

Helga TEIWES, *Kachina Dolls: The Art of Hopi Carvers* (Tucson, The University of Arizona Press, 1991, xvi and 161 p., illus., ISBN 0-8165-1226-4, hardback, ISBN 0-8165-1264-7, paperback)

Sarah Carter

Volume 15, numéro 1, 1993

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1082560ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1082560ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Association Canadienne d'Ethnologie et de Folklore

ISSN

1481-5974 (imprimé)

1708-0401 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Carter, S. (1993). Compte rendu de [Helga TEIWES, *Kachina Dolls: The Art of Hopi Carvers* (Tucson, The University of Arizona Press, 1991, xvi and 161 p., illus., ISBN 0-8165-1226-4, hardback, ISBN 0-8165-1264-7, paperback)]. *Ethnologies*, 15(1), 176–177. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1082560ar>

Helga TEIWES, *Kachina Dolls: The Art of Hopi Carvers* (Tucson, The University of Arizona Press, 1991, xvi and 161 p., illus., ISBN 0-8165-1226-4, hardback, ISBN 0-8165-1264-7, paperback).

For centuries, the Hopi of northern Arizona have carved kachina dolls which are representations of their spirit beings or "katsinam". According to Hopi religious beliefs, these carvings were made and distributed to little girls by the spirits at ceremonies held twice a year. Originally they were made only for religious purposes by anonymous carvers, but since the late nineteenth century, kachina dolls have been carved by Hopi men for commercial purposes in response to demands from collectors and tourists. Only recently have a few women carvers emerged.

There are brief introductory chapters on Hopi life and religion, and on the history of kachina doll carving, but the focus of the book is recent trends and contemporary carvers. A direct result of an exhibit at the Arizona State Museum that featured the work of 27 carvers active today, much of the book is devoted to profiles of these artists and their work which is eagerly sought after by collectors. Author Helga Teiwes is the staff photographer for the museum and her colour plates of the kachina dolls are the central showpiece of this attractive book.

As a result of new tools, materials, and techniques, there have been dramatic style changes in the 1980s. The dolls have become ever more realistic, intricate, and complex, showing motion and action. Musculature and anatomical proportions have been perfected. Also emerging within the last few years is a new art form: the kachina wood "sculpture" which is abstract except for the heads and upper bodies. A basic premise of the book is that kachina doll carving has in recent years been transformed from a "craft art" to a "fine art" (xiv). The latter seems to be defined by Teiwes as sculptural realism or naturalism requiring time and skill while the former does not demand these and is abstract and conceptual. Teiwes observes that "what only decades ago was a craft that required little technical skill lately has developed into an art requiring refined and meticulous techniques" (143). Earlier styles of kachina doll carving are measured against the recent trends and found wanting as they only approximate human proportions. The author clearly has little regard for the modern abstract sculptures which she notes require less time to carve and are made by the younger carvers who "need cash quickly" (49).

Complex questions about the appropriation of the art of non-Western people and of the power and influence of the collecting market are not seriously addressed. Tensions within Hopi society about the creation of dolls for sale are hinted at but not fully dealt with. This book will appeal mainly to collectors of

modern kachina dolls, and will be of less interest to those who wish to learn about the cultural context of this art form.

Sarah CARTER
University of Calgary
Calgary, Alberta

Nora MARKS DAUENHAUER & Richard DAUENHAUER (eds.),
Haa Tuwunaagu Yis, for Healing our Spirit, Tlingit Oratory
(Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1990, xxxv + 569
p., ISBN 0-295-96849-4).

Scholars of First Nations literature will welcome a new volume of Tlingit oratory edited by Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer. Entitled *Haa Tuwunaagu Yis, for Healing Our Spirit, Tlingit Oratory*, the work is the second in a series featuring the “classics of Tlingit Oral Literature”. As the first-ever publication of Tlingit oratory recorded in performance, as well as the first collection edited by a Tlingit scholar, *Haa Tuwunaagu Yis* is unique. The editors bring a special combination of skills and interests to this work. Norah Dauenhauer is not only Tlingit herself, but she is also a poet and an anthropologist. Richard Dauenhauer is a former poet laureate of Alaska and a scholar of comparative literature.

The book is divided into three sections. The first, the Dauenhauers’ “Introduction”, provides an extensive social/historical context to the speeches. This is followed by a presentation of the speeches in the Tlingit language with facing English translations. The final section features editors’ comments on the speeches, a glossary containing every word used in the speeches, and individual biographical sketches of each orator. Because of the inclusion of such a broad range of contextual material, readers of all backgrounds and interests will find something of value in this volume.

The editors’ “Notes” are an especially important part of the volume. For example, each line of each speech is numbered so that by flipping to the corresponding number in the Notes, one can obtain additional information pertaining to the speech. Take, for instance, the “Notes to the Welcome Speech by Jennie Thlunaut” (p. 346-354). By consulting the endnotes, one learns that the speech was delivered to Thlunaut’s apprentice weavers on February 26, 1985. Knowing this, the speech’s opening comments are given fuller meaning: