe Center Library holds a complete set of the Annual Reports of the Bureau of American Ethnology, as well as some of the Bureau’s Bulletins and other publications.



*Major John Wesley Powell in his office at the Smithsonian, about 1886*

# Dr. Jesse Walter Fewkes (1850 – 1930)

Fewkes was a pioneering archeologist and ethnographer who began his career in another field entirely—as a “medusologist,” a biologist who specialized in the study of jellyfish! This was not unusual in the nineteenth century: anthropology was just emerging as a separate field of study, and many “anthropologists” of the day—such as both Jesse



Walter Fewkes and John Wesley Powell—were specialists in other fields who were drawn to this new approach to the study of human culture.

Fewkes received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1877 and initially carried out research in the field of invertebrate zoology. His career change to archaeology in the late 1880s may have resulted from a clash with Harvard biologist and museum director Alexander Agassiz, but this is unclear. At any rate, by 1890 Fewkes was deeply involved in the study of Native Americans. In that year he accompanied the Hemenway expedition to the Hopi and Zuni pueblos. As part of his preparation for this expedition, Fewkes decided to utilize the newly-invented

phonograph as a way to record speech and music of Native Americans. In March of 1890 he tested the process by making wax-cylinder recordings of a group of Passamaquoddy Indians in Calais, Maine; these are generally considered to be the world’s first ethnomusicology recordings.

From 1895 to 1928, Fewkes served as an anthropologist with the Bureau of American Ethnology, and was the Bureau’s Director from 1918 until his retirement in 1928. In addition to his early recordings, Fewkes is remembered for coining the term “ethnoarchaeology” to describe the methodology he developed for studying Native Americans in the southwest. His method was to study a modern-day people’s culture carefully, and then use their actions and behaviors to explain the archaeological remnants of those people’s ancestors.

# Nizhoni Gallery

## How we know what Kachinas look like

By the late nineteenth century, only a few of the Pueblo peoples, such as the Hopi, who lived in very isolated locations, still actively participated in the cycle of Kachina ceremonies. It was at this time that early ethnologists began to collect systematic information about the appearance, history, and attributes of the many Kachinas. One of the most notable instances of this research was the 1899-1900 expedition among the Hopi, conducted by Dr. Jesse Walter Fewkes of the Bureau of American Ethnology (a department of the Smithsonian Institution). Fewkes described his methodology as follows:

*Believing that a series of pictures made by the cleverest artists among the Hopis would be a valuable means of studying the symbolism of the tribe, the author hired one of them to make him a series of drawings of all the personations of supernatural beings which appear in Hopi festivals.... The author found several Hopi men competent to paint a collection of pictures of the kind desired, and finally chose for that work Kutcahonauu, or White-Bear, a man of about 30 years old, who was believed to be the most competent of all who were considered.... His uncle, Homovi...drew some of the best pictures.... A few of the pictures were drawn by Winuta, whose work, like that of Homovi, is unmodified by white influences. To facilitate the painting the author provided the artists with paper, pencils, brushes, and pigments; he left the execution of the work wholly to the Indians, no suggestion being made save the name of the god whose representation was desired.... When the paintings were delivered, the author wrote under them the names of the beings represented, with such information as could be gathered concerning the special symbolism upon them.*

The result was a series of over 260 pictures of Kachinas. These were published, along with Fewkes's observations on the Hopi festival cycle, in "Hopi Kachinas Drawn by Native Artists," in the *Twenty-first Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1899-1900* (the volume was actually published in 1903). The drawings of Kutcahonauu, Homovi, and Winuta have proven a very valuable resource, not only for anthropologists but also for carvers of other pueblos where the Kachina traditions had been broken in the period following European contact in the 16th century.

In the table below we have reproduced six of the drawings collected by Fewkes in 1899-1900, alongside more recent representations of the same Kachinas, drawn from the collection here at the Schingoethe Center for Native American Cultures at Aurora University. The similarities and differences help point up an important truth about the Kachina traditions: they were not static, but were constantly being remade. No exact count of Kachinas is possible (various authorities cite between 300 and 500 different ones), because new Kachinas were added at various times to the festival cycle, while others were discarded.

## **Selected bibliography on Kachinas**

Bassman, Theda. *Hopi Kachina Dolls and Their Carvers*. West Chester, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1991.

Branson, Arthur T. *Hopi Kachina Dolls*. Tucson, AZ: Treasure Chest Publications, 1992.

Colton, Harold S. *Hopi Kachina Dolls with a Key to their Identification*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1959.

Fewkes, Jesse Walter. "Hopi Kachinas Drawn by Native Artists." *21st Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*; 3-126. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1903.

Fewkes, Jesse Walter. "Tusayan Kachinas." *15th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1897.

## **Selected links related to Kachinas**

Be aware that many sites about "Kachina Dolls" are mainly interested in selling them. To get better search results, include terms such as "information" or "history" in your query when using web search engines.

"Authenticating the Kachina Doll," by Patty Baldwin, <http://www.andinia.com/a01894.shtml>

Lesson Plan on Kachinas (4th - 6th grade), <http://www.thesolutionsite.com/lpnew/lesson/1658/madisonelA3.html>

"Kachina Dolls," by Barton Wright, <http://www.navajoworld.com/navajo/kachina/kachinadolls.htm>

"Kachina Society and Ceremonies, <http://www.indiantraders.com/aboutart/kachinas/kachcult.htm>

"Types of Hopi Kachinas," <http://www.indiantraders.com/aboutart/kachinas/kachtype.htm>

"Southwest Culture," <http://www.germantown.k12.il.us/html/southwest.html>

# Comparison Table

Below, we have reproduced selected images from Fewkes's 1903 report, on the left, and corresponding Kachina dolls from our collection, on the right. The drawings include plate numbers from the original article.



“Mana,” PL. VIII



“Kachin Mana (Maiden),” by Leroy Pooley (Hopi). 1989.6.119



“Natacka Naamu,” PL. IX



“Nata-aska (Black Ogre) Kachina,” by Lawrence Namoki, Polacca, AZ. 1989.6.24



“Paiakyamu,” PL. LVIII



“Paiakyamu (Hano Clown) Kachina  
Hano Pueblo, c. 1930. 1990.41.12



“Humis,” PL. XXI



“Hemis (Home Dancer) Kachina,” by  
Victor Charley (Pueblo). 1998.6.11



“Kwahu,” PL. XV



“Kwahu (Eagle) Kachina,” by Raymond M. Chee (Navajo). 1989.6.16



“Patun,” PL. LII



“Patung (Squash) Kachina,” Navajo. 1989.8.20



View of the Pueblo display in the Nizhoni Gallery, Schingoethe Center for Native American Cultures at Aurora University. Pueblo model by Mark Kennedy, Freshwater Studios, Ltd.

# About the Schingoethe Center...

The Schingoethe Center for Native American Cultures is a museum and program center at Aurora University, in Aurora, Illinois. The Center had its genesis in the generous donation of a collection of over 5000 artifacts by Herbert and Martha Schingoethe in 1989. Local collectors and philanthropists, the Schingoethes wished to share with the community their passion for Native American art and artifacts. In addition to donating their collection, they made possible the construction of the building where it is housed and also provided an endowment to help support the activities of the Center. Dunham Hall, named in honor of Martha Schingoethe's family, was opened in the fall of 1988 and the Center was inaugurated in the spring of 1989.

In addition to its 4500 square foot museum, the Center hosts an annual powwow held on the University campus and conducts other programs and presentations throughout the academic year, including guided tours for school children, University students, and adult groups. Approximately 12,000 people a year participate in Center activities.

The Center maintains a video lending library and conducts a loan program of "Discovery Boxes" (complete classroom units on various aspects of Native American cultures) and traveling exhibits. Call 630-844-7843 for details, or visit [www.aurora.edu/museum/educate](http://www.aurora.edu/museum/educate) for an online catalog and reservation form.

Membership in the Friends of the Schingoethe Center is open to members of the public who support the Center's goals of furthering the understanding and appreciation of all aspects of Native American cultures. For information on membership, or about the Center's current programs and activities, call 630-844-7843 or visit our website at [www.aurora.edu/museum](http://www.aurora.edu/museum).

## About this exhibit...

"The World of the Kachina" and the Nizhoni Gallery in which it is housed were designed, and largely constructed, by Associate Director Meg Bero. Caroline Waddell, who was a Spartan Fellow in academic year 2002-2003, participated in the research, development, and installation of the exhibit. The Executive Director of the Center is Dr. Michael R. Sawdey, who developed the web presence and related materials (such as this "Companion").

The exhibit opened January 30, 2003, and is scheduled to run through December of 2004.

## Visiting the Center...

To reach the Center from the east or west, take the Illinois East-West Tollway (I-88) to the Orchard Road exit in Aurora; go south (left) on Orchard Road to Galena Boulevard. Take Galena east (left) to Randall Road. Turn south (right) on Randall Road and take it all the way to the end. At the T-intersection of Marsellaise Place and Randall Road, you are facing Dunham Hall. Park in the lot to the west of the building, or on the street. The Center is located on the lower level of Dunham Hall (fully accessible). From the north, take Randall Road south to the end. From the south, take Route 47 to Galena Boulevard, Galena east to Randall, and Randall south to the Center.

**Center Hours and Admission:** The Center is open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. Also, we are open from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sundays during the academic year, with the exception of the first Sunday in each academic term (we suggest you call first). There is no fixed admission charge, but we request a donation of \$3 per person, \$2 for students and seniors, \$1 for children under 12, to a maximum of \$7 per family. The Center is free to Aurora University students, faculty, and staff, and to members of the American Association of Museums, Illinois Association of Museums, and ICOM. Group tours are available by prior arrangement; call 630-844-7843.