

CRAZY AL'S TIKI CORNER



I know you've been anxiously awaiting Part Two of the story of Tiki #13, Keeper of the Charm. So, here we go ...



The Tiki Buddha lightswitch cover—a first attempt at mixing Polynesian art concepts with other cultures, would inspire the feet of many Tikis to come.



The Tiki No. 13 mug—a limited edition, hand painted testimony that Tiki mugs can be made with an exceptional level of detail.

It was clear to me after meeting many other Tiki fans that Tiki necklaces were prized possessions. Collectors and patrons such as Otto von Stroheim helped provoke the creation of my first Bone Productions products - Tiki necklaces. I wanted to create a Tiki that would be the overseer of Tiki necklaces past and present. Tiki #13 would become Keeper of the Charm. For the body, I played off another Bone Productions item I had designed, a Tiki Budda (respectfully misspelled) light switch cover. This was my first attempt at "Tiki cross-Polynesation" (mixing Polynesian art concepts with other cultures). With Tiki #13 I wanted to continue to explore the sculpture styles of the East. My favorite sculpted images are of the Hindu god Genish (Ganesh), the elephant-headed son of Shiva seen in a Buddha seated position. I knew Keeper of the Charm would have to have the regal and holy attributes of the Hindu sculptures I so admired. This was the first time I would attempt this level of detail in palm wood. I was elated that the log chosen with the cool crown was nice, dense wood. It was able to carry the very intricate detail as I sculpted into the hands. I decided to keep the cartoony, two-dimensional feet of my Tiki Budda design, as they lent themselves to the exaggerated angles of the Hindu style. This style of feet would find its way onto Tikis #45 and #55, inspiring a Tiki with hairy feet and one with the Hang Ten® logo. The "hair," found on the graphic mouth outline of Tiki #13, was a new development in this piece as well. The bark skin around the mouth area was too thin to carve tapa designs into, so I removed it to reveal the layer underneath. This layer is full of hairy fibers that create a fantastic texture. Once again thanks to good ol' Mother Nature, I didn't have to sculpt this detail. This "beard" technique was used on Tikis # 27, 45, 51, 52, 53, 55, and 107 (Tiki#107 has "Budda" feet as well).

The Tiki charm that was to be the center of attention of the Budda body was a bit of a challenge. I wanted the charm to dangle freely on a cord, within the cupped hands I sculpted. But the cavity was too small to hold one of the necklaces I had carved. There was little time before this sculpture's debut in the Copro/Nason Tiki Art show of October 1998 to find the right size vintage charm. I had seen a perfect, tiny, silver Hawaiian Tiki earring somewhere. Unfortunately, Tiki products were



A detail of the original Tiki No. 13, the Tiki chosen to symbolize and promote Bone productions.

scarce in '98 and the Internet was not yet ubiquitous; I didn't find this perfect earring until much later while on a trip to Hawaii. I did find another tiny silver charm, in a basic humanoid shape similar to a Rarotongan design. I used this, as it seemed quite appropriate to depict a generic primitive deity.

All in all, I could not have been more satisfied with the end result for Keeper of the Charm. It would become the Tiki I would choose to symbolize my style and promote Bone Productions. In 2001 the head of Tiki #13 was one of three of my first mug designs for Tiki Farm. In 2003 I had my friend Ruben Huante render two stickers incorporating Tiki #13. In 2004 I launched my first mug in the CrazyAL Tiki Gallery Collection. Using Tiki #13, I sculpted an exact likeness as a grand exper-



the 'beard' tech. originated with Tiki No.13, and found its way onto Tiki No. 51, above.



iment. I wanted to see if Tiki mugs could be made with the level of detail that I desired in a product with my name on it. Tiki Farm produced this first release of mugs. Out of a run of 250, more than 150 had fantastic detail!! I would use this mug as the first to be custom painted and glazed, replicating the dramatic colors of the original sculpture. I painted 54 custom Tiki #13 mugs and exhausted the Tiki Farm molds. In the winter of 2007, a brand new Tiki #13 mug was released in very limited numbers with all the detail of the original sculpture.

In 2005 I imported my first hardwood carvings from the Philippines. Limited runs of Tiki #13 were made 14 inches high, 24 inches high, with even a few 4-foot high. Call me "Crazy," but I, myself, here in the U.S., carved and installed the little dangling Tiki necklaces as well as the seashell teeth of Tiki #13. Now I had a use for the unused stockpiles of small teeth I'd collected years before. With 16 teeth each, there were 384 choppers on the record as being installed. Not all the carvings from the Philippines got teeth installations. Not all I had ordered were made. I stopped the order unfulfilled due to quality control issues ... so I thought. That's right, a few Tiki #13s have appeared as unauthorized copies. Possibly reworked rejects, these unauthorized copies turned up with better detail than many of the ones I received! And my name was even carved in the back! Buyer beware, these illegitimate copies will not have the series number on them such as #13-1 or #13-13, nor will they have teeth or the tiny, dangling, carved Tiki charm on a string.

I tried my luck one more time with importing, this time from Indonesia. Once more it would be seen if carvers could imitate what Mother Nature had mostly done for me. The Indonesians have done great work, as well they should. Strangely enough the Eastern sculptors I sought to emulate in 1998 now have sculpted my Budda Tikis #45 and #55. Having ordered wall masks of Tiki #13 with bare gums from these carvers, I've found myself with more work to be had with another Tiki in the corner ... with teeth.

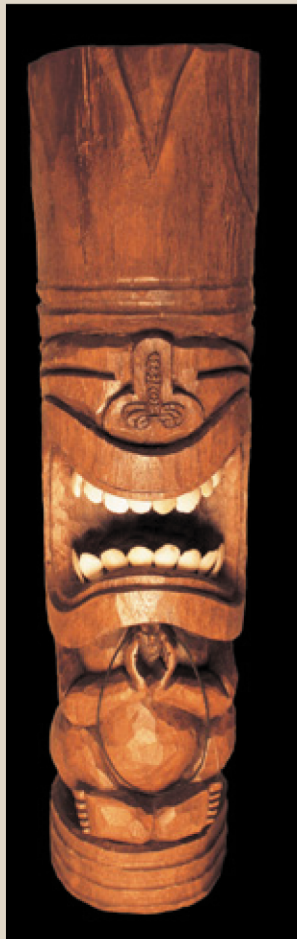
Collectable Tiki#13 mugs and imported carvings of Tikis #45 and 55 can be found at www.tikimania.com.



Correction to Vol. 3, No. 3.
The caption on p.11 should read:
Tiki #44. The natural "crown" is
one of CrazyAL's innovations.



Another experiment in importing...Tiki No. 13 masks from Indonesia.



In 2005, a limited number of Tiki No. 13 reproductions were imported from the Philippines, but the necklaces and seashell teeth still had to be installed.

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