

## 5.2 Superstructure: Art and Expressive Culture

### Focus on Horticultural Societies

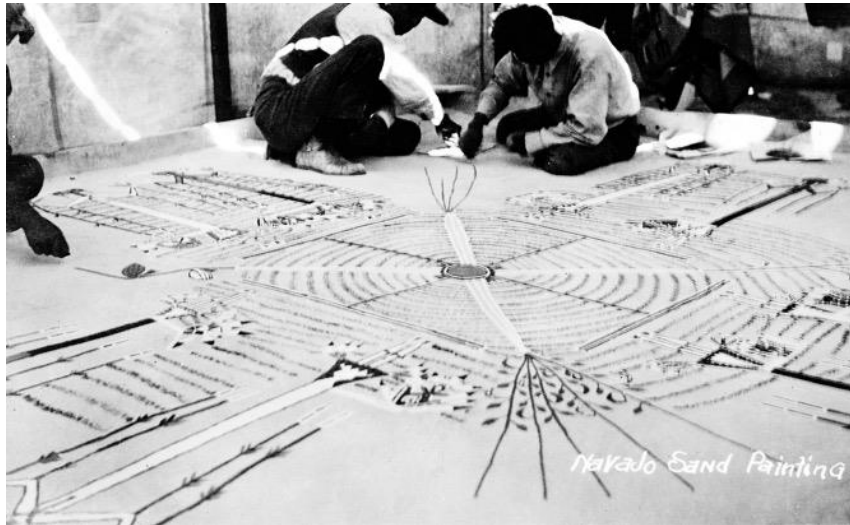


# Superstructure: Art and Expressive Culture

## Overview:

This section covers aspects from the Cultural Materialist theory that relate to Superstructure: the beliefs that support the system. Topics include: Religion, Art, Music, Sports, Medicinal practices, Architecture.

# ART



M0010862 Navajo sand-painting, negative made from postcard Credit: Wellcome Library, London. Wellcome Images images@wellcome.ac.uk <http://wellcomeimages.org> Navajo sand-painting, negative made from postcard, "All publication rights reserved. Apply to J.R. Willis, Gallup, N.M. Kodaks-Art Goods" (U.S.A.) Painting Published: - Copyrighted work available under Creative Commons Attribution only license CC BY 4.0 <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

## Key Terms & Concepts

- Art
- Visual arts
- Anthropology of art
- The problem of art
- Purpose of art
- Non-motivated purposes of art: basic human instinct, experience of the mysterious, expression of the imagination, ritualistic & symbolic
- Motivated purposes of art: communication, entertainment, political, "free zone", social inquiry, social causes, psychological/healing, propaganda/commercialism, fitness indicator
- Paleolithic art: Blombos cave, figurative art, cave paintings, monumental open air art, petroglyphs
- Tribal art: ethnographic art, "primitive art", African art, Art of the Americas, Oceanic art
- Folk art: Antique folk art, Contemporary folk art

- Indigenous Australian art: rock painting, Dot painting, Dreamtime, symbols
- Sandpainting: Navajo, Tibetan Buddhist mandalas
- Ethnomusicology
- Dance
- Native American Graves Protection And Repatriation Act (NAGPRA): cultural items

## Art



Clockwise from upper left: a self-portrait by Vincent van Gogh; a female ancestor figure by a Chokwe artist; detail from *The Birth of Venus* by Sandro Botticelli; and an Okinawan Shisa lion.

**Art** is a diverse range of human activities in creating visual, auditory or performing artifacts – artworks, expressing the author’s imaginative or technical skill, intended to be appreciated for their beauty or emotional power.<sup>[1][2]</sup> In their most general form these activities include the production of works of art, the criticism of art, the study of the history of art, and the aesthetic dissemination of art.

The oldest documented forms of art are **visual arts**, which include creation of images or objects in fields including painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, and other visual media. Architecture is often included as one of the visual arts; however, like the decorative arts, it involves the creation of objects where the practical considerations of use are essential—in a way that they usually are not in a painting, for example. Music, theatre, film, dance, and other



performing arts, as well as literature and other media such as interactive media, are included in a broader definition of art or the arts.<sup>[1][3]</sup> Until the 17th century, art referred to any skill or mastery and was not differentiated from crafts or sciences. In modern usage after the 17th century, where aesthetic considerations are paramount, the fine arts are separated and distinguished from acquired skills in general, such as the decorative or applied arts.

Art may be characterized in terms of mimesis (its representation of reality), expression, communication of emotion, or other qualities. During the Romantic period, art came to be seen as “a special faculty of the human mind to be classified with religion and science”.<sup>[4]</sup> Though the definition of what constitutes art is disputed<sup>[5][6][7]</sup> and has changed over time, general descriptions mention an idea of imaginative or technical skill stemming from human agency<sup>[8]</sup> and creation.<sup>[9]</sup>

## Anthropology of Art



Michelangelo's David, 1501-1504, Galleria dell'Accademia (Florence)

**Anthropology of art** is a sub-field in cultural anthropology dedicated to the study of art in different cultural contexts. The anthropology of art focuses on historical, economic and aesthetic dimensions in non-Western art forms, including what is known as ‘tribal art’.

### History

Franz Boas, one of the pioneers of modern anthropology, conducted many field studies of the arts, helping create a foundation to the field. His book, *Primitive Art* (1927), summarizes his main insights into so-called ‘primitive’ art forms, with a detailed case study on the arts of the Northwest Pacific Coast.<sup>[1]</sup> The famous anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss took Boas’ analyses further in his book *The Way of the Masks*, where he traced changes in the plastic form of Northwest Pacific masks to patterns of intercultural interaction among the indigenous peoples of the coast.<sup>[2]</sup>

## The Problem of Art

One of the central problems in the anthropology of art concerns the universality of 'art' as a cultural phenomenon. Several anthropologists have noted that the Western categories of 'painting', 'sculpture', or 'literature', conceived as independent artistic activities, do not exist, or exist in a significantly different form, in most non-Western contexts.<sup>[3]</sup> Thus, there is no consensus on a single, cross-cultural definition of 'art' in anthropology.<sup>[4][5]</sup> To surmount this difficulty, anthropologists of art have focused on formal features in objects which, without exclusively being 'artistic', have certain evident 'aesthetic' qualities. Boas' *Primitive Art*, Claude Lévi-Strauss' *The Way of the Masks* (1982) or Geertz's 'Art as Cultural System' (1983) are some examples in this trend to transform the anthropology of 'art' into an anthropology of culturally-specific 'aesthetics'. More recently, in his book *Art and Agency*, Alfred Gell proposed a new definition of 'art' as a complex system of intentionality, where artists produce art objects to effect changes in the world, including (but not restricted to) changes in the aesthetic perceptions of art audiences.<sup>[6]</sup> Gell's ideas have stirred a large controversy in the anthropology of art in the 2000s.<sup>[7][8][9]</sup>

## Purpose of Art



A Navajo rug made circa 1880

Art has had a great number of different functions throughout its history, making its purpose difficult to abstract or quantify to any single concept. This does not imply that the purpose of Art is "vague", but that it has had many unique, different reasons for being created. Some of these functions of Art are provided in the following outline. The different purposes of art may be grouped according to those that are non-motivated, and those that are motivated (Lévi-Strauss).



Mozarabic Beatus miniature. Spain, late 10th century

### Non-motivated functions of art

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The **non-motivated purposes** of art are those that are integral to being human, transcend the individual, or do not fulfill a specific external purpose. In this sense, Art, as creativity, is something humans must do by their very nature (i.e., no other species creates art), and is therefore beyond utility.

1. **Basic human instinct for harmony, balance, rhythm.** Art at this level is not an action or an object, but an internal appreciation of balance and harmony (beauty), and therefore an aspect of being human beyond utility.

“Imitation, then, is one instinct of our nature. Next, there is the instinct for ‘harmony’ and rhythm, meters being manifestly sections of rhythm. Persons, therefore, starting with this natural gift developed by degrees their special aptitudes, till their rude improvisations gave birth to Poetry.” -Aristotle<sup>[1]</sup>

2. **Experience of the mysterious.** Art provides a way to experience one’s self in relation to the universe. This experience may often come unmotivated, as one appreciates art, music or poetry.

“The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science.” -Albert Einstein<sup>[2]</sup>

3. **Expression of the imagination.** Art provides a means to express the imagination in non-grammatical ways that are not tied to the formality of spoken or written language. Unlike

words, which come in sequences and each of which have a definite meaning, art provides a range of forms, symbols and ideas with meanings that are malleable.

“Jupiter’s eagle [as an example of art] is not, like logical (aesthetic) attributes of an object, the concept of the sublimity and majesty of creation, but rather something else – something that gives the imagination an incentive to spread its flight over a whole host of kindred representations that provoke more thought than admits of expression in a concept determined by words. They furnish an aesthetic idea, which serves the above rational idea as a substitute for logical presentation, but with the proper function, however, of animating the mind by opening out for it a prospect into a field of kindred representations stretching beyond its ken.” -Immanuel Kant<sup>[3]</sup>

4. **Ritualistic and symbolic functions.** In many cultures, art is used in rituals, performances and dances as a decoration or symbol. While these often have no specific utilitarian (motivated) purpose, anthropologists know that they often serve a purpose at the level of meaning within a particular culture. This meaning is not furnished by any one individual, but is often the result of many generations of change, and of a cosmological relationship within the culture.

“Most scholars who deal with rock paintings or objects recovered from prehistoric contexts that cannot be explained in utilitarian terms and are thus categorized as decorative, ritual or symbolic, are aware of the trap posed by the term ‘art’.” -Silva Tomaskova<sup>[4]</sup>

### Motivated functions of art

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**Motivated purposes** of art refer to intentional, conscious actions on the part of the artists or creator. These may be to bring about political change, to comment on an aspect of society, to convey a specific emotion or mood, to address personal psychology, to illustrate another discipline, to (with commercial arts) sell a product, or simply as a form of communication.

1. **Communication.** Art, at its simplest, is a form of communication. As most forms of communication have an intent or goal directed toward another individual, this is a motivated purpose. Illustrative arts, such as scientific illustration, are a form of art as communication. Maps are another example. However, the content need not be scientific. Emotions, moods and feelings are also communicated through art.

“[Art is a set of] artifacts or images with symbolic meanings as a means of communication.” -Steve Mithen<sup>[5]</sup>

2. **Art as entertainment.** Art may seek to bring about a particular emotion or mood, for the purpose of relaxing or entertaining the viewer. This is often the function of the art industries of Motion Pictures and Video Games.



3. **The Avante-Garde. Art for political change.** One of the defining functions of early twentieth-century art has been to use visual images to bring about political change. Art movements that had this goal—Dadaism, Surrealism, Russian Constructivism, and Abstract Expressionism, among others—are collectively referred to as the avante-garde arts.

“By contrast, the realistic attitude, inspired by positivism, from Saint Thomas Aquinas to Anatole France, clearly seems to me to be hostile to any intellectual or moral advancement. I loathe it, for it is made up of mediocrity, hate, and dull conceit. It is this attitude which today gives birth to these ridiculous books, these insulting plays. It constantly feeds on and derives strength from the newspapers and stultifies both science and art by assiduously flattering the lowest of tastes; clarity bordering on stupidity, a dog’s life.” -André Breton (Surrealism)<sup>[6]</sup>

4. **Art as a “free zone”**, removed from the action of the social censure. Unlike the avant-garde movements, which wanted to erase cultural differences in order to produce new universal values, contemporary art has enhanced its tolerance towards cultural differences as well as its critical and liberating functions (social inquiry, activism, subversion, deconstruction ...), becoming a more open place for research and experimentation.<sup>[7]</sup>
5. **Art for social inquiry, subversion and/or anarchy.** While similar to art for political change, subversive or deconstructivist art may seek to question aspects of society without any specific political goal. In this case, the function of art may be simply to criticize some aspect of society.



Spray-paint graffiti on a wall in Rome

Graffiti art and other types of street art are graphics and images that are spray-painted or stenciled on publicly viewable walls, buildings, buses, trains, and bridges, usually without permission. Certain art forms, such as graffiti, may also be illegal when they break laws (in this case vandalism).



A piece done by Banksy in New York in 2014

Banksy is an unknown street artist famous for his stenciled pieces on public walls. Take a look at Banksy's website. His work challenges categories of art, and the marketing of art.

<http://www.banksy.co.uk/>

Watch video of shredding art:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxkwRNIZgdY>

6. **Art for social causes.** Art can be used to raise awareness for a large variety of causes. A number of art activities were aimed at raising awareness of autism,<sup>[8][9][10]</sup> cancer,<sup>[11][12][13]</sup> human trafficking,<sup>[14][15]</sup> and a variety of other topics, such as ocean conservation,<sup>[16]</sup> human rights in Darfur,<sup>[17]</sup> murdered and missing Aboriginal women,<sup>[18]</sup> elder abuse,<sup>[19]</sup> and pollution.<sup>[20]</sup> Trashion, using trash to make fashion, practiced by artists such as Marina DeBris is one example of using art to raise awareness about pollution.
  
7. **Art for psychological and healing purposes.** Art is also used by art therapists, psychotherapists and clinical psychologists as art therapy. The Diagnostic Drawing Series, for example, is used to determine the personality and emotional functioning of a patient. The end product is not the principal goal in this case, but rather a process of healing, through creative acts, is sought. The resultant piece of artwork may also offer insight into the troubles experienced by the subject and may suggest suitable approaches to be used in more conventional forms of psychiatric therapy.

8. **Art for propaganda, or commercialism.** Art is often utilized as a form of propaganda, and thus can be used to subtly influence popular conceptions or mood. In a similar way, art that tries to sell a product also influences mood and emotion. In both cases, the purpose of art here is to subtly manipulate the viewer into a particular emotional or psychological response toward a particular idea or object.<sup>[21]</sup>
  
9. **Art as a fitness indicator.** It has been argued that the ability of the human brain by far exceeds what was needed for survival in the ancestral environment. One evolutionary psychology explanation for this is that the human brain and associated traits (such as artistic ability and creativity) are the human equivalent of the peacock's tail. The purpose of the male peacock's extravagant tail has been argued to be to attract females (see also Fisherian runaway and handicap principle). According to this theory superior execution of art was evolutionary important because it attracted mates.<sup>[22]</sup>

The functions of art described above are not mutually exclusive, as many of them may overlap. For example, art for the purpose of entertainment may also seek to sell a product, i.e. the movie or video game.

## Paleolithic Art

### Lower and Middle Paleolithic

The earliest undisputed art originated with the Aurignacian archaeological culture in the Upper Paleolithic. However, there is some evidence that the preference for the aesthetic emerged in the Middle Paleolithic, from 100,000 to 50,000 years ago. Some archaeologists have interpreted certain Middle Paleolithic artifacts as early examples of artistic expression.<sup>[3][4]</sup> The symmetry of artifacts, evidence of attention to the detail of tool shape, has led some investigators to conceive of Acheulean hand axes and especially laurel points as having been produced with a degree of artistic expression.

Similarly, a zig-zag etching made with a shark tooth on a freshwater clam-shell around 500,000 years ago (i.e. well into the Lower Paleolithic), associated with *Homo erectus*, was proposed as the earliest evidence of artistic activity in 2014.<sup>[5]</sup>

The Mask of La Roche-Cotard has been taken as evidence of Neanderthal figurative art, although in a period post-dating their contact with *Homo sapiens*. There are other claims of Middle Paleolithic sculpture, dubbed the "Venus of Tan-Tan" (before 300 kya)<sup>[6]</sup> and the "Venus of Berekhat Ram" (250 kya). In 2002 in **Blombos cave**, situated in South Africa, stones were

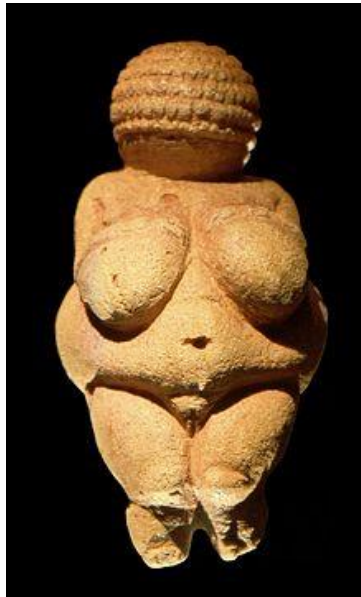
discovered engraved with grid or cross-hatch patterns, dated to some 70,000 years ago. This suggested to some researchers that early Homo sapiens were capable of abstraction and production of abstract art or symbolic art.

### Upper Paleolithic



Aurochs on a cave painting in Lascaux, France

The oldest undisputed works of **figurative art** were found in the Schwäbische Alb, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. The earliest of these, the Venus figurine known as the Venus of Hohle Fels and the Löwenmensch figurine date to some 40,000 years ago.



Venus of Willendorf

Further depictional art from the Upper Palaeolithic period (broadly 40,000 to 10,000 years ago) includes **cave painting** (e.g., those at Chauvet, Altamira, Pech Merle, and Lascaux) and portable art: Venus figurines like the Venus of Willendorf, as well as animal carvings like the Swimming Reindeer, Wolverine pendant of Les Eyzies, and several of the objects known *asbâtons de commandement*.



Image of a horse from the Lascaux caves.

Cave paintings from the Indonesian island of Sulawesi were in 2014 found to be 40,000 years old, a similar date to the oldest European cave art, which may suggest an older common origin for this type of art, perhaps in Africa.<sup>[7]</sup>

Monumental open air art in Europe from this period include Côa Valley and Mazouco in Portugal, Domingo García and Siega Verde in Spain, and Fornols-Haut in France.

A cave at Turobong in South Korea containing human remains has been found to contain carved deer bones and depictions of deer that may be as much as 40,000 years old.<sup>[8]</sup> **Petroglyphs** of deer or reindeer found at Sokchang-ri may also date to the Upper Paleolithic. Pot shards in a style reminiscent of early Japanese work have been found at Kosan-ri on Jeju island, which, due to lower sea levels at the time, would have been accessible from Japan.<sup>[9]</sup>

The oldest petroglyphs are dated to approximately the Mesolithic and late Upper Paleolithic boundary, about 10,000 to 12,000 years ago. The earliest undisputed African rock art dates back about 10,000 years. The first naturalistic paintings of humans found in Africa date back about 8,000 years apparently originating in the Nile River valley, spread as far west as Mali about 10,000 years ago. Noted sites containing early art include Tassili n'Ajjer in southern Algeria, Tadrart Acacus in Libya (A Unesco World Heritage site), and the Tibesti Mountains in northern Chad.<sup>[10]</sup> Rock carvings at the Wonderwerk Cave in South Africa have been dated to this age.<sup>[11]</sup> Contentious dates as far back as 29,000 years have been obtained at a site in Tanzania. A site at the Apollo 11 Cave complex in Namibia has been dated to 27,000 years.



## Tribal Art



A Punu tribe mask. Gabon West Africa

**Tribal art** is the visual arts and material culture of indigenous peoples. Also known as **ethnographic art**, or, controversially, **primitive art**,<sup>[2]</sup> tribal arts have historically been collected by Western anthropologists, private collectors, and museums, particularly ethnographic and natural history museums. The term “primitive” is criticized as being Eurocentric and pejorative.<sup>[3]</sup>



Artwork in the Museum of Indian Terracotta, New Delhi, India.[1]

### Description

Tribal art is often ceremonial or religious in nature.<sup>[4]</sup> Typically originating in rural areas, tribal art refers to the subject and craftsmanship of artefacts from tribal cultures.

In museum collections, tribal art has three primary categories:

- **African art**, especially arts of Sub-Saharan Africa
- **Art of the Americas**<sup>[5]</sup>
- **Oceanic art**, originating notably from Australia, Melanesia, New Zealand, and Polynesia.

Collection of tribal arts has historically been inspired by the Western myth of the “noble savage”, and lack of cultural context has been a challenge with the Western mainstream public’s perception of tribal arts.<sup>[6]</sup> In the 19th century, non-western art was not seen by mainstream Western art professional as being as art at all.<sup>[3]</sup> The art world perception of tribal arts is becoming less paternalistic, as indigenous and non-indigenous advocates have struggled for more objective scholarship of tribal art. Before Post-Modernism emerged in the 1960s, art critics approached tribal arts from a purely formalist approach,<sup>[7]</sup> that is, responding only to the visual elements of the work and disregarding historical context, symbolism, or the artist’s intention.



Congolese Nkisi Nkondi, a female power figure, with nails, collection BNK, Royal Tribal Art

### Influence on Modernism

Major exhibitions of tribal arts in the late 19th through mid-20th centuries exposed the Western art world to non-Western art. Major exhibitions included the Museum of Modern Art’s 1935 Africa Negro Art and 1941 Indian Art of the United States.<sup>[7]</sup> Exposure to tribal arts provide inspiration to many modern artists,<sup>[8]</sup> notably Expressionists,<sup>[7]</sup> Cubists, and Surrealists, notably

Surrealist Max Ernst.<sup>[9]</sup> Cubist painter, Pablo Picasso stated that “primitive sculpture has never been surpassed.”<sup>[3]</sup>



A male Kifwebe mask. Songye tribe. D.R. Congo. Central Africa

## Folk Art



“Gran calavera eléctrica” by José Guadalupe Posada, Mexico, 1900–1913

**Folk art** encompasses art produced from an indigenous culture or by peasants or other laboring tradespeople. In contrast to fine art, folk art is primarily utilitarian and decorative rather than purely aesthetic.<sup>[1]</sup> Folk Art is characterized by a naïve style, in which traditional rules of proportion and perspective are not employed.

As a phenomenon that can chronicle a move towards civilization yet rapidly diminish with modernity, industrialization, or outside influence, the nature of folk art is specific to its particular

culture. The varied geographical and temporal prevalence and diversity of folk art make it difficult to describe as a whole, though some patterns have been demonstrated.



Island of Salvation Botanica, Piety Street, Bywater, New Orleans

Characteristically folk art is not influenced by movements in academic or fine art circles, and, in many cases, folk art excludes works executed by professional artists and sold as “high art” or “fine art” to the society’s art patrons.<sup>[1]</sup> On the other hand, many 18th- and 19th-century American folk art painters made their living by their work, including itinerant portrait painters, some of whom produced large bodies of work.<sup>[2]</sup>

Terms that might overlap with folk art are naïve art, tribal art, primitive art, popular art, outsider art, traditional art, tramp art and working-class art/blue-collar art. As one might expect, these terms can have multiple and even controversial connotations but are often used interchangeably with the term “folk art”.

Folk art expresses cultural identity by conveying shared community values and aesthetics. It encompasses a range of utilitarian and decorative media, including cloth, wood, paper, clay, metal and more. If traditional materials are inaccessible, new materials are often substituted, resulting in contemporary expressions of traditional folk art forms. Folk art reflects traditional art forms of diverse community groups — ethnic, tribal, religious, occupational, geographical, age- or gender-based — who identify with each other and society at large. Folk artists traditionally learn skills and techniques through apprenticeships in informal community settings, though they may also be formally educated. Folk art are simple, direct, and mostly always colorful.



Darrel Mortimer holding 8’ tattooed bamboo chillum; photograph by Sally Larsen, 2009



House in New Orleans

### Antique folk art

Antique folk art is distinguished from traditional art in that, while collected today based mostly on its artistic merit, it was never intended to be 'art for art's sake' at the time of its creation. Examples include: weathervanes, old store signs and carved figures, itinerant portraits, carousel horses, fire buckets, painted game boards, cast iron doorstops and many other similar lines of highly collectible "whimsical" antiques.



Detail of 17th century calendar stick carved with national coat of arms, a common motif in Norwegian folk art.



## Contemporary folk art



A folk art wall in Lincoln Park, Chicago

Many folk art traditions like quilting, ornamental picture framing, and decoy carving continue to thrive, while new forms constantly emerge.

Contemporary folk artists are frequently self-taught as their work is often developed in isolation or in small communities across the country.<sup>[3]</sup> The Smithsonian American Art Museum houses over 70 such artists; for example, Elito Circa, a famous and internationally recognized folk artist, developed his own styles without professional training or guidance from the masters.

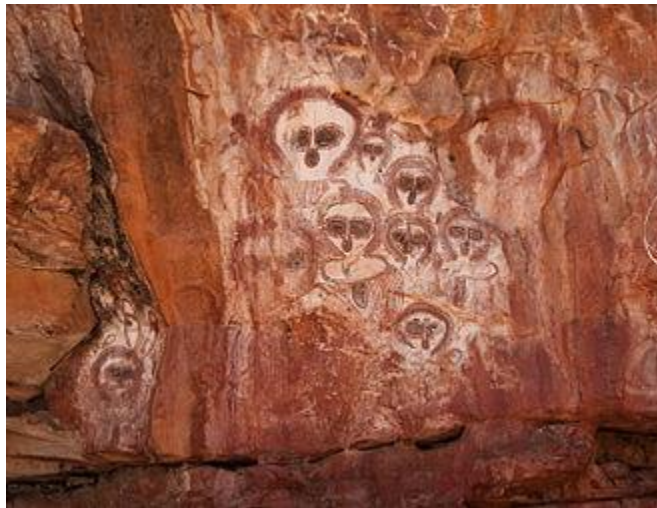
## Influence on mainstream art

Folk artworks, styles and motifs have inspired various artists. For example, Pablo Picasso was inspired by African tribal sculptures and masks, while Natalia Goncharova and others were inspired by traditional Russian popular prints called luboks.<sup>[4]</sup> In music, Igor Stravinsky's seminal *The Rite of Spring* was inspired by pagan religious rites.

## Indigenous Australian Art



Bradshaw rock paintings found in the north-west Kimberley region of Western Australia



Aboriginal pictographs known as Wandjina in the Wunnumurra Gorge, Barnett River, Kimberley, Western Australia

**Indigenous Australian art** or **Australian Aboriginal art** is art made by the Indigenous peoples of Australia and in collaborations between Indigenous Australians and others. It includes works in a wide range of media including painting on leaves, wood carving, rock carving, sculpting, ceremonial clothing and sand painting. This article discusses works that pre-date European colonization as well as contemporary Indigenous Australian art by Aboriginal Australians. These have been studied in recent years and have gained much international recognition.<sup>[1]</sup>

### Traditional Indigenous art

There are several types of aboriginal art, and ways of making art, including rock painting, dot painting, rock engravings, bark painting, carvings, sculptures, and weaving and string art.

## Rock painting



Aboriginal Namadgi National Park featuring a Kangaroo, Dingoes, Echidna or Turtles, totems and stories are created using dots.



This photo shows the painting of Baiame made by an unknown Wiradjuri artist in “Baiame’s cave”, near Singleton, NSW. Notice the length of his arms which extend to the two trees either side.

Australian Indigenous art is the oldest unbroken tradition of art in the world. The oldest firmly dated rock art painting in Australia is a charcoal drawing on a rock fragment found during the excavation of the Narwala Gabarnmang rock shelter in south-western Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. Dated at 28,000 years, it is one of the oldest known pieces of rock art on Earth with a confirmed date. Rock art, including painting and engraving or carving, can be found at sites throughout Australia. Rock paintings appear on caves in the Kimberley region of Western Australia known as Bradshaws. They are named after the European, Joseph Bradshaw, who first reported them in 1891. To Aboriginal people of the region they are known as Gwion Gwion<sup>[2]</sup> or Giro Giro.<sup>[3]</sup> Other painted rock art sites include Laura, Queensland,<sup>[4]</sup> Ubirr, in the Kakadu National Park,<sup>[5]</sup> Uluru,<sup>[6]</sup> and Carnarvon Gorge.<sup>[7]</sup>

Aboriginal rock art has been around for a long period of time, with the oldest examples, in Western Australia’s Pilbara region and the Olary district of South Australia, estimated to be up to around 40,000 years old.<sup>[8]</sup> Examples have been found that are believed to depict extinct megafauna such as Genyornis<sup>[9]</sup> and Thylacoleo<sup>[10]</sup> as well as more recent historical events such as the arrival of European ships.<sup>[11]</sup>

## Rock engravings

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Rock engraving depends on the type of rock being used. Many different methods are used to create rock engravings. There are several different types of Rock art across Australia, the most famous of which is Murujuga in Western Australia, the Sydney rock engravings around Plymouth in New South Wales, and the Panaramitee rock art in Central Australia. The Sydney engravings, depicting carved animals and humans, have their own peculiar style not found elsewhere in Australia.

The rock art at Murujuga is said to be the world's largest collection of petroglyphs<sup>[12]</sup> and includes images of extinct animals such as the thylacine. Activity prior to the last ice age until colonisation is recorded.

## Dot painting

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Dot painting consists of various paint colours like yellow (representing the sun), brown (the soil), red (desert sand) and white (the clouds and the sky). These are traditional Aboriginal colours. Dot paintings can be painted on anything though in aboriginal times they were painted on rocks, in caves, etc. The paintings were mostly images of animals or lakes, and the **Dreamtime**. Stories and legends were depicted on caves and rocks to represent the artists' religion and beliefs.

On modern artwork, dots are generally applied with one of two instruments, (1) bamboo satay sticks and (2) ink bottles. The larger flat end of bamboo satay sticks are more commonly used for single application of dots to paintings, but the sharp pointier end is used to create fine dots. To create superimposed dotting, artists may take a bunch of satay sticks, dip the pointy ends into the paint and then transfer it onto the canvas in quick successions of dotting.<sup>[13]</sup>

## Bark painting

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Bark paintings are regarded as fine art, and today the finest art commands high prices on the international art markets. The best artists are recognized annually in the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award.

## Aerial desert "country" landscapes

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From ancient times, Australian aboriginal culture also produced a genre of aerial landscape art, often titled simply "country". It is a kind of maplike, bird's-eye view of the desert landscape, and it is often meant to tell a traditional Dreaming story. In the distant past, the common media for such artwork were rock, sand or body painting, but the tradition continues today in the form of colored drawings with liquid based color on canvas (see section **Papunya Tula and "Dot Painting"** below).

## Stone arrangements

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Stone arrangements in Australia range from the 50m-diameter circles of Victoria, with 1m-high stones firmly embedded in the ground, to the smaller stone arrangements found throughout Australia, such as those near Yirrkala which depict accurate images of the praus used by Macassan Trepang fishermen and spear throwers.

See Aboriginal stone arrangements for more details.

## Carvings and sculpture

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- Carved shells – Riji
- Mimih (or Mimi) small man-like carvings of mythological impish creatures. Mimihs are so frail that they never venture out on windy days lest they be swept away like leaf litter. It is said their necks are so thin a slight breeze might snap their heads off. If approached by men they will run into a rock crevice; if no crevice is there, the rocks themselves will open up and seal behind the Mimih.
- Fibre sculpture

## Weaving and string-art

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- Basket weaving – see Australian Aboriginal fibre craft
- Necklaces and other jewelry such as those from the Tasmanian Aborigines



Ochre Pits in central Australia where a variety of clay earth pigments were obtained

## Symbols

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Certain **symbols** within the Aboriginal modern art movement retain the same meaning across regions although the meaning of the symbols may change within the context of a painting. When viewed in monochrome other symbols can look similar, such as the circles within circles, sometimes depicted on their own, sparsely, or in clustered groups. Depending upon the tribe of which the artist is a *murnanember*, symbols such as campfire, tree, hill, digging hole, waterhole, or spring can vary in meaning. Use of the symbol can be clarified further by the use of colour, such as water being depicted in blue or black.



Many paintings by Aboriginal artists, such as those that represent a “dreamtime story”, are shown from an aerial perspective. The narrative follows the lie of the land, as created by ancestral beings in their journey or during creation. The modern day rendition is a reinterpretation of songs, ceremonies, rock art and body art that was the norm for many thousands of years.

Whatever the meaning, interpretations of the symbols should be made in context of the entire painting, the region from which the artist originates, the story behind the painting, and the style of the painting, with additional clues being the colours used in some of the more modern works, such as blue circles signifying water. (Source: Aboriginal Symbols – Indigenous Australia)<sup>[14]</sup>

### Religious and cultural aspects of Aboriginal art

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Aboriginal art at Uluru

Aboriginal art at Uluru



Aboriginal art showing Barramundi fish

Traditional indigenous art almost always has a mythological undertone relating to the Dreamtime of indigenous Australian artists. Wenten Rubuntja, an indigenous landscape artist, says it is hard to find any art that is devoid of spiritual meaning:

Doesn't matter what sort of painting we do in this country, it still belongs to the people, all the people. This is worship, work, culture. It's all Dreaming. There are two ways of painting. Both ways are important, because that's culture. – source The Weekend Australian Magazine, April 2002

Story-telling and totem representation feature prominently in all forms of Aboriginal artwork. Additionally, the female form, particularly the female womb in X-ray style, features prominently in some famous sites in Arnhem Land.

## Graffiti and other destructive influences

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Many culturally significant sites of Aboriginal rock paintings have been gradually desecrated and destroyed by encroachment of early settlers and modern-day visitors. This includes the destruction of art by clearing and construction work, erosion caused by excessive touching of sites, and graffiti. Many sites now belonging to National Parks have to be strictly monitored by rangers, or closed off to the public permanently.

## Contemporary Indigenous art

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### Modern Aboriginal artists

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Picture of Albert Namatjira at the Albert Namatjira Gallery, Alice Springs Cultural Precinct, in 2007.



Rainbow serpent by John Mawurndjul, 1991

In 1934 Australian painter Rex Batterbee taught Aboriginal artist Albert Namatjira western style watercolour landscape painting, along with other Aboriginal artists at the Hermannsburg mission in the Northern Territory. It became a popular style, known as the Hermannsburg School, and

sold out when the paintings were exhibited in Melbourne, Adelaide and other Australian cities. Namatjira became the first Aboriginal Australian citizen, as a result of his fame and popularity with these watercolour paintings.

In 1966, one of David Malangi's designs was produced on the Australian one dollar note, originally without his knowledge. The subsequent payment to him by the Reserve Bank marked the first case of Aboriginal copyright in Australian copyright law.

In 1988 the Aboriginal Memorial was unveiled at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra made from 200 hollow log coffins, which are similar to the type used for mortuary ceremonies in Arnhem Land. It was made for the bicentenary of Australia's colonisation, and is in remembrance of Aboriginal people who had died protecting their land during conflict with settlers. It was created by 43 artists from Ramingining and communities nearby. The path running through the middle of it represents the Glyde River.<sup>[15]</sup>

In that same year, the new Parliament House in Canberra opened with a forecourt featuring a design by Michael Nelson Tjakamarra, laid as a mosaic.

The late Rover Thomas is another well known modern Australian Aboriginal artist. Born in Western Australia, he represented Australia in the Venice Biennale of 1991. He knew and encouraged other now well-known artists to paint, including Queenie McKenzie from the East Kimberley / Warmun region, as well as having a strong influence on the works of Paddy Bedford and Freddy Timms.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s the work of Emily Kngwarreye, from the Utopia community north east of Alice Springs, became very popular. Although she had been involved in craftwork for most of her life, it was only when she was in her 80s that she was recognised as a painter. Her works include Earth's Creation. Her styles, which changed every year, have been seen as a mixture of traditional Aboriginal and contemporary Australian. Her rise in popularity has prefigured that of many Indigenous artists from central, northern and western Australia, such as Kngwarreye's niece Kathleen Petyarre, Minnie Pwerle, Dorothy Napangardi, Lena Pwerle, Angelina Ngale (Pwerle) and dozens of others, all of whose works have become highly sought-after. The popularity of these often elderly artists, and the resulting pressure placed upon them and their health, has become such an issue that some art centres have stopped selling these artists' paintings online, instead placing prospective clients on a waiting list for work.<sup>[16]</sup>

Current artists in vogue include Jacinta Hayes, popular for her iconic representation of "Bush Medicine Leaves" and "Honey Ants", Rex Sultan (who studied with Albert Namatjira), Trepkina Sultan and Reggie Sultan, Bessie Pitjara and Joyce Nakamara, amongst others.<sup>[17]</sup>

Despite concerns about supply and demand for paintings, the remoteness of many of the artists, and the poverty and health issues experienced in the communities, there are widespread estimates of an industry worth close to half a billion Australian dollars each year, and growing rapidly.<sup>[18]</sup>

## Papunya Tula and “dot painting”

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In 1971–1972, art teacher Geoffrey Bardon encouraged Aboriginal people in Papunya, north west of Alice Springs to put their Dreamings onto canvas. These stories had previously been drawn on the desert sand, and were now given a more permanent form.

The dots were used to cover secret-sacred ceremonies. Originally, the Tula artists succeeded in forming their own company with an Aboriginal Name, Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd,<sup>[19]</sup> however a time of disillusionment followed as artists were criticised by their peers for having revealed too much of their sacred heritage. Secret designs restricted to a ritual context were now in the market place, made visible to Australian Aboriginal painting. Much of the Aboriginal art on display in tourist shops traces back to this style developed at Papunya. The most famous of the artists to come from this movement was Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri. Also from this movement is Johnny Warangkula, whose Water Dreaming at Kalipinya twice sold at a record price, the second time being \$486,500 in 2000.

The Papunya Collection at the National Museum of Australia contains over 200 artifacts and paintings, including examples of 1970’s dot paintings.<sup>[20]</sup>

## Issues

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Albert Namatjira refueling for a trip to Alice Springs, around 1948.

There have been cases of some exploitative dealers (known as carpetbaggers) that have sought to profit from the success of the Aboriginal art movements. Since Geoffrey Bardon’s time and in the early years of the Papunya movement, there has been concerns about the exploitation of the largely illiterate and non-English speaking artists.

One of the main reasons the Yuendumu movement was established, and later flourished, was due to the feeling of exploitation amongst artists:

“Many of the artists who played crucial roles in the founding of the art centre were aware of the increasing interest in Aboriginal art during the 1970s and had watched with concern and curiosity the developments of the art movement at Papunya amongst people to whom they were closely related. There was also a growing private market for Aboriginal art in Alice Springs. Artists’ experiences of the private market were marked by feelings of frustration and a sense of

disempowerment when buyers refused to pay prices which reflected the value of the Jukurrpa or showed little interest in understanding the story. The establishment of Warlukurlangu was one way of ensuring the artists had some control over the purchase and distribution of their paintings.” (Source: “Warlukurlangu Artists”. warlu.com. Archived from the original on 2005-07-23.)

Other cases of exploitation include:

- painting for a lemon (car): “Artists have come to me and pulled out photos of cars with mobile phone numbers on the back. They’re asked to paint 10-15 canvasses in exchange for a car. When the ‘Toyotas’ materialise, they often arrive with a flat tyre, no spares, no jack, no fuel.” (Coslovich 2003)
- preying on a sick artist: “Even coming to town for medical treatment, such as dialysis, can make an artist easy prey for dealers wanting to make a quick profit who congregate in Alice Springs” (op.cit.)
- pursuing a famous artist: “The late (great) Emily Kngwarreye...was relentlessly pursued by carpetbaggers towards the end of her career and produced a large but inconsistent body of work.” According to Sotheby’s “We take about one in every 20 paintings of hers, and with those we look for provenance we can be 100% sure of.” (op.cit.)

In March 2006, the ABC reported art fraud had hit the Western Australian Aboriginal Art movements. Allegations were made of sweatshop-like conditions, fake works by English backpackers, overpricing and artists posing for photographs for artwork that was not theirs. A detective on the case said:

“People are clearly taking advantage...Especially the elderly people. I mean, these are people that, they’re not educated; they haven’t had a lot of contact with white people. They’ve got no real basic understanding, you know, of the law and even business law. Obviously they’ve got no real business sense. A dollar doesn’t really have much of a meaning to them, and I think to treat anybody like that is just... it’s just not on in this country.” Call for ACCC to investigate Aboriginal Art industry, ABC PM, 15 March.

In August 2006, following concerns raised about unethical practices in the Indigenous art sector, the Australian Senate initiated an inquiry into issues in the sector. It heard from the Northern Territory Art Minister, Marion Scrymgour, that backpackers were often the artists of Aboriginal art being sold in tourist shops around Australia:

“The material they call Aboriginal art is almost exclusively the work of fakers, forgers and fraudsters. Their work hides behind false descriptions and dubious designs. The overwhelming majority of the ones you see in shops throughout the country, not to mention Darling, are fakes, pure and simple. There is some anecdotal evidence here in Darwin at least, they have been painted by backpackers working on industrial scale wood production.”<sup>[21]</sup>



The inquiry's final report made recommendations for changed funding and governance of the sector, including a code of practice.

### Aboriginal art movements and cooperatives

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Australian Indigenous art movements and cooperatives have been central to the emergence of Indigenous Australian art. Whereas many western artists pursue formal training and work as individuals, most contemporary Indigenous art is created in community groups and art centres.<sup>[22]</sup>

Many of the centres operate online art galleries where local and international visitors can purchase works directly from the communities without the need of going through an intermediary. The cooperatives reflect the diversity of art across Indigenous Australia from the north west region where ochre is significantly used; to the tropical north where the use of cross-hatching prevails; to the Papunya style of art from the central desert cooperatives. Art is increasingly becoming a significant source of income and livelihood for some of these communities.

### Awards

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US President George W. Bush examines a Yirrkala Bark Painting at the Australian National Maritime Museum, 2007

The winners of the West Australian Indigenous Arts Awards were announced on 22 August 2013. From over 137 nominations from throughout Australia, Churchill Cann won the Best West Australian Piece (A\$10,000) and North Queensland artist Brian Robinson won the Best Overall prize (A\$50,000).<sup>[23]</sup>

### Aboriginal art in international museums

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The Museum for Australian Aboriginal art "La grange" (at Neuchâtel, Switzerland) is one of the few museums in Europe that dedicates itself entirely to this kind of art. During seasonal exhibitions, works of art by internationally renowned artists are being shown. Also, the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, has an "Oceania" collection,<sup>[24]</sup> which includes works by Australian Aboriginal artists Lena Nyadbi, Paddy Nyunkuny Bedford, Judy Watson, Gulumbu Yunupingu, John Mawurndjul, Tommy Watson, Ningura Napurrula and Michael Riley.<sup>[25]</sup>

Two museums that solely exhibit Australian Aboriginal art are the Museum of Contemporary Aboriginal Art (AMU), in Utrecht, The Netherlands and the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia.<sup>[26][27]</sup>

## Sandpainting

**Sandpainting** is the art of pouring colored sands, and powdered pigments from minerals or crystals, or pigments from other natural or synthetic sources onto a surface to make a fixed, or unfixed sand painting. Unfixed sand paintings have a long established cultural history in numerous social groupings around the globe, and are often temporary, ritual paintings prepared for religious or healing ceremonies. It is also referred to as dry painting.

Drypainting is practiced by Native Americans in the Southwestern United States, by Tibetan and Buddhist monks, as well as Australian Aborigines, and also by Latin Americans on certain Christian holy days.



SLNSW 75764 Warriors in Ambush series 49 Aboriginal Mystic Bora Ceremony

### History

#### Native American sandpainting



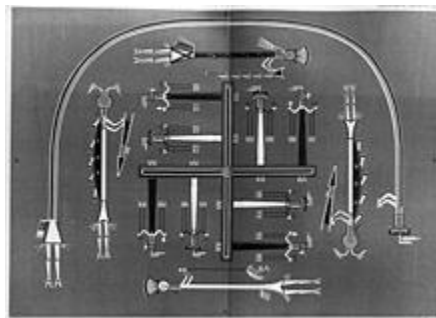
Navajo sandpainting, photogravure by Edward S. Curtis, 1907, Library of Congress

In the sandpainting of southwestern Native Americans (the most famous of which are the **Navajo** (known as the Diné)), the Medicine Man (or Hatałii) paints loosely upon the ground of a hogan, where the ceremony takes place, or on a buckskin or cloth tarpaulin, by letting the coloured sands flow through his fingers with control and skill. There are 600 to 1,000 different traditional designs for sandpaintings known to the Navajo. They do not view the paintings as static objects, but as spiritual, living beings to be treated with great respect. More than 30 different sandpaintings may be associated with one ceremony.

The colors for the painting are usually accomplished with naturally coloured sand, crushed gypsum (white), yellow ochre, red sandstone, charcoal and a mixture of charcoal and gypsum (blue). Brown can be made by mixing red and black; red and white make pink. Other colouring agents include corn meal, flower pollen, or powdered roots and bark.

The paintings are for healing purposes only. Many of them contain images of Yeibicheii (the Holy People). While creating the painting, the medicine man will chant, asking the yeibicheii to come into the painting and help heal the patient.

When the medicine man finishes painting, he checks its accuracy. The order and symmetry of the painting symbolize the harmony which a patient wishes to reestablish in his or her life. The accuracy of a sandpainting is believed to determine its efficacy as a sacred tool. The patient will be asked to sit on the sandpainting as the medicine man proceeds with the healing chant. It is claimed the sandpainting acts as a portal to attract the spirits and allow them to come and go. Practitioners believe sitting on the sandpainting helps the patient to absorb spiritual power, while in turn the Holy People will absorb the illness and take it away. Afterward, when the sandpainting has served its purpose, it is considered to be toxic, since it has absorbed the illness. For this reason, the painting is destroyed. Because of the sacred nature of the ceremonies, the sandpaintings are begun, finished, used and destroyed within 12 hours.



Navajo sandpainting, photo by H.S. Poley, published c. 1890-1908, Library of Congress

The ceremonies involving sandpaintings are usually done in sequences, termed 'chants', lasting a certain number of days depending on the ceremony. At least one fresh, new sandpainting is made for each day.

Some Navajo laws and taboos relate to the sandpaintings, and protect their holiness:

- Women of child-bearing age are not supposed to sing the chants associated with the yeibicheii. This is both because the ceremony has a possibility of injuring an unborn child, and because of a taboo preventing menstruating women from attending. (Some cultures considered menstruation and presence of blood to be powerful spiritual events that had to be restrained, as they represented life forces.) Post-menopausal women are more likely to be chanters or diagnosticians.
- Authentic sandpaintings are rarely photographed, so as to not disrupt the flow of the ceremony. For many reasons, medicine men will seldom allow outsiders inside a sacred ceremony. Because so many outsiders are curious about sandpainting, some medicine men may create pieces for exhibition purposes only, using reversed colors and variations. To create an authentic sandpainting solely for viewing would be a profane act. The sandpaintings for sale in shops and on the Internet are commercially produced and contain deliberate errors, as the real sandpaintings are considered sacred.
- The earliest credited instance of traditional Navajo sandpaintings (being rendered in coloured sands as opposed to tapestry or other media) being created in a permanent form for sale, have been traced to between 1945 and 1955. The main credit is generally given to a Navajo Hatalii named Fred Stevens, Jr. (Grey Squirrel), who developed the primary method of “permatizing” for commercial sandpaintings that is still used.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Ethnomusicology



Ethnomusicologist Frances Densmore recording Blackfoot chief Mountain Chief for the Bureau of American Ethnology in 1916

**Ethnomusicology** is an area of study that encompasses distinct theoretical and methodical approaches to the study of music that emphasizes the cultural, social, material, cognitive, biological, and other dimensions or contexts of musical behavior instead of or in addition to its isolated sound component.

The term ethnomusicology, said to have been first coined by Jaap Kunst from the Greek words ἔθνος (ethnos, “nation”) and μουσική (mousike, “music”), is often defined as the anthropology or ethnography of music, or as musical anthropology.<sup>[1]</sup> During its early development from comparative musicology in the 1950s, ethnomusicology was primarily oriented toward non-Western music, but for several decades has included the study of all and any musics of the world (including Western art music and popular music) from anthropological, sociological and intercultural perspectives. Bruno Nettl once characterized ethnomusicology as a product of Western thinking, proclaiming that “ethnomusicology as western culture knows it is actually a western phenomenon”;<sup>[2]</sup> in 1992, Jeff Todd Titon described it as the study of “people making music”.<sup>[3]</sup>



The didgeridoo and clap stick players of the One Mob Different Country dance troupe at the Nightcliff Seabreeze Festival 04 May 2013

### Definition

Stated broadly, ethnomusicology may be described as a holistic investigation of music in its cultural contexts.<sup>[4]</sup> Combining aspects of folklore, psychology, cultural anthropology, linguistics, comparative musicology, music theory, and history,<sup>[5]</sup> ethnomusicology has adopted perspectives from a multitude of disciplines.<sup>[6]</sup> This disciplinary variety has given rise to many definitions of the field, and attitudes and foci of ethnomusicologists have evolved since initial studies in the area of comparative musicology in the early 1900s. When the field first came into existence, it was largely limited to the study of non-Western music—in contrast to the study of Western art music, which had been the focus of conventional musicology. In fact, the field was referred to early in its existence as “comparative musicology,” defining Western musical traditions as the standard to which all other music were compared, though this term fell out of use in the 1950s as critics for the practices associated with it became more vocal about ethnomusicology’s distinction from musicology.<sup>[7]</sup> Over time, the definition broadened to include study of all the music of the world according to certain approaches.<sup>[8][9]</sup>

While there is not a single, authoritative definition for ethnomusicology, a number of constants appear in the definitions employed by leading scholars in the field. It is agreed upon that ethnomusicologists look at music from beyond a purely sonic and historical perspective, and look instead at music within culture, music as culture, and music as a reflection of culture.<sup>[7][9]</sup> In addition, many ethnomusicological studies share common methodological approaches encapsulated in ethnographic fieldwork, often conducting primary fieldwork among those who make the music, learning languages and the music itself, and taking on the role of a participant observer in learning to perform in a musical tradition, a practice Hood termed “bi-musicality”.<sup>[10]</sup> Musical fieldworkers often also collect recordings and contextual information about the music of



interest.<sup>[7]</sup> Thus, ethnomusicological studies do not rely on printed or manuscript sources as the primary source of epistemic authority.

## Dance

**Dance** is a performance art form consisting of purposefully selected sequences of human movement. This movement has aesthetic and symbolic value, and is acknowledged as dance by performers and observers within a particular culture.<sup>[nb 1]</sup> Dance can be categorized and described by its choreography, by its repertoire of movements, or by its historical period or place of origin.

### Origins



Mesolithic dancers at Bhimbetka

Archaeological evidence for early dance includes 9,000-year-old paintings in India at the Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka, and Egyptian tomb paintings depicting dancing figures, dated c. 3300 BC. It has been proposed that before the invention of written languages, dance was an important part of the oral and performance methods of passing stories down from generation to generation.<sup>[5]</sup> The use of dance in ecstatic trance states and healing rituals (as observed today in many contemporary indigenous cultures, from the Brazilian rainforest to the Kalahari Desert) is thought to have been another early factor in the social development of dance.<sup>[6]</sup>



Greek bronze statuette of a veiled and masked dancer, 3rd-2nd century BC, Alexandria, Egypt.

References to dance can be found in very early recorded history; Greek dance(horos) is referred to by Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch and Lucian.<sup>[7]</sup> The Bible and Talmud refer to many events related to dance, and contain over 30 different dance terms.<sup>[8]</sup> In Chinese pottery as early as the Neolithic period, groups of people are depicted dancing in a line holding hands,<sup>[9]</sup> and the earliest Chinese word for “dance” is found written in the oracle bones.<sup>[10]</sup> Dance is further described in the Lüshi Chunqiu.<sup>[11][12]</sup> Primitive dance in ancient China was associated with sorcery and shamanic rituals.

During the first millennium BCE in India, many texts were composed which attempted to codify aspects of daily life. Bharata Muni’s Natyashastra (literally “the text of dramaturgy”) is one of the earlier texts. It mainly deals with drama, in which dance plays an important part in Indian culture. It categorizes dance into four types – secular, ritual, abstract, and, interpretive – and into four regional varieties. The text elaborates various hand-gestures (mudras) and classifies movements of the various limbs, steps and so on. A strong continuous tradition of dance has since continued in India, through to modern times, where it continues to play a role in culture, ritual, and, notably, the Bollywood entertainment industry. Many other contemporary dance forms can likewise be traced back to historical, traditional, ceremonial, and ethnic dance.

## Cultural traditions

### Africa

Ugandan youth dance at a cultural celebration of peace

Dance in Africa is deeply integrated into society and major events in a community are frequently reflected in dances: dances are performed for births and funerals, weddings and wars.<sup>[13]:13</sup> Traditional dances impart cultural morals, including religious traditions and sexual standards; give vent to repressed emotions, such as grief; motivate community members to cooperate,

whether fighting wars or grinding grain; enact spiritual rituals; and contribute to social cohesiveness.<sup>[14]</sup>

Thousands of dances are performed around the continent. These may be divided into traditional, neotraditional, and classical styles: folkloric dances of a particular society, dances created more recently in imitation of traditional styles, and dances transmitted more formally in schools or private lessons.<sup>[13]:18</sup> African dance has been altered by many forces, such as European missionaries and colonialist governments, who often suppressed local dance traditions as licentious or distracting.<sup>[14]</sup> Dance in contemporary African cultures still serves its traditional functions in new contexts; dance may celebrate the inauguration of a hospital, build community for rural migrants in unfamiliar cities, and be incorporated into Christian church ceremonies.<sup>[14]</sup>



An Indian classical dancer

## Asia

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All Indian classical dances are to varying degrees rooted in the *Natyashastra* and therefore share common features: for example, the *mudras* (hand positions), some body positions, and the inclusion of dramatic or expressive acting or *abhinaya*. Indian classical music provides accompaniment and dancers of nearly all the styles wear bells around their ankles to counterpoint and complement the percussion.

There are now many regional varieties of Indian classical dance. Dances like “*Odra Magadhi*”, which after decades long debate, has been traced to present day Mithila, Odisha region’s dance form of *Odissi* (Orissi), indicate influence of dances in cultural interactions between different regions.<sup>[15]</sup>

The Punjab area overlapping India and Pakistan is the place of origin of Bhangra. It is widely known both as a style of music and a dance. It is mostly related to ancient harvest celebrations, love, patriotism or social issues. Its music is coordinated by a musical instrument called the 'Dhol'. Bhangra is not just music but a dance, a celebration of the harvest where people beat the dhol (drum), sing Boliyaan (lyrics) and dance. It developed further with the Vaisakhi festival of the Sikhs.

The dances of Sri Lanka include the devil dances (yakun natima), a carefully crafted ritual reaching far back into Sri Lanka's pre-Buddhist past that combines ancient "Ayurvedic" concepts of disease causation with psychological manipulation and combines many aspects including Sinhalese cosmology. Their influence can be seen on the classical dances of Sri Lanka.<sup>[16]</sup>



Two classical ballet dancers perform a sequence of The Nutcracker, one of the best known works of classical dance

The dances of the Middle East are usually the traditional forms of circle dancing which are modernized to an extent. They would include dabke, tamzara, Assyrian folk dance, Kurdish dance, Armenian dance and Turkish dance, among others.<sup>[17][18]</sup> All these forms of dances would usually involve participants engaging each other by holding hands or arms (depending on the style of the dance). They would make rhythmic moves with their legs and shoulders as they curve around the dance floor. The head of the dance would generally hold a cane or handkerchief.<sup>[17][19]</sup>

### Europe and North America

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Ballet developed first in Italy and then in France from lavish court spectacles that combined music, drama, poetry, song, costumes and dance. Members of the court nobility took part as performers. During the reign of Louis XIV, himself a dancer, dance became more codified. Professional dancers began to take the place of court amateurs, and ballet masters were licensed by the French government. The first ballet dance academy was the Académie Royale de Danse (Royal Dance Academy), opened in Paris in 1661. Shortly thereafter, the first

institutionalized ballet troupe, associated with the Academy, was formed; this troupe began as an all-male ensemble but by 1681 opened to include women as well.<sup>[5]</sup>

20th century concert dance brought an explosion of innovation in dance style characterized by an exploration of freer technique. Early pioneers of what became known as modern dance include Loie Fuller, Isadora Duncan, Mary Wigman and Ruth St. Denis. The relationship of music to dance serves as the basis for Eurhythmics, devised by Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, which was influential to the development of Modern dance and modern ballet through artists such as Marie Rambert. Eurythmy, developed by Rudolf Steiner and Marie Steiner-von Sivers, combines formal elements reminiscent of traditional dance with the new freer style, and introduced a complex new vocabulary to dance. In the 1920s, important founders of the new style such as Martha Graham and Doris Humphrey began their work. Since this time, a wide variety of dance styles have been developed.

African American dance developed in everyday spaces, rather than in dance studios, schools or companies. Tap dance, disco, jazz dance, swing dance, hip hop dance, the lindy hop with its relationship to rock and roll music and rock and roll dance have had a global influence.

## Latin America

Dance is central to Latin American social life and culture. Brazilian Samba, Argentinian tango, and Cuban salsa are internationally popular partner dances, and other national dances—merengue, cueca, plena, jarabe, joropo, marinera, cumbia, and others—are important components of their respective countries' cultures.<sup>[20]</sup> Traditional Carnival festivals incorporate these and other dances in enormous celebrations.<sup>[21]</sup>

Dance has played an important role in forging a collective identity among the many cultural and ethnic groups of Latin America.<sup>[22]</sup> Dance served to unite the many African, European, and indigenous peoples of the region.<sup>[20]</sup> Certain dance genres, such as capoeira, and body movements, especially the characteristic quebrada or pelvis swing, have been variously banned and celebrated throughout Latin American history.<sup>[22]</sup>

# ARCHITECTURE

## 1. ARCHITECTURE

Architecture is another creative form that can give insights into cultural values and beliefs. How can the type of housing be reflective of the different ways in which people live and survive? For example, why would the form of housing be different for Forager societies from Agricultural societies? What can we learn about cultural identity, status, and beliefs by looking at architectural forms in different societies?

Watch the “The Architecture of Mud” (51:00)

Log onto Kanopy Stream from the City tech library website, select “articles” in order to select the database under “K” for Kanopy Streaming. Or click link below, but you still need your City Tech ID to login from off campus.

<https://citytech-kanopystreaming-com.citytech.ezproxy.cuny.edu/video/architecture-mud>

OR

Take a look at “The Art and Architecture of Power” (30:00)

<https://citytech-kanopystreaming-com.citytech.ezproxy.cuny.edu/video/art-and-architecture-power>

## WATCH THE FOLLOWING:

Watch Wade Davis’s TED talk “The Worldwide Web of Belief and ritual” (19:08):

[http://www.ted.com/talks/wade\\_davis\\_on\\_the\\_worldwide\\_web\\_of\\_belief\\_and\\_ritual](http://www.ted.com/talks/wade_davis_on_the_worldwide_web_of_belief_and_ritual)

In what way is religion / belief intertwined in their daily lives? How are all things connected?

Davis asks “What does it mean to be human and alive”? What does he mean?



# Summary Outline of chapter

## UNIT FIVE: Superstructure: Beliefs and Expressions that Support the society

Art

Purpose of Art

Paleolithic Art

Tribal Art

Folk Art

Indigenous Australian Art

Navajo Sandpainting

Ethnomusicology

Dance

Architecture

Architecture

Watch:

Watch the “The Architecture of Mud” (51:00)

Or

Take a look at “The Art and Architecture of Power” (30:00)

# REFERENCES BY SECTION

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<https://courses.candelalearning.com/anthropologyx15x1/part/unit-11-art/>

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## Chapter : Art - References

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## External links

- [Tribal Art Magazine](#)
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## Dance -- References

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"Dance is human behaviour composed (from the dancer's perspective, which is usually shared by the audience members of the dancer's culture) of purposeful (individual choice and social learning play a role), intentionally rhythmical, and culturally patterned sequences of nonverbal body movement mostly other than those performed in ordinary motor activities. The motion (in time, space, and with effort) has an inherent and aesthetic value (the notion of appropriateness and competency as viewed by the dancer's culture) and symbolic potential."<sup>[3]</sup>

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