

GALERIE FLAK

8 rue des Beaux-Arts, 75006 Paris
T: +33 1 46 33 77 77 – contact@galerieflak.com
www.galerieflak.com

BRAFA ART FAIR

Galerie Flak booth 92

KATSINA CALLING



A thematic exhibition

«They are the most beautiful things in the world...».

This is how French poet Paul Eluard once described Hopi kachina dolls to his wife
(*Letters to Gala, 1924-1948, Editions Gallimard p. 23*)

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KATSINA CALLING (L'APPEL DES KACHINAS) **Hopi ritual figures of Arizona** **Ancient Arts of North America – BRAFA 2024 booth 92**

For hundreds of years, atop the mesas of Arizona, masked and costumed dancers have gathered week after week on the plaza - the large rectangular central square of the Hopi village - to pray for rain and germination.

They represent Kachina spirits or "katsina" (plural katsinam), a term signifying both wooden figurine, masked dancer, and deity.

Objects of tradition and of education, tools to remember and works of art in their own right, katsina dolls give vibrant testimony to the traditions and secret beliefs of Native Americans of the Southwest.

Nearly 450 different katsina spirits can be identified in the Hopi pantheon, each characterized by specific colors, symbols, and elements of costume that allow for precise identification.

Celebrations of fauna and flora, prayers for fertility and favorable weather, katsinam also mirror the diversity of human behaviors with figures of warriors, priests, guardians of peace, or masters of disorder. The expansive realm of Katsinam resonates with the timeless concerns shared by all human societies throughout the ages.

Since the early 20th century, illustrious predecessors such as the Surrealists around André Breton or Max Ernst, as well as Claude Lévi-Strauss, André Malraux, or Jacques Lacan, have all fallen under the spell of these polychrome wooden dolls. In turn, these pioneers have passed on their passion to entire generations of collectors. Thus, katsinam have remained, since their discovery over a hundred years ago, an endless source of dreams, poetry, and inspiration.

20 years in the making, this exhibition entitled "Katsina Calling" presents an exceptional collection of several dozen antique Katsina dolls dating from the 1880s to the 1930s.

These sculptures will be exhibited by Galerie Flak at BRAFA in January 2024. A eponymous book, with essays from leading art historians, ethnologists, and katsina dolls collectors, will be published on this occasion.

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Shalako Maiden

Shalako Mana Katsina doll

Hopi, Arizona

Carved cottonwood, natural pigments

Prior to 1900

Height: 40 cm

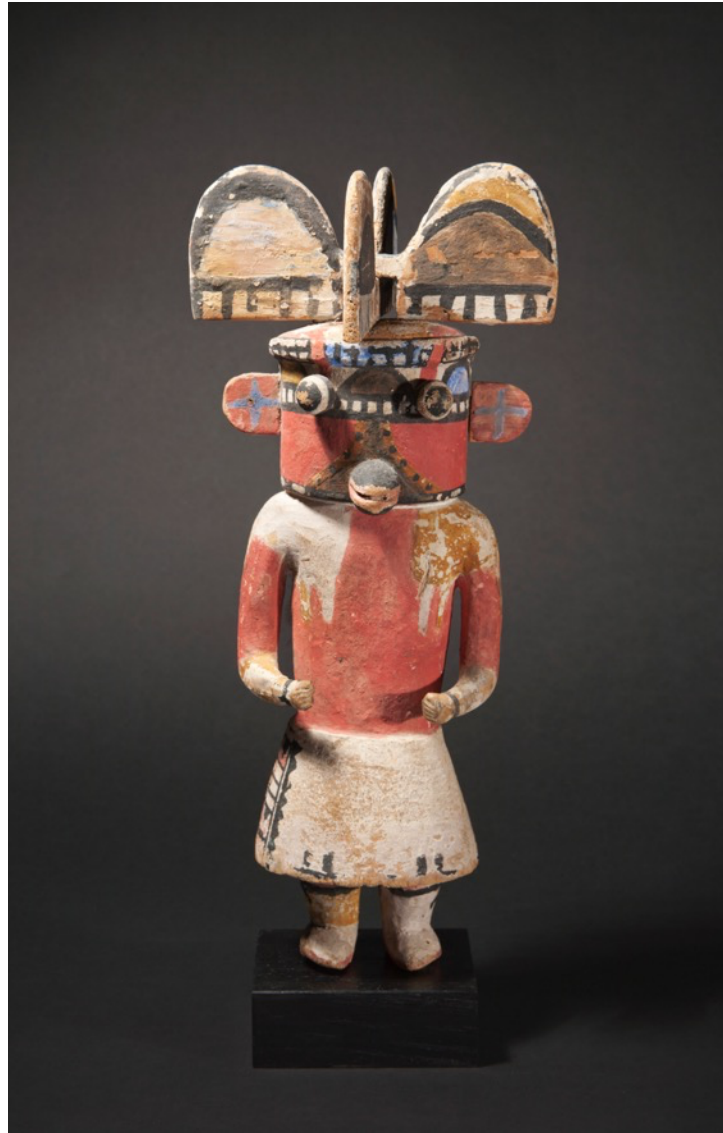
Ex collection Robert Bayuk, Thousand Oaks, Californie

Ex collection Galerie Flak, Paris

Ex private collection France, acquired above in 2013

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Cross Crown, Four-Corner Cloud
Nahoile-chiwakopachoki Katsina doll
Hopi, Arizona

Carved cottonwood, natural pigments

Circa 1910s or earlier

Height: 32 cm

Ex collection George Everett Shaw, Colorado

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Butterfly Maiden figure

Poli Mana Katsina

Hopi, Arizona

Carved cottonwood, natural pigments

Prior to 1900

Height : 55 cm - Width : 43 cm

Provenance

Ex collection Robert Brady (1928-1986)

Ex collection The Robert Brady Museum Foundation, Cuernavaca, Mexico

Ex collection Donald Ellis, New York & Dundas, Canada, inv. S4003

This Hopi doll represents the goddess of maize. In the crenelated frame around the head, you'll see the clouds over the mountains; in the small chequerboard at the centre of the forehead, the ear of maize; and around the mouth, the rainbow [...]. Is this not poetry as we continue to hear it?

André Breton, *Le Littéraire*, 1946

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Moon Kachina

Muyao Katsina doll

Hopi, Arizona

Carved cottonwood, natural pigments

Circa 1910-1920

Height: 25 cm

Ex collection Toby Herbst, Santa Fe

Ex collection Galerie Flak, Paris

Ex private collection, Nice, France, acquired above in 2014

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Eagle or Red-Hawk Falcon
Kwahu / Palakwayo Katsina doll

Hopi, Arizona

Circa 1890s

Height: 24 cm

Ex private collection, Scottsdale, Arizona

Ex collection Toby Herbst, New Mexico

Ex private collection, Santa Fe

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Snake Priest figure

Chusona Dancer

Hopi, Arizona

Carved cottonwood root, leather, natural pigments

Height : 26.4 cm

Circa 1890-1900

Ex collection Alan Kessler, Santa Fe

Ex Sotheby's New York, December 1997, lot 24

Ex collection Galerie Flak, Paris

Ex private collection France, acquired from above in 2013