

# ART 2D: AFRICAN, OCEANIC & NATIVE AMERICAN ART

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4.5
Hours:	4 lecture, 1.5 laboratory per week (66 total per quarter)
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 3: Arts & Humanities
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

## Student Learning Outcomes

- A successful student will be able to identify and analyze within their socio-historical contexts a variety of art objects and related traditions from Africa (e.g., Nigeria, Ghana, Mali, etc.), Oceania (e.g., New Guinea, Hawaii, Rapa Nui, etc.) and Native North America (e.g., Pueblo, Inuit, Northwest Coast, etc.)
- A successful student will be able to evaluate and examine the role of ethnic/cultural heritage in your own life and in contemporary American society as a whole, based on an understanding of African, Oceanic, and Native American traditions (such as personal adornment, ancestor commemoration, etc.) discussed in Art 2D.

## Description

A chronological and thematic examination of arts produced by a selection of societies from Africa, Oceania, and Native North America. Includes the influences of these diverse non-Western arts on American art and society. Art objects will be analyzed within the relevant social and historical context and as part of a larger matrix of myth, ritual, religious belief, politics, and worldview. Includes an examination of art from West Africa (e.g., Nigeria: Ife, Benin, Yoruba, Igbo, etc.), Melanesia (e.g., New Guinea), Polynesia (e.g., Hawaii, Rapa Nui, New Zealand), and Native North America (e.g., Woodlands, Southwest, Plains, Northwest Coast, Arctic and Subarctic, etc.).

## Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Systematically develop an appreciation for and an ability to interpret and analyze significant art works and aesthetic traditions from a variety of cultures in Africa, Oceania, and Native North America
2. Deepen their knowledge of the human condition in the process of recognizing and discussing ethnocentrism and how world-view affects judgments about and appreciation of art
3. Examine and evaluate art within a diverse variety of socio-historical contexts, contrasting assemblages of transient art forms (e.g., objects functioning in ritual or festival events) with a Western traditional emphasis on the object (e.g., paintings, sculptures, etc.)
4. Develop the ability to identify and think critically about multi-cultural aesthetic parallels as a means of discerning how art functions in society and describes social values
5. Develop broad-based cultural foundations for understanding art by examining and comparing non-Western art traditions to contemporary multi-cultural American art
6. Appreciate our common humanity by developing an understanding of art production and creativity in the visual arts within diverse cultural contexts
7. Think critically and make reasoned judgments about appropriation and public exhibition of non-Western arts within the context of Western museums
8. Recognize significant contributions of African, Oceanic, and Native American artistic traditions in the development of American art and society

## Course Content

1. Introduction to African Art; Ancient Nigeria (Nok, Ife)
  - a. Past (mis)conceptions of "primitive" art; ethnocentrism
  - b. Archaeology and art in Nigeria
2. Nigeria: Royal Arts of Benin Kingdom
  - a. 1897 British Punitive Expedition and Western art collecting/repatriation/museum exhibition issues concerning African art
3. Nigeria: Yoruba and Igbo Art
  - a. Influence of Yoruba art and religion in the Americas; santeria and Yoruba altars in the New World
  - b. Royal Yoruba arts contrasted with more egalitarian Igbo art and society
  - c. Igbo altars to the earth deity, Ala, and "foreign-import" Mamy Wata
4. Ghana: Akan/Ashante Art
  - a. The origins of kente cloth
  - b. Relationships between word and image in Akan art; the significance of the oral traditions (e.g., proverbs, etc.) in Ghana
5. Introduction to Oceanic Art; Melanesia (New Guinea: Mt. Hagan, Abelam, Asmat; New Ireland)
  - a. Rockefeller collection of Asmat art at the NY Metropolitan Museum of Art; collection and exhibition concerns regarding context of AOA art
  - b. Contrasting art produced by coastal and mountain cultures in New Guinea
6. Polynesia: New Zealand Maori
  - a. Maori moko and contemporary moko
7. Hawaii; Fiji, Tonga, Samoa
  - a. Aristocratic arts and architecture of Hawaiian royalty
  - b. Concepts of mana/tapu
  - c. Pacific Island contributions to contemporary American art
8. Introduction to Native North American Art; Woodlands
9. Southwest, Plains, Far West
  - a. Horse culture and the impact of introducing the horse to Plains societies; aesthetics of mobility
  - b. Contemporary Plains beadwork and contributions to American art today
10. Northwest Coast, Arctic and Subarctic
  - a. Traditions of reciprocity in NWC art: the potlatch, etc.
  - b. Northwest Coast creation stories and contemporary NWC art and architecture
  - c. The importance of spirit in Inuit belief and art

11. Contemporary and Modern Native American Art  
a. Continuity and change in Native American art tradition in contemporary American culture

## Lab Content

Lab activities are provided for students to practice visual literacy and critical thinking skills through the synthesis of content from the lecture, posted videos, and reading assignments through written responses to weekly prompts related to specific works of art and architecture. Students practice visual literacy skills through observation, description, analysis, and interpretation within specific historical and cultural context using the language of visual analysis (formal elements and principles of design), technique, and genre. When appropriate and applicable, students practice the application of theoretical frameworks (biography, Marxism, Feminism, Psychoanalysis, Modernism, Postmodernism, Post-colonialism, Structuralism, etc.) for understanding and interpreting art in each topic area.

## Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. When taught on campus: access to digital images, video projection equipment, screening room lighting, computer, and screen.
2. When taught via Foothill Global Access: ongoing access to a computer with email software and capabilities, email address, and JavaScript-enabled internet browsing software.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Discussions based on required readings in text and related online weekly lesson modules. Questions posed in lessons to be discussed in online (written) discussion forums or in traditional classroom  
Weekly essay assignments based on readings of text and lesson modules online to evaluate ongoing student learning; research paper/museum report essay assignment project may be assigned  
Two midterms and one final examination; examinations may include slide identification, term definition and slide comparison essay, short answer and objective questions

## Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture  
Discussion  
Electronic discussions/chat  
Laboratory  
Field trips

## Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Kampen-O'Riley, Michael. Art Beyond the West, 3rd ed.. 2014.

Although this text is older than the "five years or newer" standard, it remains seminal for the areas of study.

Selected readings from the following texts:

Thomas, Nicholas. Oceanic Art, 2nd ed. 2018.

Penny, David W. North American Indian Art. 2004.

Kasfir, Sidney Littlefield. Contemporary African Art (World of Art), 2nd ed. 2020.

## Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Approximately one chapter of text (30-60 pages) per week
2. Primary/secondary source reading from handouts
3. 7-8 page paper prepared using the MLA format and researched using primary and secondary sources only
4. Weekly writing responses to the questions based on their discussion lab prompts
5. Written essay responses on all three exams

## Discipline(s)

Art History