**FIVE CONTINENTS - an exhibition of a heritage**

Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas, both north and south, are the continents referred to in the title of the new exhibition which opened Sunday, November 15, at the International Folk Art Museum of the Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe. An extensive collection acquired in recent years by the Museum demonstrates the sources of the unique cultural heritage of Spanish New Mexico. The treasure hunt leads us three thousand years back in time, and many more miles than that of travel, to the roots of Spanish influence and its cultural dispersion around the world.

The sources are not only Spain, but extend through that country, back in time and distance to ancient Phoenicia, Greece, Rome, the Arab world, Africa, the Orient, France, Flanders, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. From Spain it moved out to the New World, the Philippines, back to Africa and Asia, and northward. (The name of Ireland's Eamon de Valera is of Spanish derivation.)

The Museum's current exhibition explores and proves the thesis with objects gathered from all over the world. A pair of earrings made in New Mexico during the 19th century shows a traditional design that traces its lineage back to ancient Phoenicia. A crucifix, also of local origin, reflects a style similar to that used in Chinese ivory carvings. Phillipine santos show the classical style of 18th century Spain. A Tibetan charm box and a fetish from Tanganyika are threads connecting the wide-spread sources of influence...
that gathered in the Iberian Peninsula before dissemination to far-flung colonies throughout the world. Spanish colonial New Mexico is well-represented. Spain and Portugal, Mexico and Bolivia, Morocco and Ghana are predictably represented by everything from lowly household objects like mortar and pestles to fancy majolica, as well as riding paraphernalia such as stirrups, clothing, furniture, bultos and retablos. But surprisingly, so is Finland represented: the prevalence of certain designs is demonstrated by a Finnish wooden box, intricately decorated with straw.

A pair of full-scale replica kitchens, one from Spain and the other from New Mexico (adobe-plastered, of course), containing typical objects of their time and place, demonstrates by their contents the theme of the exhibition. The kitchens, incidentally, were more than the strictly departmentalized food-preparing centers of our modern homes: they were centers around which all household activities revolved, and these examples contain such “un-kitchenly” items as a military lance and a buffalo-hunter’s spear. The mannequins in the Spanish kitchen are dressed as though preparing to leave the house for a fiesta. The New Mexico kitchen contains a type of fireplace prevalent since at least the 13th century, and still used by the Hopi Indians. FIVE CONTINENTS was designed by the Museum’s Curator In Charge of Exhibitions, Joseph Haydock.

The exhibition also emphasizes the diversity of the Museum’s collections. Its curators traveled far to amass the hundreds of items in the show; so did the many generous donors whose gifts to the Museum have added immeasurably to the quality and value of its collections, and therefore, through its exhibitions such as this one, and its research facilities, to the benefit of the public.

Dr. Delmar Koib, the Museum of New Mexico’s Acting Director, pointed out that the present aim of the International Folk Art Museum is to collect objects to reflect the times and areas which combined to produce the background for New Mexico’s distinctive style, and also to collect objects from other more or less unrelated societies, which show that man invents or designs similar things, no matter where he may live, when he arrives at a given cultural level.

This handsomely mounted exhibition will remain on view through September 6, 1965.
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