

PRECIOUS CARGO

CALIFORNIA INDIAN CRADLE BASKETS
AND CHILDBIRTH TRADITIONS



Suzie and Sadie McGowan (Mono Lake Paiute).
Yosemite Valley, c.1901. Photograph by J.T. Boysen.
Yosemite Museum, Yosemite National Park.

The groundbreaking exhibition “Precious Cargo: California Indian Cradle Baskets and Childbirth Traditions” presents cradle baskets in their cultural context through direct collaboration with contemporary California Indian weavers. “Precious Cargo” examines traditional beliefs and practices concerning childbirth and the use of cradle baskets, both historically and contemporarily, among Pomo and Western Mono peoples, with additional material from 28 other tribal regions throughout the state.

Thirty California Indian weavers were commissioned by the Marin Museum of the American Indian to create cradle baskets characteristic of their region for inclusion in the exhibition. “Precious Cargo” also includes an array of photographic images and excerpts from interviews with weavers. A short documentary video, which was developed as part of the project, features interviews with California Indian weavers and elders. This documentary was directed by PBS award-winning filmmaker Terry Strauss and is narrated by actor Peter Coyote.

The “Precious Cargo” exhibition, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, documents what cradle baskets mean to contemporary California Indian peoples, reflecting their unique view of the world and their understanding of the meaning of the objects on display.

Exhibition Information

The “Precious Cargo: California Indian Cradle Baskets and Childbirth Traditions” exhibition includes:

- ◆ 54 historic and contemporary cradle baskets and artifacts (approximately 1,000 square feet)
- ◆ “Precious Cargo,” 15-minute documentary video
- ◆ Exhibition press kit
- ◆ Education materials
- ◆ Catalog available through Heyday Books

Rental Fee: \$5,000 + shipping for an 8-week booking

Security: High



California
Exhibition
Resources
Alliance

For more information, contact:

Lisa Eriksen, Executive Director
4365 Terrabella Way
Oakland, California 94619

Phone 510. 336. 7062

Fax 510. 336. 1613

E-Mail ceraexhibits@earthlink.net

Web www.ceraexhibits.org