

History on birchbark - the art of Tomah Joseph, Passamaquoddy : an exhibition at the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Brown University, Bristol, Rhode Island, March 7 through August 31, 1993

Robert Abbe Museum - History on Birchbark



Description: -

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Lynn, Mass. -- Biography. [from old catalog]

Lynn, Mass. -- History. [from old catalog]

Picture-writing, Indian -- Exhibitions

Paper birch -- Art -- Exhibitions

Passamaquoddy Indians -- Art -- Exhibitions

Joseph, Tomah -- ExhibitionsHistory on birchbark - the art of Tomah

Joseph, Passamaquoddy : an exhibition at the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Brown University, Bristol, Rhode Island, March 7 through August 31, 1993

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History on Birchbark

He did so by etching birch-bark artwork to sell as souvenirs to the tourists who summered along the coast of Maine, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. The style of traditional New England incised birchbark art was dramatically changed by Tomah Joseph's introduction of figurative and pictorial themes into an abstract, floral tradition. If the story stopped here, this would simply be a tale of one culture eclipsing another.

HISTORY ON BIRCHBARK The Art of Tomah Joseph, Passamaquoddy

HISTORY ON BIRCHBARK The Art of Tomah Joseph, Passamaquoddy Joan A. In this 20 page catalog with 50 black and white photos, author Joan Lester, Curator of Native American Collections at the Children's Museum Boston, examines Tomah Joseph's life and his art.

Passamaquoddy Life Preserved in Birch Bark

Tomah Joseph was born in 1837 and lived for most of his life on the Peter Dana Point Indian reservation near Princeton, Maine. Tomah Joseph signed this box on one side. With the encroachment of whites onto Indian lands, he could no longer sustain a life solely through Passamaquoddy ways.

Tomah Joseph, birchbark box

Passamaquoddy peoples long used birchbark to make durable and waterproof household objects. Utilizing traditional methods, he painstakingly re-created in birch bark common household objects found in most Victorian homes of the day: wastepaper baskets, log carriers, coat racks, picture frames, letter holders, handkerchief boxes, umbrella stands, tabletops, and picnic baskets, as well as native forms such as canoes, paddles,

mocucks covered buckets , and snowshoes.

Tomah Joseph, birchbark box

Like so many other stories of Native Americans, his is one in which cultural survival and economic necessity are inextricably and tragically linked.

History on Birchbark

On this birchbark box, the Passamaquoddy culture hero Glooscap, the Great Hare, sits smoking a pipe. Such is the story of Tomah Joseph, a Passamaquoddy Indian artist who lived in eastern Maine during the mid- to late 19th and early 20th centuries. But Joseph, knowing that the ways of old would soon be gone, sought to create a record of Passamaquoddy life while at the same time earning a living.

Passamaquoddy Life Preserved in Birch Bark

Like all signatures, it is unique and personal and binding. As is typically the case, the design is drawn by scratching away the outer, darker surface of the bark, to reveal a lighter layer of bark underneath. Catherine Riedel represents Skinner Auctioneers and Appraisers of Boston.

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