

Chapter 1 : The enchanted burro

*The Enchanted Burro THE ENCHANTED BURRO STORIES of NEW MEXICO and SOUTH AMERICA gCHARLES ELUMMIS FELIPE'S SUGARING-OFF (Peru) 99 ANDRES, THE ARRIERO (Bolivia)*

What Is Folk Art? This book would not have been possible without his guidance. Also, very special thanks to Mr. Imagination for taking the time to share his art and ideas with me. His dedication to educating kids about art is inspiring. Thanks to Beverly Finster and Hildegard Bachert for taking the time to talk with me. Thanks to Frank Iragqi and Elina Leonova for taking some excellent photographs. Thanks to Peter Prommersberger for sharing his art works. Thanks to Willy Heilmann for taking me to the Ivory Museum in Erbach and sharing his collection with me. Also thanks to the following people who helped me in the course of my research: Thanks to the Windsor Historical Society in Connecticut for providing some needed information. Thanks also to my wife, Caren, for her editorial skills, and to Caren, Matthew, and Elizabeth for their patience and understanding. Acknowledgments vi Foreword by William C. Over the past two decades, the number of art and antiques enthusiasts has increased exponentially. Today, millions of Americans create or collect folk art. Writers have been quick to capitalize on this phenomenon, turning out hundreds of books designed to educate the enthusiast. Up to now, however, these texts have been directed solely to the adult market. No one has thought to provide basic information for children and young adults, despite the fact that they represent the next generation. Folk art is readily understood by all. Children who are naturally drawn to painting and sculpture have an affinity for folk expression. After all, it relates directly to life. The child, with enthusiasm and an open mind, can readily accept and appreciate a carved wooden doll or a toy house constructed of Popsicle sticks. Apparent crudeness in construction and failure to follow the accepted canons of academic art, which might turn off a sophisticated adult, will be seen by the youthful enthusiast as signs of playfulness and artistic vigor. In fact, folk art, which springs from the most innate needs and nature of humankind, is the perfect field through which to introduce youth to the world of art and antiques. Panchyk, moreover, has combined sound introductions to a variety of folk art fields with interesting hands-on projects that allow the reader to experience and explore the same creative feelings that animate the folk artist. In combination, text and projects provide an innovative introduction to folk art that seems guaranteed to produce a new generation of enthusiastic folk art and antique lovers. Untitled by Bill Traylor, circa When a little baby looks at lots of colors, they can relate. Kids start really young. Kids like to make dots and lines. Lots of kids are self-taught from early on. Lots of kids are actually geniuses. Art has to be a very natural thing. Ministry runs in my family. My great-great aunt told me I was going to be a minister. But it turned out I would be a minister of art. I have been working with kids and teenagers and parents for many, many years, and to this day. I have taught thousands and thousands and thousands of kids. Lots of kids have told me once they get older they want to be an artist. I run into some of the ones I taught who are adults and have kids of their own. They would say they still have their art pieces they made. Lots of artists have this Foreword viii wonderful talent but are afraid to share it because someone might steal their ideas. But I am happy if the kids I teach might go back to their neighborhoods and teach others. First, before doing my workshop, I actually show them what I made, and then I allow them to hold some of my work, like a paintbrush. I let them wear my bottle cap hat, and they remember that. Kids go to a museum and they are not allowed to touch anything. You have to put faith and trust in kids. I start the workshop by telling kids that I was walking down the street to the store and I heard a sound go like: When I give them a piece of sandstone, I would tell them to look into that stone and carve what they see, and if they make a wrong line, they can always by Mr. Imagination erase that and start over. When making art, you cannot make a mistake. Then I give them glue and art paper so they could use that sand from their carving to do sand paintings by using their imagination. Art helps them to work together as a team and learn how to solve a problem. I use a wire hanger, modeling clay, and bottle caps to make a snake. One time there was a little girl. I had flattened out a bunch of caps. She got scissors and cut a diamond shape out of the cap. I liked her idea. She actually taught me something. For many, many years I have been receiving boxes and boxes and boxes of letters from kids, telling me what a wonderful time they had making art. They write

and thank me for showing them how to turn trash into treasures. It allowed them to use their imagination. At the end of each workshop that I have done, everyone leaves with a smile. When I do workshops with kids, it allows them to not just make art, but it allows them to be able to work together like a team, a skill they will need later in life. I like the fact that the activities in this book can also be done by kids working together. Folk art is not possible without imagination. I hope that everyone reading this book will open up their mind and explore their own imagination. He saws and carves wood into cars, trains, and airplanes, then paints and assembles the parts to make these whirligigs, as they are called. For a couple of hours after lunch, he sits at his roadside stand selling these wind toys to passing motorists. To him it is just a fun hobby, a way to pass the time. The old man may not even realize it, but he is a folk artist. Every Saturday evening, the man puts out a cardboard box of his scraps for the garbage collector to take, but the garbage collector rarely gets a chance to pick them up. Every Sunday morning, a middle-aged woman from down the road rides her bicycle up to the curb. She loads her knapsack with all the scraps. Sometimes the old man sees her and waves. When the woman gets home, she glues the scraps of wood and metal together to make collages. She does not realize it either, but she is also a folk artist. Folk art is all about taking something ordinary and making it extraordinary. The old man uses some wood and his imagination to make colorful toys. The woman recycles his garbage to make more artworks. If there is one common theme that runs throughout the many different types of folk art that appear in this book, it is that of ordinary people making something out of nothing. From some ordinarily useless scraps of fabric, a woman creates a beautiful quilt. From a plain and simple chair, a folk artist makes a decorated masterpiece. From a shapeless hunk of wood, a duck decoy is carved. A folk artist takes ordinary handwriting and turns it into elegant, flowing calligraphy; takes old fence posts and creates an American flag; takes bottle caps and makes a sculpture. American folk art developed from the traditions of immigrants coming from all around the world. Folk art celebrates the colorful diversity that is inside each of us, our multicultural heritage passed down over the centuries, and our natural-born ability to create something beautiful. In this book you will read about many different types of folk art that have captured the imagination of millions of people around America and across the globe. Because there are so many different types of folk art, it was not an easy task. First I explain the origins of folk art in chapter 1. Then I go into different categories of folk art. Though it was impossible to include everything in one book, I have tried to cover all the major types of folk art. When possible, I have provided exact dates of the art shown in the illustrations, but most folk art is anonymous and undated, so many of the dates given in this book are educated guesses. The word *circa*, which means approximately, is used to indicate that the exact date of a piece of art is not known. I hope that you enjoy your journey into the world of folk art as much as I have enjoyed writing the book. Our early ancestors created small gray stone sculptures using only basic tools. As time passed, art became more colorful and sophisticated. Ice Age people, who lived 15,000 years ago, decorated the walls of their cave homes. Beginning around 8,000 to 6,000 b.c.

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The enchanted burro (New Mexico)--The mummy-miner (Peru)--A boy of the Andes (Pe.*

They are like human figures, excellently sculptured; and the strangest thing about them is that they are made of alternate zones of gold and silver from feet to head, so that they remind one of that great image we read of in Revelations. That is the nearest Faquito ever came to finding the Pez Grande-and quite near enough for one poor boy. And that is what took my breath away when I had wakened and hauled up with my reata the little, ragged cholo I accidentally spied in the trap where he had cried himself to sleep over something hugged in his arms. Taita Dios-God our Father-sends us friends we know not. For the owl brought me here and showed me the place, so that now we are very rich. And even so, I could have died there without the help of you. So I think your grace may be even as wise as the owl, which knows where is the Pez Grande. There was enough else to look at. The overpowering walls of the mountains on both sides seemed to turn the eyes, even as they turned the foaming Rimac, into a channel from which there was no escape. Up at the end of the cleft was such a sight as no man can long hold his eyes from - the black peak of Chin-chan, bent down with its load of eternal winter. There is some- thing awful about the snow that never melts the great blank fields, the wrinkled glaciers, the savage ice cornices, the black rocks that peer out hopelessly here and there. It is so different from the friendly white we know and welcome for its sleigh rides and coastings, its snow men and snow- ballings. It was far up the summit of the Peruvian cordillera, at the very foot of the last wild peaks that stand 18, feet in the sky. Where the panting mules trudged, 3, feet below the peaks, was low, green herb- age; and feet lower yet the little tor- rent, white as its mother snows, roared and chuckled alternately to the uneven wind. But up yonder all was so white and still; their eyes kept lifting up to it, forgetful of the dangerous trail -the mules could take care of that. They, poor brutes, seemed ill at ease. They breathed in short, loud gasps; and every forty feet or so they stopped and rested for a few moments, un- mindful of the spur. Then, when they were ready, they started up again of their own accord, sighing heavily. They would not last much longer, at this rate. It spoils even this scenery for me, to see the suffering of the mules. The Professor watched him without a word, but with an expression half quizzical, half grave. After a hundred yards he spoke: I never saw you heavy-footed before. But I cannot seem to breathe well. Now get on your mule. But courage is a dangerous thing unless you mix it with brains. You must learn that there are some things pluck can- not overcome-and this is one of them. Mount, then I" Barton obeyed with rather an ill grace, and promptly got angrier with himself at realizing what a relief it was to be perched again in the ridiculously comfortable Peru- vian saddle. He could not get over a feel- ing of shame that the muscles which had borne the cruelest tests of the frontier should now have "played the baby," as he put it; and he rode on somewhat sulkily. It was here that Ramon Ynga stumbled into their lives; and, as I have said, all by the doing of the llamas. As the travelers rounded a sharp turn in the trail the mules stopped suddenly almost face to face with the two strangest animals that Barton had ever seen. But their necks were the worst - tall and ungainly as stovepipes covered with hair. And such heads I They were disproportionately small and ludicrously narrow, with pointed ears, ma- lignant little faces, and lips wickedly drawn back. What on earth are they? In fact, if we had had any daylight in Casapalca you would have noticed many hundreds of them; for they bring all the ore to the stamp mills, and do most of the freighting besides. Hil Get out of the way, you standing grievances! But the llamas stood stolidly, blocking the trail. He drummed his spurs against his mule; whereat the animal took two steps forward and stopped, bracing back, un- mindful of the rowels. The llamas did not take a step. Only they seemed to drop their bodies a little, upon those long legs. On the right, the great, dark slope ran up to the very clouds; on the left, one A Boy of the Andes. Sometimes they even shove each other off the cliff. At this un- pleasant salutation he retreated hastily. But I wish they would get out of the way we have no time to spare. A figure hardly less remarkable than the camels slid down from the overhanging hillside, and stood in the path, looking at the startled travelers. It was a dwarfish creature, not four feet tall, with a large, round head, a broad, strong body, and very 50 A Boy of the Andes. A boy what in the world was he doing on that impossible slope? What a goat

he must be! God give you good day, sirs," answered the lad gravely, in thick Spanish. Ordinarily they would have obeyed; but the aggressive manner of Barton had roused their obstinacy, and they did not budge. The boy put his shoulder to the ribs of one, and heaved hard, but the brute stood its ground. Then he sat down on a boulder that jutted from the bank, settling himself as if for a long rest, and threw a mild and measured pebble at each llama. They turned their heads a little and wrinkled their disagreeable noses. He waited a moment and then pitched two more pebbles-which had the same effect. So he sat, slowly and mechanically tossing his harmless missiles upon the dense hair of his charges. Evidently he A Boy of the Andes. They sat quietly in their saddles, watching the droll scene. It was very ridiculous to need deliverance from two stupid beasts, and to get it from such an owlish little tatterdemalion. His ragged clothing was of very thick, coarse cloth; and upon his feet were the clumsy yanquis, or rawhide sandals of mountain Peru, and he wore thick stockings rising to his knees. Over his trousers was a curious garment, half apron and half leggings; and oversleeves of the same material, hung with a cord about his neck, came up over the elbows of his coat. These two garments were knit in very strange patterns, amid which were square, brown llamas wandering up and down a gray background. Around his waist was a woven belt, now very old, but of beautiful colors and workmanship. And his face-what a brown, round riddle! And the other I do not know. I have been here a long time -ever since they built the mill at Casapalca. And where do you live? They seem to think nothing of the eternal clambering up and down. Suddenly the brown llama turned with a snort of disgust, and strode off up the trail. The white one hesitated a moment, snorted, and followed. No, the boy is quite right. It is another case wherein you must not try to be smarter than nature. The llama is the stubbornest brute alive-a mule is vacillating compared to him. If you put a pound too much on his load, he will lie down, and you might beat him to death or build a fire beside him, but he would not get up. Nobody but a Peruvian A Boy of the Andes. Hurt the animal, and he only grows more sullen; but the pebbles merely tease him until he can bear it no longer. And really he repays patience; for he is the only animal that can work effectively at these altitudes, where horses and mules are practically useless. He liked these pale men; and a dim little wish to please them warmed in his heart. That big young man--why, he was taller than any Serrano in the cordillera! But the other man, with a little gray above his ears, who only looked at him so, and spoke as if he knew The Peruvian silver dollar. Pronounced soul 54 A Boy of the Andes. We are going to climb the Chinchan, to look at the ice cornices and to measure them. If a Serrano had said it, every one would know he was crazy. Or if it were the young man--well, what could you expect of one who would give away a whole sol? But this one-whatever he did, it must be right. He certainly was not crazy. Still- But the Soroche, your Excellency," ventured the boy. For all strangers have it; and many die, even in crossing the slope. Only we who were born here can go so high. Besides, we are both very strong. Sometimes the sick cross in safety, and those who are very large and A Boy of the Andes. But all do not fall victims, and we must brave it. For I know these hills very well, and perhaps I could help. As for the llamas, my brother Sancho comes even yonder, and he will herd them. It would be the death of him. They had camped for the night in a deserted hovel at the head of the valley; and there the mules could be seen grazing, pulling as far down hill as their ropes would allow. The hut was not a mile behind; but the travelers had been ever since daylight coming thus far. By noon they were at the foot of the last ridge, in a great rounding bay flanked by two spurs of the upper peak. The curving rim far overhead was a savage cliff of eternal ice-a cliff of 1, feet sheer. At the top a great white brow projected many yards, overhanging the bluish precipice.

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