

Arts 2J / INTL 22 History of Art
Indigenous Arts of the World
De Anza College
Spring Quarter, 2009

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Course Description: This course is an introduction to some of the many indigenous art traditions around the world. Emphasis will be placed upon Sub-Saharan African, indigenous American and Oceanic art history. We will take a thematic and comparative approach to learning about indigenous arts and cultures, recognizing commonalities such as the importance of oral history, ancestors, family, community, ceremony and place. Other themes include access to materials and the environment, gender, the role of the individual artist and patron, and the importance of both tradition and innovation.

Critical analysis of the history of colonialism, collecting of indigenous arts, and representation in museums will provide a framework for understanding indigenous arts in a global context today. We will explore how indigenous arts and artistic practices reveal to us current challenges and solutions Native artists use in the 21st century to maintain cultural heritage while also building contemporary social/political awareness. Students will work collaboratively, becoming actively involved in their own learning experience.

Required Texts (available at the Bookstore and ON RESERVE in the Learning Center):

Berlo, Janet C. and Ruth B. Phillips, *Native North American Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
Kahn, Miriam and Erin Younger, eds. *Pacific Voices: Keeping Our Cultures Alive*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005.

*****All reading assignments from textbooks for each week are listed below. I will assign on-line articles to read as well.**

***** Additional readings:** I will be handing out some short additional readings in class. Please make sure you receive these handouts as you will be responsible for them.

In this class, I will expect students to:

1. Contribute to a positive, collaborative learning environment by being open and receptive to the ideas and opinions of others. It is ok to disagree with a concept, but please be respectful of the ideas of others.
2. **Attend class regularly.** More than three absences will result in the lowering of your grade **one full step (A to a B, B to a C, etc.) or being dropped from the class.** After three missed class sessions, I have the option of dropping you from enrollment. However, I consider it **your responsibility** to drop the course if you find it necessary to do so.
3. Be on time and practice polite classroom etiquette. **If you are late, I may count you absent,** especially if you disturb the class. Don't hold separate conversations during lecture time or class discussions. Others may want to hear what is going on in class. Come prepared to class and participate.

*****Turn off cell phones during class time – it is distracting for other students and the teacher.**



4. Don't cheat. **Anyone found cheating on an exam or plagiarizing (copying material without reference or credit)** will be given an "F" on that exam or assignment and may fail the course. Each student **MUST** write his/her own paper, even if research was conducted with others. If two students hand in the same paper, each will receive half the points earned (equivalent to an "F").
5. **Finish paper and reading assignments on time.** Readings complement the material we cover in class. Completing the reading assignments will help your ability to participate in class discussions. **NO E-MAIL SUBMISSIONS OF COURSE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

Assignments: Two exams are required. Sample questions to be answered will be provided in class. Students will write short responses (1-2 pages) using an essay format for exam questions. **In-class writings, worksheets and work in small groups** will also be required. A **short in-class group presentation (3 minutes per student)** will be scheduled for the last week of the quarter. The **final paper assignment** is a research paper and optional art project. It is 4-6 pages. **The research paper requires** a total bibliography of 4 sources. **I will assist you in skills needed for documenting and writing research papers.** See class handout for full instructions regarding the final paper assignment. **All papers need to be typed, double-spaced and proofread.**

Grading Policy: Grades are determined using a scale of 100 points as follows:

In-class writings, worksheets / participation =	20 points	Above 96	A+		
Class group presentation =	5 points	96-93	A	92-90	A-
Midterm exam =	25 points	89-87	B+	86-83	B
Final Paper =	20 points	79-77	C+	76-73	C
Final Exam =	<u>30 points</u>	69-60	D		
	100 points possible			Below 60	F

*****Extra Credit: An opportunity to receive up to 8 points in extra credit will be discussed in class.**

*****NOTE:** Class participation is a very important component in your final grade. This class relies upon student participation as well as the instructor's input. **You need to take an active interest in class discussion and activities.** Your involvement will contribute to the learning experience of your classmates.

Class Schedule and Assignments:

Week One: Introduction

Reading Assignment: Class handout and websites assigned in class.

Theme: What is 'art'? Broadening definitions

Week Two: Creation and the Ancestors

Reading Assignment: *Native North American Art*, pp. 71-86.

Theme: Oral history, myth and the visual arts

Week Three: Family, Community and Ceremony

Reading Assignment: *Native North American Art*, pp. 37-40, 45-55, 61-69

Theme: The value of tradition



Week Four: Colonialism and Its Legacy**Reading Assignment:** *Native North American Art*, pp.86-88, 94-105**Theme:** Dynamic responses to a time of destruction**Week Five:** Making Art – Materials and TechniquesMIDTERM EXAM: Monday, May 4th.**Reading Assignment:** *Native North American Art*, pp. 133- 137, *Pacific Voices*, pp. 3-5, 39-49, websites assigned in class.**Theme:** Holding on to art traditions in a fragile and changing environment**Week Six:** Gender Roles in the Creation and Use of Indigenous Arts**Reading Assignment:** *Pacific Voices*, pp. 51-59, *Native North American Art*, pp.32-35.**Theme:** Questioning tradition**Week Seven:** Indigenous Art and Identity**Reading Assignment:** *Pacific Voices*, pp. 7-37.**Theme:** The personal object as art**Week Eight:** *Mana* - Art and Spiritual Power**Reading Assignment:** *Native North American Art*, 139-171. *Pacific Voices*, pp. 151-157.**Theme:** Spirits, art and environment**HOLIDAY: Monday, May 25th – NO CLASS****Week Nine:** Museums: Collecting and Exhibiting Indigenous Arts**Reading Assignment:** *Native North American Art*, pp. 9-17, 173-207. *Pacific Voices*, pp., 142-149.**Theme:** Repatriation and Art as cultural patrimony**Week Ten:** Art as Commodity**Reading Assignment:** Class Handout**Theme:** Tourism and the art market**Research paper and optional art project due Thursday, June 11th.****Week Eleven:** Contemporary Arts / Current Politics**Reading Assignment:** *Native North American Art*, pp. 209-213, 220-239**Theme:** Postcolonial realities**Class Group Presentations******Final Exam: Monday, June 22nd.**

History of Art
Cadge-Moore

Outline for Describing a Work of Art

When studying or writing about art, make note of the following:

- WHO? For whom and by whom was the object made? Specific artist known?
Patron known? (Who commissioned or paid for an artwork?)
- WHAT? What is it? What is its title or subject?
- WHERE? Where was it made? What site and is this an important factor?
- WHY? Why was this object made? For what purpose? What does it tell us about
the culture who made and used it?
- HOW? How was it made? What are the materials and techniques used?

Does the artwork reveal anything about the following contexts?

- Historical
- Cultural
- Social
- Political
- Religious or ceremonial
- Economic

What is the subject matter? What motifs or symbols are used and what is their significance? Art historians call this *iconography*.

When describing the style of an artwork (stylistic analysis), consider the following:

- Scale: What is the size and why is this important?
- Composition: What is the overall arrangement of the elements of the piece?
Is the design balanced or symmetrical? Asymmetrical?
Do the motifs fill the entire design surface? How is space used?
What are the relationships of the designs to one another?
- Overall approach: Is it naturalistic? Based on natural forms, but stylized?
Geometric? Abstract (not naturalistic)?
- Shape: What is the basic shape or contour of the piece?
What shapes does the artist use? Square, circle, triangle?
- Line: What is the character of the painted, sculpted, beaded, embroidered,
woven line? Are forms strongly outlined? Is the line curvilinear?
Straight-edged? Dynamic, meandering, fluid? Do forms suggest
movement?
- Color: What are the colors used? How do they affect the work? Are they bright?
Subtle in effect? How is black and white used? Are shadows obvious?
- Texture: Is texture indicated? How does this affect the work?

How have all the elements above contributed to the way the piece looks?

What is the emotional impact on you, the viewer?

Do these aspects of style suggest anything about the contexts given above?

About the artist and his or her culture?