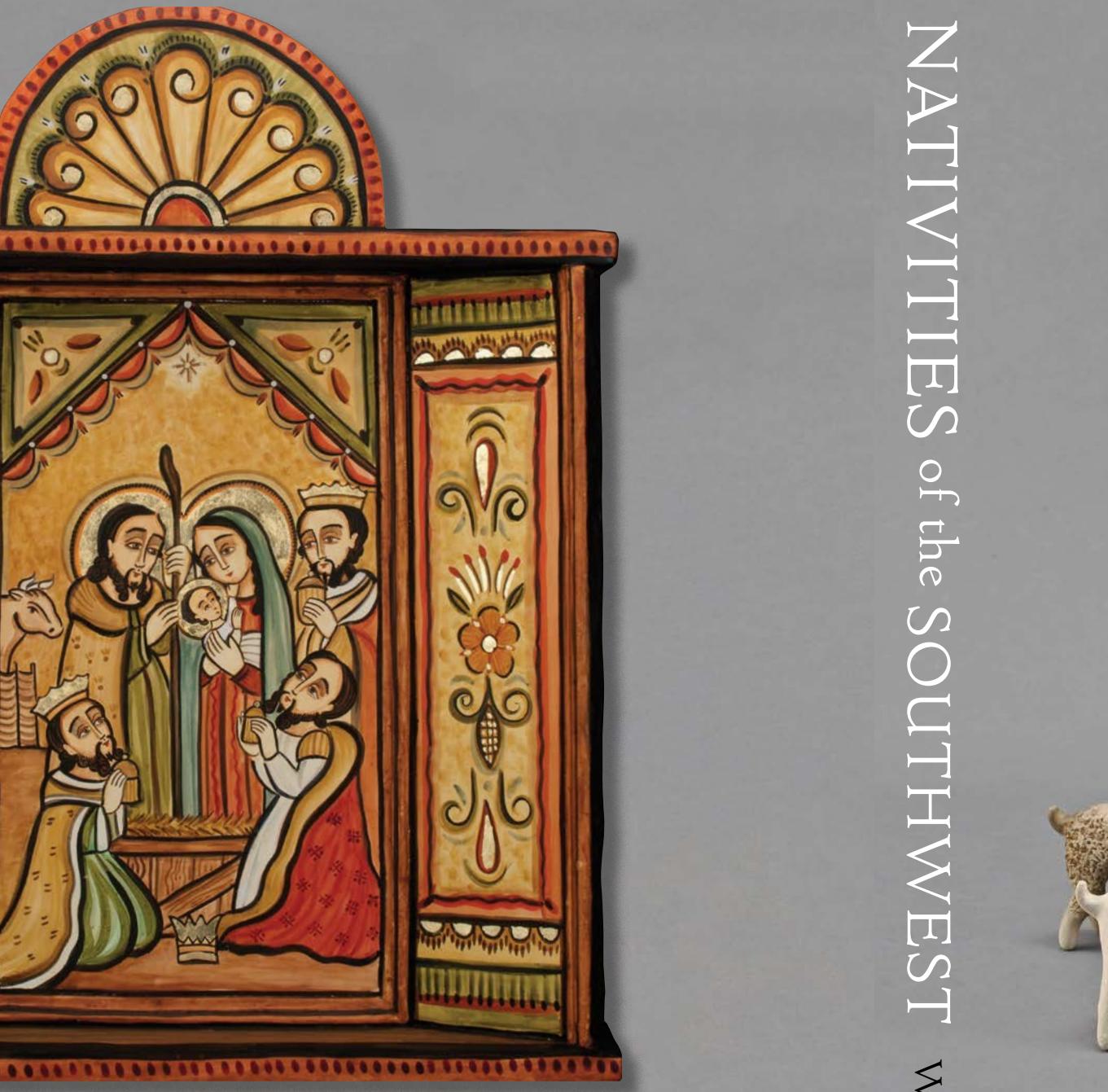


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SUSAN TOPP WEBER has owned and operated Susan's Christmas Shop in Santa Fe, New Mexico, for more than thirty-five years. She has a prized collection of nativities herself, which began with a gift in 1965, and has sold nativities in her shop since 1978. She is the author of *Christmas in Santa Fe* and *Nativities of the World*.

FRONT COVER: Photograph by Randy Mace
BACK COVER: Photograph by Blair Clark
FRONT FLAP: Photograph by Randy Mace
BACK FLAP: Photograph by Blair Clark
JACKET DESIGN by Melissa Dymock



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GIBBS
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Susan Topp Weber
FOREWORD BY TOMIE DEPAOLA

NATIVITIES
of the
SOUTHWEST



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of the
SOUTHWEST

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THIS BOOK FEATURES A COLLECTION OF photos of one-of-a-kind nativities from the American Southwest, including many made by native Pueblo, Navajo, and Tohono O'odham artists and artisans, as well as others based in the traditions of the other two dominant cultures of the Southwest: Spanish and Anglo. The nativities feature a wide range of artistic expression, all grounded in the unique backgrounds and cultures of the Southwest, and are made from both traditional and non-traditional materials, including pottery, tin, sandstone, corn, straw, beads, antlers, embroidery, and handwoven rugs made with homespun wool. Many of the nativities shown herein have never before appeared in print.

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CHACO CANYON NATIVITY BY CHRIS THOMAS
(2005)

6 in. (15 cm.) tall

Collection of Jane Dillard, Cortez, Colorado

PHOTOGRAPH BY BLAIR CLARK

This nativity is made entirely of wood, but Chris was able to show the distinctive stone masonry style of the ancestral pueblo ruins at Chaco Canyon in western New Mexico. The figures inside the frame wear old-style Pueblo clothing. The man's kilt shows traditional embroidery and the woman's dress is a black *manta* fastened at one shoulder.



JEMEZ PUEBLO

Jemez Pueblo is known for pottery and sculpture. There are many nativity makers here, perhaps because for as long as anyone remembers this pueblo has had a live nativity called Bethlehem during the Christmas season. Several famous sculptors are from Jemez Pueblo. These include Estella Loretto, who made the statue of Kateri Tekakwitha in front of the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi in Santa Fe, and Cliff Fragua, who made the marble statue of Popé in the National Statuary Hall Collection in Washington, D.C.

Jemez Pueblo is unique because it has two feast days. One is August 2, and is associated with Pecos Pueblo. A larger feast day is November 12, the same day as Tesuque Pueblo's feast day. A large street market occurs on both feast days.

POTTERY NATIVITY SET INSIDE A KIVA BY SANTANA SEONIA (1993)

The stable is 4 in. (10 cm.)

Collection of Sylvia Hughes, Albuquerque, New Mexico

PHOTOGRAPH BY BLAIR CLARK

This pottery nativity by Santana Seonia is set inside a Pueblo kiva. Kivas are the ceremonial chambers of the pueblos, and they are usually round. Kivas are entered from the top by climbing down a ladder. The ladder is included here, but since the front of the kiva is cut away, it serves well as a "stable" for the nativity scene. The wise men bring their Pueblo-style gifts, curious animals draw near, and an angel presides over everyone from the roof of the kiva.

Santana Seonia comes from the talented Toledo family of Jemez Pueblo, and several of her siblings and children also make nativities.

POTTERY NATIVITY WITH ANIMALS BY LAURA
FRAGUA-COTA (2000)

The base is 8 in. (20 cm.) across

Collection of Mary Ann Adams, Albuquerque, New Mexico

PHOTOGRAPH BY BLAIR CLARK

This unusual Jemez pottery nativity is full of symbols. Baby Jesus is laying on a cross set in a starry night sky. Kiva step designs are repeated on the bowl that serves as a base. The turtle refers to Pueblo origin myths, and tales of the emergence of ancestors from worlds below through a small hole in the bottom of the kiva called a *sipapu*. The snake symbolizes the devil, because evil is always present in life. The bear and bird no doubt both also have symbolic meanings known to the artist as she created this unique nativity. Mary and Joseph are stylized pottery figures, with Joseph pointing to the baby on the cross.

