# Art of the Americas:
# Pre-Columbian to Modern

## 1. Chavín de Huántar

Chavín de Huántar is located in the north-central sierra of Peru, sandwiched between the desert coast - one of the driest deserts of the world - and the humid tropical Amazonian lowlands to the east. The famed Andean prehistoric states, culminating with the expansive Inca empire, were primarily situated in coastal and sierra environments.

Chavín de Huántar is a site representative of early monumentality, and by extension, early leadership, if we infer that the large amount of labor involved in massive construction was coordinated by, and probably mandated by the governing structure. If this is the case, then the characteristics and growth patterns of these early centers should reflect some aspects of that leadership, and the strategies of governance in which architecture played a part.

Chavín dates to around 1000-200 B.C. (if not earlier), a period called the Early Horizon, when elaborate ceramics, textiles, and sculpted stone found in larger sites throughout much of the Central Andes (modern day Peru) demonstrate a certain level of stylistic unity. At first it was thought that this broad distribution of similar art was evidence for a strong state-like political leadership, but little evidence has been found for the unified, bureaucratic, and military organization typical of evolved states.

Rather, Chavín sits squarely in the transition from societies based on relatively egalitarian relations (in which people are fairly close to equal in status and power, and permanent leadership is rare), and states, which are based on intrinsic differences in rights and power between individuals and segments of the population, and a strong, usually hereditary leadership of pervasive control.

Leadership and power may have evolved through many routes. Early roles of leaders probably included organizing the relatively recently instituted agricultural food production, coordinating the increasingly large local living groups (villages, towns), coordinating aggression and defense, and serving as a religious leadership. Leaders probably benefitted from their key position in society, and probably saw benefits in expanding the area and population over which they had control. While those being led may have benefitted from certain aspects of the organization, they inevitably had to support such specialists through increasing levels of contributed labor or produce. It is likely that early leaders were searching for strategies through which they could convince others of their ability and right to make decisions and control others.

Chavín art is dramatic, strangely exotic, filled with mythical and living beasts and snarling humans. The imagery is compelling, some of the finest from prehistoric America, an art style with a strong Amazonian flavor. It is as if Chavín ideology has attempted to reconcile the dichotomy between high mountain and humid jungle, melding together primordial beliefs from the forests with those of farmers in remote mountain valleys. Experts believe there were two major gods at Chavín. The first was the 'Smiling God' depicted on the Lanzón stela, a human body with a feline head, clawed hands and feet. The second was a 'Staff God,' carved in low relief on another granite slab found in the temple. A standing man with downturned, snarling mouth and serpent headdress grasps two staffs adorned with feline heads and jaguar mouths. Both these anthropomorphic deities were supernatural beings, but may represent complex rituals of transformation that took place in the temple according to Richard Burger. There are some clues from the other Chavín reliefs. A granite slab from the plaza bears the figure of a jaguar-being resplendent in jaguar and serpent regalia. He grasps a powerful, hallucinogenic San Pedro cactus, a species still used today by tribal shamans peering into the spiritual world. The San Pedro contains mescaline, and has mind-altering effects, producing multi-colored visions, shapes, and patterns. This powerful hallucinogen gives the shaman great powers, sends him on flowing journeys through the subconscious, and gives him dramatic insights into the meaning of life. Perhaps the Chavín jaguar-humans represent shamans transformed into fierce, wily jaguars by potent does of hallucinogenic plants. Such shamanistic rituals, so common in South America to this day, have roots that go back deep into prehistory, to Chavín and probably beyond.

The shaman and the jaguar, and the complex relationship between them, were a powerful catalyst not only in the Andes, but in Mesoamerica as well. This was not because a compelling shaman-jaguar cult developed in, say, Olmec or Chavín society and spread far and wide to become the foundation of all prehistoric American civilization. It was simply because of the deep and abiding symbolic relationship between the human shaman and the animal jaguar in native American society literally wherever jaguars flourished. Chavín ideology was born of both tropical forest and coastal beliefs, one so powerful that it spawned a lively, exotic art style that spread rapidly over a wide area of the highlands and arid coast. Chavín was the catalyst for many technological advances, among them the painting of textiles, many of which served as wall hangings with their ideological message writ large in vivid colors. These powerful images, in clay, wood, and gold, on textiles and in stone, drew together the institutions and achievements

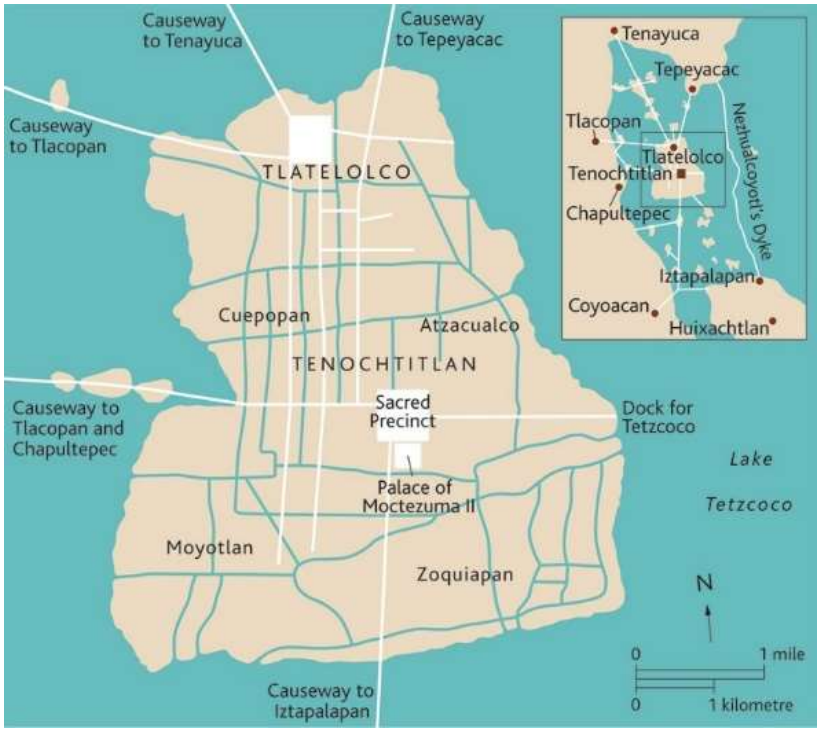
of increasingly sophisticated Andean societies. Such cosmic, shamanistic visions were Chavín's legacy to later Andean civilizations.

**2. Templo Mayor**

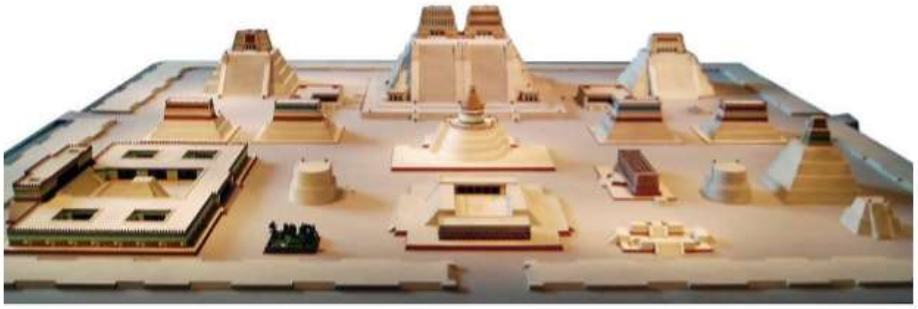
In 1978, electrical workers in Mexico City came across a remarkable discovery. While digging near the main plaza, they found a finely carved stone monolith that displayed a dismembered and decapitated woman. Immediately, they knew they found something special. Shortly thereafter, archaeologists realized that the monolith displayed the Mexica (Aztec)* goddess Coyolxauhqui, or Bells-Her-Cheeks, the sister of the Mexica's patron god, Huitzilopochtli (Hummingbird-Left), who killed his sister when she attempted to kill their mother. This monolith led to the discovery of the Templo Mayor, the main Mexica temple located in the sacred precinct of the former Mexica capital, known as Tenochtitlan.

The Templo Mayor The city of Tenochtitlan (now Mexico City) was established in 1325 on an island in the middle of Lake Texcoco (much of which has since been filled in to accommodate Mexico City which now exists on this site), and with the city's foundation the original structure of the Templo Mayor was built. Between 1325 and 1519, the Templo Mayor was expanded, enlarged, and reconstructed during seven main building phases, which likely corresponded with different rulers, or tlatoani ("speaker"), taking office. Sometimes new construction was the result of environmental problems, such as flooding.

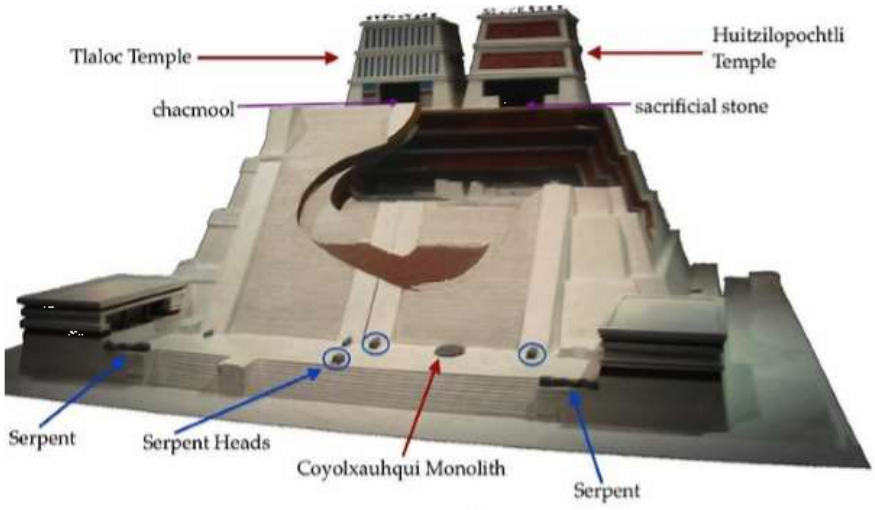
Located in the sacred precinct at the heart of the city, the Templo Mayor was positioned at the center of the Mexica capital and thus the entire empire. The capital was also divided into four main quadrants, with the Templo Mayor at the center. This design reflects the Mexica cosmos, which was believed to be composed of four parts structured around the navel of the universe, or the axis mundi.



The Templo Mayor was approximately ninety feet high and covered in stucco. Two grand staircases accessed twin temples, which were dedicated to the deities Tlaloc and Huitzilopochti. Model of the sacred precinct in Tenochtitlan. Tlaloc was the deity of water and rain and was associated with agricultural fertility. Huitzilopochtli was the patron deity of the Mexica, and he was associated with warfare, fire, and the Sun.



Paired together on the Templo Mayor, the two deities symbolized the Mexica concept of atl-tlachinolli, or burnt water, which connoted warfare—the primary way in which the Mexica acquired their power and wealth.




In the center of the Huitzilopochtli temple was a sacrificial stone. Near the top, standardbearer figures decorated the stairs. They likely held paper banners and feathers. Serpent balustrades adorn the base of the temple of Huitzilopochtli, and two undulating serpents flank the stairs that led to the base of the Templo Mayor as well.

**3. Aztec Calendar Stone. c.1500, basalt**

The Aztecs carried on the traditions of timekeeping begun by the Maya. Like the Maya, they devised a solar calendar of 365 days and anticipated the cyclical destruction of the world every fifty-two years. They produced the famous ‘Calendar Stone,’ a huge votive object that functioned not as an actual calendar, but as a symbol of the Aztec cosmos. The four square panels that surround the face of the sun

god represent the four previous creations of the world. Arranged around these panels are the twenty signs of the days of the month in the eighteen-month Aztec year, and embracing the entire cosmic configuration are two giant serpents that bear the sun on its daily journey. The stone is the pictographic counterpart of Aztec legends that bind human beings to the gods and to the irreversible wheel of time.

This process of creations and destructions was the result of the titanic struggle between the Black Tezcatlipoca and Quetzalcoatl, in each of which one or the other would be triumphant and would dominate the next age. The previous age perished in floods, when the sky fell on the earth and all became dark. We ourselves live in the Fifth Sun, which was created at Teotihuacan when the gods gathered there to consider what to do. After each had declined in turn the honor of sacrificing himself to begin the world anew, the least and most miserable of them, 'The Proxy (or Purulent) One,' hurled himself in a great fire and rose up to the sky as the new Sun. Another god then repeated this altruistic act, rising as the Moon; but this luminary was casting rays as bright as the Sun, so to dim it the gods hurled a rabbit across the Moon's face, where it may still be seen.


Human beings had existed in the previous world, but they had perished. To recreate them Quetzalcoatl made a perilous journey into the Underworld, stealing their bones from Mictlantecuhtli 'Lord of the Land of the Dead.' When he reached the earth's surface, these were ground up in a bowl, and the gods shed blood over them from their punctured members. From this deed, people were born, but they lacked the sustenance that the gods had decreed for them: maize, which had been hidden by the gods inside a magic mountain. Here again Quetzalcoatl came to the rescue: by turning himself into an ant, he entered the mountain and stole the grains which were to nurture the Aztec people.

It was impressed on the Aztec mind that the close of every 52-year Calendar Round was a point at which the Fifth Sun could be destroyed. On this day, all fires in every temple, palace, and household were extinguished. On the Hill of the Star, just east of Colhuacan in the Valley of Mexico, the Fire Priests anxiously watched to see if the Pleiades would cross the meridian at midnight on this date; if they did,

then the universe would continue. A fire was kindled on fire-sticks in the newly opened breast of a captive, and the glowing embers were carried by runners to every part of the Aztec realm.

At the center of the Sun Stone, the wrinkled face of a blond-haired Tonatiuh is depicted with his tongue ravenously hanging from his mouth in the shape of an obsidian sacrificial knife (tecpatl). (Some scholars actually think that the deity is actually Tlaltecuhtli, the night sun of the underworld.) His wrinkles indicate his old age, and his blond hair (as described in indigenous chronicles) associates him with the golden Sun. But it is his tongue that so graphically links him to human sacrifice and blood. Tonatiuh is surrounded by the symbol Nahui Ollin (4 Movement), the date on which the current sun of motion (the fifth sun) was created in Teotihuacán.

In the four flanges of the Ollin sign appear the names of the four previous creations: 4 Jaguar, 4 Wind, 4 Rain, and 4 Water. Adjacent to the flanges, the four directions or cardinal points of the universe are represented like a cosmological map. The north is a warrior's headdress, which symbolized the military power of the Mexica and their growing empire. The south is a monkey and represents a part of one of the previous suns or ages in the myth of creation. The west is Tlalocan, the house of the rain god Tlaloc, and symbolizes water, essential for human survival. In the next outer circle are shown the 20 days of the month. The solar calendar was composed of 18 periods of 20 days, plus five days called nemontemi (useless and nameless).

The outermost circle depicts the bodies of two fire serpents that encompass the Sun Stone. These serpents symbolize the connection between the upper and lower worlds and work like an axis mundi uniting two opposite worlds. Their opened mouths at the bottom represent the underworld. Two heads emerge from their opened mouths: Quetzalcoatl, personified as Tonatiuh (the Sun) on the right, and Tezcatlipoca, personified as Xiuhtecuhtli (the night) on the left. These two gods have their tongues out touching each other, representing the continuity of time. This interaction symbolizes the everyday struggle of the gods for supremacy on Earth and in the heavens with the rising and setting of the sun, which are always in contact.

**4**. **Coyolxauhqui Stone**

Aztec monumental sculpture continues to fascinate people today, sun gods all bristling with claws and fangs, undulating rattle snakes bursting forth from the necks of decapitated goddesses. What was all of this frightening imagery about? It is clear that the monoliths were set in and around Tenochtitlán's Great Temple to lend context and meaning to the religious architecture and to the gods

celebrated there. Contrasting with its subtlety is the extremely graphic imagery. The portrayal of death is a common theme. The sculpted disk of Coyolxauhqui is a good case in point. By far the most famous object decorating the Huitzilopochtli temple is the Coyolxauhqui monolith, found at the base of the stairs. It portrays the goddess lying on her side and stripped of her clothing. In Mesoamerica, nudity was symbolic of the public humiliation of the defeated.

Originally painted and carved in low relief, the Coyolxauhqui monolith is approximately eleven feet in diameter and displays the female deity Coyolxauhqui, or Bells-on-her-face. Golden bells decorate her cheeks, feathers and balls of down adorn her hair, and she wears elaborate earrings, fanciful sandals and bracelets, and a serpent belt with a skull attached at the back. Monster faces are found at her joints, connecting her to other female deities—some of whom are associated with trouble and chaos. She is also decapitated and dismembered. Her head and limbs are separated from her torso and are organized in a pinwheel shape. Pieces of bone stick out from her limbs.

The monolith relates to an important myth: the birth of the Mexica patron deity, Huitzilopochtli. Apparently, Huitzilopochtli's mother, Coatlicue (Snakes-her-skirt), became pregnant one day from a feather that entered her skirt. Her daughter, Coyolxauhqui, became angry when she heard that her mother was pregnant, and together with her 400 brothers (called the Centzonhuitznahua) attacked their mother. At the moment of attack, Huitzilopochtli emerged, fully clothed and armed, to defend his mother on the mountain called Coatepec (Snake Mountain). Eventually, Huitzilopochtli defeated his sister, then beheaded her and threw her body down the mountain, at which point her body broke apart.

The monolith portrays the moment in the myth after Huitzilopochtli vanquished Coyolxauhqui and threw her body down the mountain. By placing this sculpture at the base of Huiztilopochtli's temple, the Mexica effectively transformed the temple into Coatepec. Many of the temple's decorations and sculptural program also support this identification. The snake balustrades and serpent heads identify the temple as a snake mountain, or Coatepec. It is possible that the standard-bearer figures recovered at the Templo Mayor symbolized Huitzilopochtli's 400 brothers.

Ritual performances that occurred at the Templo Mayor also support the idea that the temple symbolically represented Coatepec. For instance, the ritual of Panquetzaliztli(banner raising) celebrated Huitzilopochtli's triumph over Coyolxauhqui and his 400 brothers. People offered gifts to the deity, danced and ate tamales. During the ritual, war captives who had been painted blue were killed on the sacrificial stone and then their bodies were rolled down the staircase to fall atop the Coyolxauhqui monolith to reenact the myth associated with Coatepec. For the enemies of the Mexica and those people the Mexica ruled over, this ritual was a powerful reminder to submit to Mexica authority. Clearly, the decorations and rituals associated with the Templo Mayor connoted the power of the Mexica empire and their patron deity, Huitzilopochtli.

5. **Ruler's feather headdress (probably of Motecuhzoma II). Mexica (Aztec). 1428–1520 C.E. Feathers (quetzal and cotinga) and gold.**

Of the many hundreds of Aztec featherworks that once existed only a few have survived. Just like jade, turquoise and gold, featherworks were valued highly by the Aztecs and other Mesoamerican peoples. The featherworkers or amantecas were organized in guilds and stood at the service of the elite in the main centers of the Triple Alliance or Aztec Empire. The colorful tropical feathers were imported by merchants or extracted as tribute from conquered areas since none of the tropical birds actually lived in the homeland of the Aztecs or Mexica. After the Conquest many featherworks were shipped to Europe and entered the collections of the clergy and nobility.

It consists of over 450 tail feathers of the Resplendent Quetzal, as well as feathers of the Lovely Cotinga, Roseate Spoonbill, Squirrel Cuckoo and additional shorter feathers of the Quetzal. They are mounted on a net of vegetal fibers and wooden sticks. The front part is decorated with gold ornaments. In its original state, a golden bird's beak was attached to the headdress. Upon its discovery the headdress was restored, feathers and metal ornaments (now of gilded bronze) were substituted. The approximate measurements of the feathered piece are 116 cm in height and a width of 175 cm.

Clearly, Aztec art was colorful. An idea of its iridescent splendor is captured in the Feather Headdress said to have been given by the Aztec emperor Moctezuma to Cortes, and thought to be the one listed in the inventory of treasures Cortes shipped to Charles V, the Habsburg emperor in Spain, in 1519. Featherwork was one of the glories of Mesoamerican art, but very few of these extremely fragile artworks survive. The tropical feathers in this headdress exemplify the exotic tribute paid to the Aztecs; the long iridescent green feathers that make up most of the headdress are the exceedingly rare tail feathers of the quetzal bird- each male quetzal has only two such plumes. The feathers were gathered in small bunches, their quills reinforced with reed tubes, and then sewn to the frame in overlapping layers, the joins concealed by small gold plaques. Featherworkers were esteemed artists. After the Spanish invasion, they turned their exacting skills to 'feather paintings' of Christian subjects.

Aztecs believed the natural world in which they lived to be infused with divine spirit and took great interest in animals and plants. As the Spaniards noted, the king Motechuzoma II maintained menageries, aviaries and a kind of botanical garden. Sculptures of the Aztec period include numerous carvings of plants, reptiles, animals and even insects. Some, especially coiled rattlesnakes, may have had symbolic significance.

**6. Frontispiece, *Codex Mendoza*, Viceroyalty of New Spain, c. 1541–1542, pigment on paper**

The Codex Mendoza is believed to have been commissioned by the Viceroy Mendoza for presentation to Charles V and is said to have been seized by French pirates. The Codex Mendoza contains 72 pages of drawings with Spanish glosses, 63 pages of Spanish commentary, one text figure, and seven blank pages. Its three sections, although drawn with a uniform style of drawing and annotation, have different subject matters and origins.

The original purpose of the Codex Mendoza seems to have been to provide royal policymakers with reliable information about the functioning of the former Aztec empire now controlled by the Spaniards. Beyond its practical value to the Spanish, the antiquarian value of the codex to modern scholars is immense, since two-thirds of the document may have been copied directly from pre-Hispanic pictorial sources. If so, then this is a truly amazing survival since such pre-Hispanic codices were all but completely destroyed during the extirpation campaigns waged by the first bishop of Mexico, Juan de Zumarraga. Hastily finished before the departure of the semi-annual flotilla back to Spain, the codex was captured along with other goods and riches bound for the Spanish king by French corsairs in the Caribbean, and thence was deposited with the French royal cosmographer Andre Thevet--whose autograph and annotations are copiously present on the text.

The codex itself was divided into three distinct sections. Part One, "the conquest section," is a history of the Mexica kings from the founding of Tenochtitlan to the arrival of the Spanish. For each king's reign, a standard "annals" format was employed by native artists: Native-style year glyphs run along the margins of an initial page (corresponding to his years of rule), followed by a series of place-glyphs pierced by flaming-spears (representing the towns and regions captured during his military campaigns). Part Two, "the tribute section," is an account of the provinces which owed tribute to the Mexica kings. Again a standardized format is employed by the native artists with each page corresponding to a distinct tribute-paying region: Place-glyphs of the towns within each tribute province are drawn along the left and lower margins of the page, while the type and quantity of tribute paid during the year are represented by images of tribute goods with Spanish glosses. Part Two of the Codex Mendoza provided the Spanish with practical information about Aztec tribute patterns and levels that served as a guide and yardstick for their own tribute-collection activities. The third part of the Codex

Mendoza, "the daily-life section," contains ethnographic data pertaining to the life cycle of individuals from birth to marriage (fs. 57r-61r), as well as about the various occupations of priests, warriors and other professions. While Parts One and Two seem to have been copied from extant native pictorial manuscripts, the third section was added specifically for the codex.

An Aztec scribe drew an idealized representation of the city of Tenochtitlan and its sacred ceremonial precinct for the Spanish viceroy in 1545. It forms the first page of the Codex Mendoza. An eagle perched on a prickly pear cactus growing out of a stone- the symbol of the city- fills the center of the page. Waterways divide the city into four quarters, and indicate the lake surrounding the city. Early leaders of Tenochtitlan are shown sitting in the four quadrants. The victorious warriors at the bottom of the page represent Aztec conquests, and a count of years surrounds the entire scene. This image combines historical narration with idealized cartography, showing the city in the middle of the lake at the moment of its founding.

The Mexica people who lived in the remarkable city that Cortes found were then rulers of much of the land that later took their name, Mexico. Their rise to power had been recent and swift. Only 400 years earlier, according to their own legends, they had been a nomadic people living far north of the Valley of Mexico in a distant place called Aztlan. The term Aztec derives from the work Aztlan, and refers to all those living in Central Mexico who came from this mythical homeland, not just to the Mexica of Tenochtitlan. The Mexica arrived in the Valley of Mexico in the thirteenth century. They eventually settled on an island in Lake Texcoco where they had seen an eagle perching on a prickly pear cactus (nochtli) growing out of a stone (tetl), a sign that their god Huitzilopochtli told them would mark the end of their wandering. They called the place Tenochtitlan. The city on the island was gradually expanded by reclaiming land from the lake, and serviced by a grid of artificial canals. In the fifteenth century, the Mexica- joined by allies in a triple alliance- began an aggressive campaign of expansion. The tribute they exacted from all over Mexico transformed Tenochtitlan into a glittering capital.

At the center of the city- considered the center of the universe- was the sacred precinct archaeologists call the Templo Mayor, represented in abbreviated form above the eagle as a single temple- one of two surmounting a great pyramid. To the right of the cactus is the rack of skulls of the

sacrificial victims whose bodies the Aztec priests threw down the pyramid's steps after cutting out their hearts. The labeled figures seated on reed mats in Tenochtitlan's four quarters are the legendary founders of the city. Below, the painter represented two historical events in stereotypical form. Aztec warriors with clubs and shields conquer two cities, Colhuacan and Tenayuca, shown as temple-pyramids set ablaze. The border contains hieroglyphs for 51 of the 52 years of one of the recurring cycles of the Aztec calendar system.

Tradition tells us that the beautifully painted books were gathered into a small heap in the marketplace of Texcoco and that, in a Christian ceremony marked by religious fervor aimed at wiping out the devil's magic and idolatrous images, the brilliant intellectual and artistic treasures of ancient Mexico were committed to the flames and became ashes. Though this particular story may be apocryphal, it is a fact that of the thousands of pictorial manuscripts extant in Mexico in 1519, showing the histories, cosmologies, and cartographies of the ancient culture, only sixteen remain today. The destruction and defacing of ancient Mexican symbols and images included breaking the huge sacred stones, dismantling the ceremonial shrines and centers which contained them, and whitewashing religious idols and images. This hard line reflects a Christian approach to conquest and acculturation going back at least as far as the seventh century AD, when Pope Saint Gregory articulated the principles of substitution and superimposition of religious ideals and symbols.

**7. Machu Picchu, Peru, Inka (Inca) c. 1450–1540**

**MACHU PICCHU AND LIVING AT HEIGHTS**

What remains of the Inca legacy is limited, as the conquistadors plundered what they could of Inca treasures and in so doing, dismantled the many structures painstakingly built by Inca craftsmen to house the precious metals. Remarkably, a last bastion of the Inca empire remained unknown to the Spanish conquerors and was not found until explorer Hiram Bingham discovered it in 1911. He had found Machu Picchu, a citadel atop a mountainous jungle along the Urubamba River in Peru. Grand steps and terraces with fountains, lodgings, and shrines flank the jungle-clad pinnacle peaks surrounding the site. It was a place of worship to the sun god, the greatest deity in the Inca pantheon. The survival of Machu Picchu over hundreds of years, on a mountaintop subject to erosion and mudslides, is a testament to Inca engineering.

Perhaps most unique about Inca civilization was its thriving existence at altitude. The Incas ruled the Andean Cordillera, second in height and harshness to the Himalayas. Daily life was spent at altitudes up to 15,000 feet and ritual life extended up to 22,057 feet to Llullaillaco in Chile, the highest Inca sacrificial site known today. Mountain roads and sacrificial platforms were built, which means a great amount of time was spent hauling loads of soil, rocks, and grass up to these inhospitable heights. Even with our advanced mountaineering clothing and equipment of today, it is hard for us to acclimatize and cope with the cold and dehydration experienced at the high altitudes frequented by the Inca. This ability of the sandal-clad Inca to thrive at extremely high elevations continues to perplex scientists today.

A Marvel of Inca Engineering The ancient Inca wonder of Machu Picchu, perched 8,000 feet above sea level on a ridge in the Peruvian Andes, was a royal estate for the legendary warrior Pachacuti, who was largely responsible for building the Inca Empire in the 15th century. Like other massive stone constructions of this formidable emperor, it was built with eternity in mind. But how did Inca builders ensure that Machu Picchu would survive in its precarious mountaintop setting? Ken Wright, a civil engineer who has been studying the site since the mid-1990s, explains in this interview. While impressive

today, Machu Picchu would have been an even greater site to behold in the late 1400s, with gleaming white granite walls topped by golden-colored thatched roofs.

**A ROYAL CHALLENGE NOVA: What was your first impression of Machu Picchu?**

Ken Wright: When I arrived in 1994, my first visit ever, I was blown away by the view of Machu Picchu itself and also by the surrounding territory. The first question in my mind was, why would they ever take on a site this difficult? Engineering wise, it would seem almost impossible to handle. The first day, I was not looking at engineering evidence, I was being awed by the site, just like every other tourist. The second or third day, I began looking at the Inca spring and the canal, a canal that led for 2,500 feet to Fountain Number One and all the way down to Number 16. I saw not just a watercarriage system but a well-engineered system. A lot of thought had gone into it. That was when I first realized that this was an engineering marvel. Why would the Inca build on such a difficult site? The more I became familiar with the site and looked at the mountains and the rivers surrounding it, I realized why. The Huayna Picchu mountain on the north, Machu Picchu mountain on the south, Mount Yanantin, the triangular peak Putucusi—all of these are holy peaks. We know they are because when we're with the Quechua Indians, the people who are the descendants of the Inca, they pray to [these mountains], so the site is a natural. It couldn't have been better as a royal estate for Emperor Pachacuti.

**How did they know that the mountain spring would provide adequate fresh water?**

What the Inca likely did, upon arriving at the site and before deciding that they were going to build there and before cutting down all the trees, they would have studied the spring and made some measurements, so they'd have an idea of how much it would flow and how much it would vary during the year. We know they did that because the evidence tells us that the canal was just the right size for the spring yield, and the fountains are just the right size for the canal. How long they spent studying the site, we don't know. But it couldn't have been a long, long time because all of Machu Picchu was built in roughly 90 years [A.D. 1450 to 1540]. They couldn't have spent a decade studying the water supply. I would think a year or two. If you had been an Inca planner, overseeing the building of the estate, what would have been your greatest challenge? The biggest problem would be landslides, unstable earth, and for that reason I would have my civil engineers focus on being good stewards of the soil. Stabilize the slopes with the appropriate terraces, and plenty of them. The other thing I would do is spend a lot of time and effort on foundations and site preparation, because I knew I was building for the ages. And the Inca engineers did spend about 50 percent, maybe 60 percent of their overall effort underground—doing foundations, site preparation—to make sure that Machu Picchu would last forever.

**A STABLE FOUNDATION How did you get a sense of all the underground foundation work they did?**

We had an excavation done in the Plaza, a very important part of Machu Picchu that separates the eastern urban sector from the western urban sector. It went down probably nine feet. In that nine feet, we found about three feet of topsoil, rich topsoil. Under that was a sandy, gravelly-type soil, and then we came across an underground, subsurface drainage system made out of waste rock from all of the stones that they'd been cutting for years and years and years. This rock turned out to be white because it was white granite originally, before turning color with age. So while we look at Machu Picchu today and see gray buildings, when it was built, it was white granite. At any rate, the white granite told us a lot about their engineering ingenuity and their desire to provide good drainage for Machu Picchu, because without good drainage, there would be no Machu Picchu existing today. Wright's excavation revealed a vast underground drainage system with layers of topsoil, sandy gravel, and granite waste rock

**There was a surprise for you at the bottom of the excavation, right?**

Yes. At the very bottom of the excavation was a golden bracelet—the only gold found at Machu Picchu—and we are very pleased to have that. It's in the Cusco Regional History Museum today.

**Why was good drainage essential?**

How much rain does the area get? About 76 inches per year, and it mostly falls during the wettest seven months or so. That's a lot of water, roughly two and a half times as much as the city of Chicago gets. What role do the many terraces play in this system? The terraces, the 700 or so terraces, have a high permeability, so the water goes down underground to be carried safely away. Terraces at Machu Picchu are fundamental to its longevity. Without terraces, the mountain would have slid terribly, so we see them primarily as the means for soil stabilization and support of buildings or trails. But they also provide agricultural area. Roughly 700 terraces carved into the mountain and fortified by granite walls help keep Machu Picchu stable.

**In the urban areas, where the residents lived, did the Inca use anything like our modern sewer drains?**

Yes. In the urban areas, you would find lots of thatched roofs. A thatched roof has a lot of run-off. It's almost like a parking lot, so they had to deal with the run-off, and that was handled by a well-planned urban drainage system. Overall, we've found some 130 drainage holes that were planned during the initial construction of the walls, not put in as afterthoughts. The Inca were better urban drainage engineers than we are at the present time, because they planned ahead. My reaction was one of admiration, one of awe, because these people did not have a written language, they did not have iron or steel, they did not use the wheel, and yet they were developing drainage systems that were good. And we know they were good because Machu Picchu has lasted for some 500 years. How does the stability of land at Machu Picchu

compare with that on surrounding peaks? You can look around at surrounding mountainsides and see landslides that have happened in the past 10 years or so. But at Machu Picchu, it's been quite stable. Now, that doesn't mean that the Inca were perfect. When we look carefully, we find some buildings have settled, like the Principal Temple, and we find clues that the Inca had a landslide that they were in the process of curing. So there are a few places where the magic aura of the Inca did not mean that they were perfect. Another Inca marvel: On the morning of the summer solstice, light pours into a window of the Temple of the Sun to illuminate a sacred rock.

**Did the quality of the Inca stonework also play a role in Machu Picchu's longevity?**

Certainly. The Inca buildings have endured because of the good foundations, the slope, the interconnected stones, the tight joints. They built for the ages. The stonework is beautiful, too. It is. Hiram Bingham [the American explorer who found the site in 1911] called the Sun Temple's Inca wall the most beautiful in South America because of its exceptional design, the way the stone is shaped and carved. It's a masterpiece, and it's beautiful, and it has withstood earthquakes now for 500 years. But from my standpoint as a civil engineer, my greatest admiration is for the water system and the fountains, because they are so out of this world.

**SACRED WATERS How did the Inca plan the layout of the estate, particularly given that they had no written language?**

Machu Picchu is a planned estate. It certainly was not built haphazardly. But we know that the Inca had no writing, so they may have drawn plans up with clay models. We don't know that, but we do know that it was planned because the evidence is there. Everything is orderly; it fits. The Inca spring, in many ways, controlled the layout of Machu Picchu. The location of the spring was fixed, and the Inca engineers figured out the slope of the canal and set it at an average of about three percent, and the length was fixed at about 2,500 feet. These things were determined by nature and by hydraulics. The canal and fountain system, designed to provide a steady flow of fresh water, shows remarkable planning and foresight.

**So did that help determine, for instance, where the Emperor's residence was sited?**

Yes. Obviously, the Emperor should have first use of the water, the cleanest water [from Fountain One]. So that's where they built the residence, and they also built the Temple of the Sun there, and Wayrona [a three-sided building], and Fountain Number Three, which is a sacred fountain. How do we know that water had a sacred nature for the Inca? They went to special care to provide the sight and sound of flowing water, or falling water. And that included the sight and sound of water from the Urubamba River 1,600 feet below. The roar at Fountain Number Three and the Wayrona was loud, and delightful. Also, just outside the walls of Machu Picchu is an overhanging rock, a very important rock. This overhanging rock catches the sound from the Urubamba River 1,600 feet down and amplifies it, so when

you're in this little area, the roar is good. So we could tell from the evidence of the layout that water certainly had a sacred aspect in their religion.

**Do you see a reverence for nature in other ways at the site?**

Yes. Walking through the main gate, the only formal gate into Machu Picchu, you find that the doorway frames perfectly the wonderful peak of Huayna Picchu. The ancient windows have special views, either of the Urubamba River below or of a mountain peak, and then when we look at the terraces near the guardhouse, we realize that these terraces weren't built just for utilitarian soil stewardship purposes. The beautiful curves are a masterpiece of environmental and aesthetic design. The breathtaking view looking down toward the residential complex.

**KEEPING CLEAN How much water could the canal and fountain system handle?**

All of the fountains, all the way down to 16, were established to handle about 25 gallons per minute maximum. In the event that run-off water came into the canal during heavy rainfall, the Inca engineers provided two safety valves, one in the middle of the agricultural zone—it would discharge out onto the agricultural slope and just infiltrate into the ground—and another at the main drain. So what we saw was a balanced system all the way from the spring to the main drain. And do we know that the water was kept clean? What do we know about Inca hygiene? Well, Inca hygiene, we know little about it except the evidence that they left in the field. And we were amazed that the water supply canal was built in such a way that it would be pretty well isolated from drainage holes and from potential pollution. So it was laid out in such a way as to provide for maintaining pure water.

**What about sewage?**

Well, all we can say is that these people were agriculturally oriented. The power of the Inca Empire lay in its ability to produce food, food surpluses. But the [Emperor's] residence, which is nearby Fountain Number One, has a room in the back that's considered to be the bathroom area. The only house sanitary drain that we've found coming out of any building in Machu Picchu came out of that room, and it didn't go to any place where it could possibly contaminate. So we concluded that these people somehow had a sense of hygiene and pure water, long before Westerners did, for instance, in the city of London. Another thing that impressed you, I imagine. We've been doing this for roughly 15 years now, and every time we visit Machu Picchu and study some aspect of it, we are more amazed than before. The whole system of Machu Picchu is a marvel—not just the water system or the most beautiful wall—but how everything fits together, ranging from the foundations, which would be geo-technical engineering, to site layout, which would be city planning, to trails that deliver people from one location to another without interfering with someone's privacy, to the huge plaza which provided the space for celebrations. When you look at Machu Picchu as a whole, complete with the temples and the solar observatories, you realize that it is a site that's well designed, well balanced, and somewhat of an engineering marvel.

**8. Silver and gold maize cobs. Inka. c. 1400–1533 C.E. Sheet metal/repousée, gold and silver alloys.**

Ancient South American peoples were proficient metallurgists who manufactured cast and hammered objects of gold, silver, copper and bronze. Gold or silver sheet metal was formed into crowns, earspools, and pectorals, and into luxurious cups, bowls, and jars. The Inca manufactured sheet metal llamas and human figurines that were used as offerings on mountaintops and at other sacred locations; several are now preserved in museums.

To judge from the accounts of Spanish conquistadors, such works represent only a tiny fraction of Inca gold and silver treasure in the sixteenth century. They describe buildings with walls sheathed in gold, large disks that represented the sun and moon, and life-size human statues, all of which were melted down by the Spanish. Among the most intriguing accounts are those that describe the Coricancha shrine in Cuzco, where the Inca royal mummies were venerated. In a courtyard and an adjacent garden were planted full scale gold maize stalks, as well as life-size statues of llamas and herders. The maize plants were reputedly erected during planting and harvest festivals, and as part of investiture ceremonies. Other Inca shrines may have contained similar ritual objects.

Imagine a garden of miniature llamas, corn, flowers, and people all made of gold and silver. Such a garden existed in the courtyard in one of the most important Inka temples, the Qorikancha, in the capital city of Cuzco. One of these beautiful metal objects is a gold-silver alloy corncob sculpture. It mimics the appearance of a ripe ear of corn breaking through its husk, still on the stalk but ready to be harvested. In this sculptural representation of maize, individual kernels of corn protrude from the cob that is nestled in jagged metallic leaves. Inka metalsmiths expertly combined silver and copper to mimic the internal and external components of actual corn. Hollow and delicate, the ears of corn on the stalk are life-sized.

While many ancient Andean art traditions favored abstract and geometric forms (such as the All-T'oqapu Tunic), Inka visual expression often incorporated more naturalistic forms in small-scale metal objects. This silver alloy corncob sculpture is one example of this type of object.

After the Spaniards arrived in the Andes, the European invaders soon desired the gold and silver belonging to the Inka. Some of the earliest

Spanish chroniclers record the placement of a garden composed of gold Pedro de Cieza de León describes a golden garden in his 1554 account:

> *"In the month of October of the year of the Lord 1534 the Spaniards entered the city of Cuzco, head of the great empire of the Inkas, where their court was, as well as the solemn Temple of the Sun and their greatest marvels. The high priest abandoned the temple, where [the Spaniards] plundered the garden of gold and the sheep [llamas] and shepherds of this metal along with so much silver that it is unbelievable and precious stones, which, if they were collected, would be worth a city."*

After the defeat of Inka leadership in the 1530s, Spanish royal agents set up colonies across the continent. They looted Inka objects in large quantities and sent many back to Spain. The silver corncob and stalk were likely part of the spoils captured in this raid. By 1534, the collections of the Spanish king Charles V included a gold maize stalk with three leaves and two ears of corn, similar to the one above. Royal inventories also describe gold and silver llamas, female figures, a lamb, and a male figure that purportedly originated in one of the most important Inka temples in the capital city of Cuzco, the Qorikancha. A compact version of the Inka cosmos The life-size garden was a significant offering within the Qorikancha where it became part of a compact version of the cosmos controlled by the Inka state. It also represented the vast range of ecosystems encompassed by the empire and the most important agricultural products cultivated in them. The empire reached from the desert coasts to over 6000 feet above sea level. Plants and animals represented in the golden garden cannot grow and survive at every point in the empire, but only at specified altitudes. For example maize grows up to a mid-range altitude, and llamas graze at the highest points of the empire. The metallic maize cobs would have represented one of the most important imperial foodstuffs, used for making the chicha (maize beer) consumed at political feasts, which cemented the obligations of local political leaders to the Inka state.

The Inka commonly deployed small-scale naturalistic metallic offerings, like the silver alloy corncobs, in ritual practices that supported state religion and government. Offerings have been found across Inka territories. Besides corn, these offerings included small gold and silver human figurines ornamented with textiles that accompanied qhapaq hucha sacrifices at the furthest reaches of the empire. All these offerings acted as symbols of the supernatural origin of the Inkas in the Sun, and their control over the natural world as descendants from the most powerful deity.

The secret to Inca success was that the empire managed to produce not only ample goods and foodstuffs for its armies, religious officials, and the luxurious court at Cuzco but plenty for the common people. The Inca himself granted local chieftains permission to distribute cloth and food from the state stores to needy peasants- a practice that kept their subjects contented. In all parts of the kingdom they

stockpiled maize, sweet potatoes, chili peppers, coca, and various other foods that could be eaten without prior cooking. Though it's common in Peru today, in Inca times, corn was a royal food.

So important was maize that it was rendered in silver by imperial craftsmen. It was both secular, as essential food, and sacred, used to make chicha beer for consumption in religious festivals. Abundant sources of gold, silver and copper in Peru and Bolivia are found pure (gold and copper) and in ores (silver and copper). Most prehistoric Andean gold was retrieved from streams by washing the gravel in wooden trays. Sometimes streams were diverted to expose gold-bearing gravels. Lesser amounts were excavated from one-man trenches. Mine shafts for silver and copper ores were 1 meter or so to perhaps 70 m (230 feet) long. Vertical shafts were only as deep as the dirt could be thrown up to the surface, then another hole was started nearby. Wooden, bronze and antler tools were used to dig, and stone and deer antler hammers and picks were used to break up veins of ore, and to crush it. Excavated material was brought out in hide sacks and fiber baskets. Spanish chroniclers record that Inca mines were worked only in the summer, from noon to sunset. Mining, like so many other tasks, was carried out as part of the Inca mit'a labor tax. Crushed silver and copper. Gold-bearing streams and ore deposits were considered sacred places. Ceremonies were held at them to honor their holy spirits and solicit ease of extraction. Gold and silver collection and mining were restricted under state control of the Inca Empire (and, as they were regarded as precious, probably under elite control in preInca cultures as well). Copper extraction and use was widespread and less regulated.

The process of repoussé- the creation of relief designs from behind- began with cutting out the shape with a thin-bladed chisel. The pattern was scribed onto the metal, sometimes using templates, then the raised design was pressed out from the back with metal and wooden punches onto a yielding surface, such as thick leather or a sand-filled bag. The final design was refined and sharpened from the front with fine tools. Incised designs were also scored into metal figures, and areas of metal were sometimes cut out. Multi-piece objects, sometimes of different metals, were combined by several techniques. Edges were overlapped and hammer-welded, with annealing, sometimes including the clinching of the edges of folding them over on each other. Soldering and brazing were accomplished with melted bits of metal alloy. Moche spot-welding was second to none, with some pieces including hundreds of individual spot-solderings. Granulation, or diffusion bonding, was used for very fine work, such as tiny beads or fine wire.

**9. The City of Cuzco**

The City of Cuzco, at 3,400 m above sea level, is located in a fertile alluvial valley fed by several rivers in the heart of the Central Peruvian Andes of South America. Under the rule of Inca Pachacuteq (Tito Cusi Inca Yupanqui), in the 15th century, the city was redesigned and remodeled after a pre-Inca

occupation process of over 3,000 years, and became the capital of the Tawantinsuyu Inca Empire, which covered much of the South American Andes between the 15th and 16th centuries AD.

The Imperial city of the Incas was developed as a complex urban centre with distinct religious and administrative functions which were perfectly defined, distributed and organized. The religious and government buildings were accompanied by the exclusive abodes for royal families, forming an unprecedented symbolic urban compound, which shows a stone construction technology with exceptional aesthetic and structural properties, such as the Temple of the Sun or Qoricancha, the Aqllahuasi, the Sunturcancha, the Kusicancha and a series of very finely finished buildings that shape the Inca compound as an indivisible unity of Inca urbanism. The noble city was clearly isolated from the clearly delineated areas for agricultural, artisan and industrial production as well as from the surrounding neighborhoods. The pre-Hispanic patterns and buildings that shaped the Imperial city of the Incas are visible today.

With the Spanish conquest in the 16th century, the urban structure of the Inca imperial city of Cuzco was preserved and temples, monasteries and manor houses were built over the Inca city. They were mostly of baroque style with local adaptations, which created a unique and high quality mixed configuration representing the initial juxtaposition and fusion of different periods and cultures, as well as the city's historic continuity. The city's remarkable syncretism is evident not only in its physical structure but also in the Viceroyalty's artistic expression. It became one of the most important centers of religious art creation and production in the continent. It is also important for its population's customs and traditions, many of which still keep their ancestral origins. From its complex past, woven with significant events and beautiful legends, the city has retained a remarkable monumental ensemble and coherence and is today an amazing amalgam of the Inca capital and the colonial city. Of the first, it preserves impressive vestiges, especially its plan: walls of meticulously cut granite or andesite, rectilinear streets running within the walls, and the ruins of the Sun Temple. Of the colonial city, there remain the freshly whitewashed squat houses, the palace and the marvelous Baroque churches which achieved the impossible fusion of the Plateresco, Mudejar or Churrigueresco styles with that of the Inca tradition.

Cuzco and the old villages still retain traces of land occupation from the Inca Empire to preserve, in a more global manner, an archaeological heritage, which has become susceptible to the effects of urbanization.

Situated at 3,400 m above sea level, in a fertile alluvial valley fed by several rivers in the Peruvian Andes, Cuzco was developed under the Inca ruler Pachacutec into a complex urban centre with distinct religious and administrative functions. It was surrounded by clearly delineated areas for agricultural, artisanal and industrial production.

In 1536, within the Spanish colonial domain from which it did not definitively emerge until after the proclamation of independence (1821) and the victory of Bolívar at Ayacucho. From its complex past,

woven with significant events and beautiful legends, the city has retained a remarkable monumental ensemble and a coherence that recent changes have not compromised.

Inca mythology attributes the foundation of the city to the Inca Manco Cápac: according to tradition the golden scepter that the Sun had given him was thrust into the fertile soil of Cuzco to designate the emplacement of the capital.

In actuality, Cuzco appears to have been a centre of only mediocre importance until the 15th century when the power of the Incas was affirmed following the battle against the Chancas invaders: its reconstruction, directed by two great Incas, Pachacutec (1438-71) and Tupac Yupanqui (1471-93) lasted 20 years and, supposedly, employed 50,000 men. The first of these rulers (to whom is also attributed the construction of Machu Picchu) wished to create an ideal city that would respond to the multiple functions of a capital: after having canalized the two principal rivers (Saphi and Tullumayo), whose flooding periodically menaced the inhabitants of the old Cuzco, he laid down the foundations of an extremely hierarchical organization in which the urban centre united administrative and religious functions, whereas the outlying areas and especially the satellite-towns situated in a cultivated zone (Cayaucachi, Claquillchaca, Picchu, Quillipata, Carmenca, Huacapunco, etc.) were units of agricultural, artisanal and industrial production. This tripartite division must have stirred the imagination of the conquistadores, as did the orthogonal layout of the streets of the Ciudad Nobiliaria, barely inflected to accommodate land erosion. The European invaders respected the plan of this rational city, so curiously close to the idea cities of the Renaissance. They limited themselves to the destruction of the principal edifices charged with political and religious symbolism, and constructed new monuments, aggressively

Catholic and Spanish, on the admirable cyclopean masonry of the demolished walls of these buildings. The Huaccapayta, centre of the Inca empire, bordered by the palaces of Pachacutec, Viracocha and Huayna Capac, is the present-day Plaza de Armas; the palace of Viracocha was demolished in order to build the cathedral begun in 1560; the Acclahuasi to construct the convent of Santa Catalina; the Coricaucha, partially destroyed in order to make space for the convent of Santo Domingo de Guzman, etc.

Cuzco is today an amazing amalgam of the Inca capital and the colonial city. Of the first, it preserves impressive vestiges, especially its plan: walls of meticulously cut granite or andesite, rectilinear streets running within the walls, ruins of the Sun Temple of which the Golden Garden, once covered with sculptures of precious metals, was pillaged by the Spanish soldiers to enrich the coffers of Charles V. Of the colonial city, there remain the freshly whitewashed squat houses, the palace and the marvelous Baroque churches which achieved the impossible fusion of the Plateresco, Mudejar or Churrigueresco styles with that of the Inca tradition.

The City of Cuzco is a unique testimony of the ancient Inca civilization, heart of Tawantinsuyu imperial government, which exercised political, religious and administrative control over much of the

South American Andes between the 15th and 16th centuries. The city represents the sum of 3,000 years of indigenous and autonomous cultural development in the Peruvian southern Andes.

**10. All-T'oqapu tunic. Inka. 1450–1540 C.E. Camelid fiber and cotton.**

This tapestry tunic is one of the finest known Inka royal textiles. Typical of Inca tunics, it was woven as one long rectangle of cloth with a neck slit in the middle and then folded in half and the sides sewn up to the arm holes. It has warps of undyed cotton and wefts of dyed camelid fiber spun so fine and woven so tight that they number between 98 and 108 per centimeter. Textiles were valued more highly than gold in the Inka Empire, and much effort went into their production. Fine qompi cloth was the task of specialists, and the best cloth, used for royal and religious functions, was made by cloistered women known as acllacuna.

Unlike other Inka tunics, this one is almost entirely covered with small rectangular geometric units called t'oqapu. Created in a variety of patterns and colors, t'oqapu may have held special meaning or significance. A common t'oqapu design, depicted here in alternating red and yellow, consists of a diagonal bar between two dots. Another is a miniature representation of a black-and-white checkerboard tunic with a red collar. Scholars suggest that individual t'oqapu may have represented specific peoples, places, or things, thus constituting a sign system akin to the knotted khipu cords that the Inkas used to record information. Garments bearing this design could thus communicate the status of their wearer and possibly other information as well. We know from historical sources that only persons of high rank were entitled to wear tunics decorated with t'oqapu, and most such tunics include only a limited number of them, clustered around the neck or waist of the garment. No other known tunic incorporates such a large number and variety of t'oqapu into its design. Possibly worn by the ruler himself, this all-t'oqapu tunic broadcast the message that he controlled enormous diversity and almost the totality of possible motifs in his clothing.

In Inca times textiles were the nearest Andean concept to 'coinage,' and because their value was understood in terms of labor they were, in effect, reciprocal labor for labor. Because cloth was so highly valued in Andean cultures, it was used by the Incas in a similar way to currency. Regular allocations of cloth were given to army units and it was 'paid' as a reward for government services. Whether textiles were used in this way by pre-Inca cultures is not known.

Weaving was specifically a female craft, although men worked rougher fibers into cord and rope for more utilitarian uses. In Inca times all women wove, from the common women subjects of the empire, through women of elite households, to the wives of the emperor. For commoners, weaving was a craft and hallmark of femininity in which a woman took pride in clothing her family; to the elite, weaving was a symbolic demonstration of femininity, rather than a necessity. Textile production occupied more people and labor than any other Inca craft, and an intensity of labor was probably surpassed only by agriculture. Special clothing marked changes in life cycles, both as costume for initiation ceremonies and as a mark of age, social status and distinction. Specific people wore specific clothes for specific occasions. Cloth was offered to the gods in burnt offerings, used to dress and preserve mummies, and offered in burials. Finally, cloth provided a medium for representing the gods and religious imagery reflecting cosmological concepts.

Government officials wore garments that were distinctive in both color and design. We know through a variety of sources that square geometric designs (tocapu) adorned tunics of various ranks of civil service officers and that they served some kind of identifying function. It has been pointed out that tocapu designs bear little resemblance to motifs of earlier cultures, as if to make plain the unprecedented domination of the Inca over the Andean world. In the early Colonial Period, Guaman Poma de Ayala depicted Inca rulers wearing tunics that were covered entirely with tocapu. Tocapu are found in other media as well, including on buildings and keros, and may have been a kind of signing system that perhaps even approached a quasi-hieroglyphic form. In any event, tocapu were clearly an aid to the management of the Inca civil service and bureaucracy, together with the armies, roads, khipu, and taxation systems. The Inca created and maintained an empire with great skill for a hundred years before they met a challenge that was impossible for them to have foreseen- a challenge literally from beyond their world. The arrival of European conquerors in person was preceded by a disastrous epidemic of smallpox, one of the diseases that they had brought with them to the Americas and to which Andean peoples, like other Native Americans, had almost no immunity. The result was a calamity for the Inca, whose empire rapidly collapsed. Perhaps the empire was already stretched to its limit, given the tools and methods available for managing it, and would soon have fallen apart even without the twin disasters of disease and conquest. It is something to which we will never know the answer. What is certain is that within another century the peoples and cultures of Peru were profoundly and irrevocably changed.

When local peoples resisted incorporation into the empire, or worse, rose in rebellion afterward, Inca retribution could be fierce. Inca armies rarely met defeat and once the contentious territory was firmly in imperial hands the state exercised close control. Even in tranquil areas the Inca imposed a hierarchical system in which the population was divided into units, beginning with a single unit of ten households and working upward into larger units. All were under the gaze of imperial officials who employed spies and reported infractions to their superiors. Taxes were taken in the form not only of crops and livestock but also artisans' skills and other services. Good runners would become chasquis, and the prettiest girls would be pressed into Inca service as acllacuna, 'chosen women,' to weave, make chicha beer for festivals, and, occasionally, be presented as gifts from the emperor.

Quite apart from their value in making cloth and preparing drink and food, the chosen women had sexual value, providing the Inca, his senior officials, and his generals with a harem. It was considered an honor for a girl to be chosen to serve the Inca in this way, and in provincial cities young girls who held promise of adult beauty were groomed as mamaconas. The Inca would give some of these women, those he did not keep for himself, to Indians he chose to honor. The girls thus became a kind of royal bounty. Girls and women reserved for the service of the Inca and the official religion were, naturally, carefully protected, living in well-guarded enclosures and well-supplied with food and luxuries. The aclla-huasi of Cuzco lay directly between the sun temple Coricancha and the main square. Daily processions of priests bearing the sun image passed along a beautiful lane between the superb stone walls of the Amaru-cancha palace and the aclla-huasi. This street is still intact.

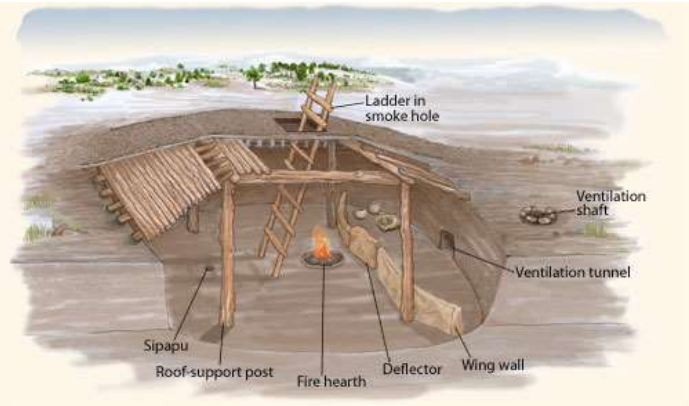
**11. Mesa Verde, Ancestral Puebloan, 450–1300 CE, sandstone, Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado**

A great concentration of ancestral Pueblo Indian dwellings, built from the 6th to the 12th century, can be found on the Mesa Verde plateau in south-west Colorado at an altitude of more than 2,600 m. Some 4,400 sites have been recorded, including villages built on the Mesa top. There are also imposing cliff dwellings, built of stone and comprising more than 100 rooms. The Mesa Verde landscape in the American south-west is considered to be the type site of the prehistoric Ancestral Puebloan culture, which lasted for some nine hundred years from c 450 to 1300, on this plateau in south-west Colorado at an altitude of more than 2600 meters (8,500 feet).

There is a great concentration of spectacular Pueblo Indian dwellings. Some 600 ‘cliff dwellings’ have been recorded within Mesa Verde National Park, including the famous multi-storey ones such as Cliff Palace, Balcony House, and Square Tower House, built of sandstone and mud mortar, and an additional 4100 archaeological sites have been discovered. New discoveries are routinely made. The exceptional archaeological sites of the Mesa Verde landscape provide eloquent testimony to the ancient cultural traditions of Native American tribes.

They represent a graphic link between the past and present ways of life of the Puebloan Peoples of the American south-west. Among the American Indian civilizations recognized by ethnologists and prehistorians, that of the Anasazi Indians and of their distant descendants, the Pueblos of New Mexico and Arizona are indeed quite original, owing in part to the substantial rigors of their natural environment: the south-western part of Colorado with its mesas cut by deep canyons. On the high limestone and sandstone plateau, which in one place reaches an altitude of 2,620 m above sea level, the climate is semi-arid, being characterized by irregular precipitation and great differences between day and night temperature. The first signs of regular human occupation go back to the 6th century of the current era. They are principally located on the plateau where partially buried villages, consisting of silos and low dwellings, have existed since this period.

From roughly 750 to 1100 some highly specific features appeared in the human settlements of Mesa Verde. While the plateau villages were increasingly built in an L- or U-shaped layout, the valley villages grew larger. In rock shelters under the refuge of imposing overhanging cliffs, on the side of cuestas deeply lacerated by erosion, composite, both troglodytic and built villages were established having various functions: agricultural, handicrafts or religious - the first kivas (subterranean or buried structures of a subcircular layout) appeared during this period. This civilization reached its apogee between 1100 and the end of the 13th century before suddenly disappearing. Impressive, multi-storey constructions (the best-known being 'Cliff Palace' and 'Long House', with its 181 rooms and 15 kivas) were erected under the shelter of the cliffs. They are demonstrative of surprising progress in building techniques and a very keen sense for use of space. At Marsha K. Russell St. Andrew’s Episcopal School, Austin, TX the same time, agrarian techniques were improved: irrigation, based on a network of reservoirs and dams, was used to offset the rigors of a climate largely hostile to the cultivation of cereals and starches, staples of the Anasazi diet. This 'golden age',



facilitated by control of the natural environment, is further illustrated by the outstanding quality of the handicrafts. As the first explorers of Mesa Verde claimed on many an occasion, the wickerwork, weaving and especially ceramics were of astonishing quality. Discovered in 1874, the rock-cut villages of Mesa Verde were pillaged by collectors (there was a very large pottery sale in 1889) before being studied and excavated by archaeologists. However, the protection of the site which came into effect in 1906 under the Federal Antiquities Act is one of the most effective and long-standing on the American continent.

**The Pueblo III Period: A.D. 1150 to 1300 Housing**

The small upland farmsteads that were home to most families early in the Pueblo III period consisted of a masonry room block, a plaza area, a kiva, and a midden, usually aligned on a north-south axis. Room blocks were very substantial in their construction, consisting of masonry walls that were two stones wide. Kivas were generally similar to those of the Pueblo II period, except both their upper and lower walls were consistently built of masonry. In addition, the bench along the south wall was much wider than the other benches; archaeologists call this wide bench a "southern recess."

With the formation of large villages later in the period—some of which housed hundreds of people—the basic elements of the farmstead were preserved, but they looked very different when incorporated into a densely populated settlement. Large villages contained many room blocks and kivas, and the arrangement of structures had to be tailored to the specific setting—canyon head, canyon slope, or rock alcove. Villages wrapped around the heads of canyons or located on canyon slopes often were enclosed by thick walls. Such walls clearly defined the village limits and may have been used for defense.

Typically, each village had at least one natural spring that provided a reliable source of drinking water. Controlling access to such a water supply was probably a priority for village residents, especially in a time of drought. At least portions of most room blocks in canyon-head sites were multistory, and circular, masonry towers were often constructed as well. Towers were sometimes connected to kivas by means of underground tunnels. But the people of the Pueblo III period are probably best known for the spectacular cliff dwellings they constructed in natural rock alcoves carved into steep canyon walls. Masonry kivas and densely packed, multistory rooms fill these natural alcoves, which, by their very locations, would have offered a measure of protection from both the elements and intruders. These villages, too, were usually located near springs. Some of the best examples of Pueblo III cliff dwellings are found at Mesa Verde National Park, in the heart of the Mesa Verde region.

Ancestral Puebloans lived in the cliff dwellings for less than 100 years. By about A.D. 1300, Mesa Verde was deserted. Several theories offer reasons for their migration. We know that the last quarter of the A.D. 1200s saw drought and crop failures—but these people had survived earlier droughts. Maybe after hundreds of years of intensive use the land and its resources—soils, forests, and animals—were

depleted. Perhaps there were social and political problems, and the people simply looked for new opportunities elsewhere.

### 12. Fort Ancient Culture(?), *Great Serpent Mound,* c. 1070, Adams County, Ohio

Mound building first appeared in North America as early as the fourth millennium BCE and continued into the second millennium CE. Effigy mounds—mounds in the shape of animals and other figures—are known from the late first millennium CE on and can be found across the present-day states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Ohio, and Iowa. The largest of these effigy mounds is the Serpent Mound, which undulates across a hilly overlook in Adams County, Ohio, before ending in a coil formation.

Running some 1,330 feet from start to finish and averaging four to five feet in height, the Serpent Mound is unique among Native North American Earthworks and the identity of its makers is contested. For many years, it was thought to be the creation of the Adena culture (500 BCE–200 CE), to whom two conical mounds in the region are also attributed. More recent radiocarbon dating, however, places the mound's construction closer to 1000–1200 CE. In this case, it is probably the work of the Fort Ancient culture (1000–1550 CE), who built several other burial mounds in the vicinity and are associated with a village located near the effigy's tail.

Most of the mounds that have been excavated in North America are burial mounds. Unlike these, the Serpent Mound does not seem to have functioned as a burial site. Indeed, the reason for its creation remains something of a mystery. As with other ancient Earthworks in both North America and abroad, it was, most likely, the site of sacred rituals and linked to astronomical occurrences. Scholars have pointed out that the head of the serpent is aligned with the summer solstice sunset and it is believed that the coiled tail might be aligned with the winter solstice sunrise. With the new dating, it has also been suggested that the Serpent Mound might have some relation to two well-known eleventh-century celestial events—the 1054 stellar explosion that produced the Crab Nebula and the 1066 appearance of Halley's Comet.

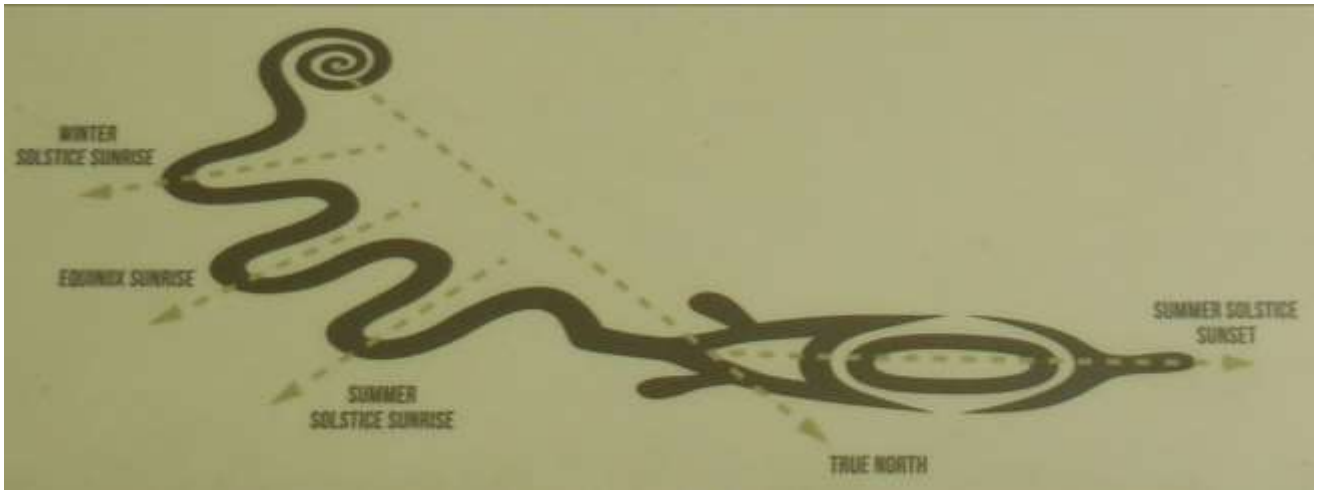
Another puzzling element of the Serpent Mound is the significance of the ovular shape at the snake's head. Various suggestions have been put forth to explain its meaning. Some have proposed that the head depicts the serpent with its jaws spread open in the act of devouring an egg. Others have related the form to the horned serpent that is a recurrent character in American Indian mythology. Still others have suggested that the elliptical shape represents the serpent's eye.

Various native traditions and stories are associated with Serpent Mound. Mekoce Shawnee Chief Frank Wilson tells one that connects the mound with a ritual of spiritual cleansing:

> *"If you count the curves in the Serpent, there's seven of them, there's seven curves before it gets to the head. And seven, the way I was taught, for the Shawano people, is the seven gates that one must go through to reach spirituality, or enlightenment, as people call it, to become a dawan, a medicine person. So each curve, a person walked the snake. They walked the serpent. And there were certain things they had to accomplish on each curve of the snake's back. And as they accomplished this they moved on, and when they reached the head, they reached a point where everything was completely stripped away except their spirit."*

New radiocarbon dates suggest that Serpent Mound, a one-quarter-mile-long earthen effigy of a snake in south-central Ohio, was built as many as 2,000 years later than previously thought. The effigy had been attributed to the Adena culture (1000-100 B.C.) based on the presence of Adena burials nearby. The Adena people, who lived in an area stretching from the Midwest to the Atlantic coast, collected and began domesticating plants, improved methods of food storage, and buried their dead in mounds. Two samples of wood charcoal were obtained from undisturbed parts of Serpent Mound. Both yielded a date of ca. A.D.1070, suggesting that the effigy was actually built by people of the Fort Ancient culture (A.D. 900-1600), a Mississippian group that lived in the central Ohio Valley. Mississippian people inhabited the Tennessee, Cumberland, and Mississippi river valleys, built huge earthworks, cultivated maize, and were governed by powerful chiefs, ruling families, or both. The Mississippian's centralized authority would have made possible organizing a large building project such as the construction of Serpent Mound. Additional evidence for the later date includes the remains of a Fort Ancient village 100 yards south of the mound and rattlesnake motifs on Mississippian gorgets (ornaments worn on the chest) made from marine shell.

The new dates are the result of work by University of Pittsburgh archaeology student Robert V. Fletcher, who noticed that maps of the mound were out of date. He and a friend, Terry L. Cameron, began to remap the site on weekends. Serpent Mound had not been scientifically investigated since the late 1880s, when Frederick W. Putnam of Harvard's Peabody Museum mapped the mound and excavated




sections of the serpent's sinuous body and oval "head" (upper right in photo), which has also been described as an egg or an enlarged eye. Putnam attributed the creation of Serpent Mound to the Adena culture even though he found no Adena artifacts within the serpent itself. Fletcher and Cameron wanted more solid evidence with which to date the effigy, so they contacted archaeologists Bradley Lepper, a curator at the Ohio Historical Society, and Dee Anne Wymer, of Bloomsburg University, who took core samples and conducted the limited excavations that yielded the samples for dating.

Other studies indicate that features of Serpent Mound are aligned with both the summer solstice sunset and, less clearly, the winter solstice sunrise. A pile of burned stones once located inside the oval head area was several feet northwest of its center, possibly to make a more precise alignment with the point of the "V" in the serpent's "neck" and the summer solstice sunset. The A.D. 1070 date coincides roughly with two extraordinary astronomical events. Light from the supernova that produced the Crab Nebula first reached Earth in 1054 and remained visible, even during the day, for two weeks. The brightest appearance ever of Halley's Comet was recorded by Chinese astronomers in 1066. Could Serpent Mound have been a Native American response to such celestial events? "It is impossible to test whether or not the effigy mound represents a fiery serpent slithering across the sky," says Lepper, "but it is fun to speculate."

**13. Bandolier Bag, Lenape (Delaware tribe), c. 1850 C.E., hide, cotton cloth, silk ribbon, glass beads, wool yarn, metal cones**

Delaware women, forced west onto the prairies as a result of the Indian Removal Act of 1830, are credited with creating a new style of appliqué beadwork. Known as the “Prairie style,” it drew on the northern and southern beadwork traditions of the Woodlands. The Prairie Style used colorful glass beads fashioned into patterns. The patterns could be either naturalistic flowers or abstract floral designs. The Prairie Style is the result of peoples coming into contact with one

another, particularly in the wake of removal from their ancestral homelands. Floral forms, combined with the use of ribbons and colorful glass beads, not only attest to the transformations in artistic production, but also testifies to the creativity of people as they adapted to new situations. Bandolier Bags, as well as other objects and clothing, helped to express group identities and social status. In the wake of forced removals and threats to traditional ways of life, objects like the Bandolier Bag demonstrate the resilience and continued creativity of groups like the Lenape.

An early example of Prairie style beadwork style is seen in this shoulder bag. It is decorated with glass seed-bead embroidery and trimmed with silk ribbon. The pouch itself is composed of two simple rectangles, one stitched on top of the other. The back rectangle extends above the pouch opening and is ornamented with a band of beadwork. The body of the bag itself is an elaborate field of spot-stitch bead embroidery. The abstract, geometric designs are very carefully outlined with tiny white beads. The design on the strap is much broader, and bolder, than the design on the pouch. The pouch of the bag may have become separated from its original strap, and the strap seen here may be later in date.

By the 1830, Delaware Indians were living in Missouri, Arkansas and Texas, but the main body of the tribe had settled into Kansas. Two centuries of border warfare and forced removals had obliterated many of their traditional customs, undermined their social unity, and caused widespread demoralization. Hunting was their preferred occupation, and many Delawares became famous as trappers in the far West and as scouts of the U.S. Army.

The quillwork-decorated black skin shot pouches of these people revealed their former residence near Ottawa and other great Lakes Indians. A gradual change of these Delaware shot pouches into colorful bandoleer bags started about 1830, when the Delawares witnessed the arrival of thousands of Indians forcibly removed from the Southeast. The exposure to the bandoleer bags of these Creek, Seminole, and Cherokee Indians is clearly visible in the subsequent Delaware developments, but it did not lead to a complete replication of the Southeastern style. A Delaware identity was retained by preserving some traditional elements, the very gradual change of other components, and the development of a distinct style of flamboyant beadwork. However, the Delawares understood and followed the Southwestern example of this colorful apparel as an almost defiant expression of their Indian identity.

By 1800, the Indians in the eastern part of the country had been engaged in trade with Europeans for over two hundred years. Wool and cotton fabrics had to a large extent replaced deerskin for garments.

Beads, silk ribbons, and the acquaintance with colonial folk art were stimulating new ideas and new techniques of ornamentation, and were to have a profound effect on the arts of the native people.

In their adjustment to the fur trade, and as long as the French, British and Americans were occupied with their territorial wars, the Indian tribes had maintained a measure of social and political independence. This came to an end in the War of 1812. In the subsequent subjection of the native peoples, and despite the white man's refusal to recognize the basic rights of the Indians, much of the artistic creativity of the native women was motivated by their efforts to maintain and revitalize their Indian identity.

Starting in the 1820s, elaborately bead-worked shoulder bags became popular Indian apparel in the Southeastern parts of the country, followed in the 1830s by the Delaware in Kansas, and by the Ojibwa and other tribes of the Upper Great Lakes region in c. 1850. In each of these regions these so-called 'bandoleer bags' were the more elaborate versions of earlier hunter bags, presumably influenced in their shape by the shoulder bags of the colonial military.

Widespread was the halfway change in the beadwork patterns on the shoulder straps; remarkable is the frequently dissimilar decoration of pouch and strap, treating them as totally separate objects of decoration. Much of the beadwork on the bandoleer bags was apparently inspired by designs observed in American folk art, on printed cotton, and on commercial ceramics. But the inspiration was channeled through dreams, as stated by several of the women artists. Dreams did not necessarily give the designs a symbolic meaning, but the creation of these new designs challenged the artist's imagination, thereby giving them an emotional value that went beyond a merely decorative quality.

In contrast to their native proto-types, these spectacular bandoleer bags served no practical purpose. Primarily worn by the men on festive occasions, this apparel earned prestige for the women artists. Large numbers of these bags have survived, indicating their once great popularity. Unfortunately, only very few of these bags have any recorded history, making it difficult to identify tribal styles.

When looking at photographs of what we today call a Bandolier Bag (in the Ojibwe language they are called Aazhooningwa'on, or "worn across the shoulder"), it is nearly impossible to see the thousands of tiny beads strung together that decorate the bag's surface. This is an object that invites close looking to fully appreciate the process by which colorful beads animate the bag, making a dazzling object and showcasing remarkable technical skill.

**14. Transformation mask. Kwakiutl, Northwest coast of Canada. Late 19th century C.E. Wood, paint, and string.**

Masks are highly valued by the Kwakiutl, serving as potent manifestations of ancestral spirits and supernatural beings and offering these supernatural entities temporary embodiment and communication through dance and other kinds of performance. Masks also allow the wearer to undergo spiritual and social renewal, and serve as an outward manifestation of inward transformations. However, Northwest Coast tribes do not all share the same myths or characters, nor do they necessarily use masks in the same way during their ceremonies. Each mask and accompanying dance are owned by particular families and passed down by elders and chiefs to their immediate and extended families to be used in ceremonies like the potlatch and seasonal festivals. These masks thus accumulate histories that transform and enhance their value. Oftentimes, people who specialize in carving are commissioned to make these masks several months, even years, in advance for members of the Kwakiutl First Nation as well as for museums and private collectors. Archaeological evidence for the antiquity of mask-making on the Northwest Coast is scarce, though it is clear that a distinctive Northwest Coast cultural pattern and artistic style emerged over a thousand years ago.

Animals feature prominently in Northwest Coast art because each extended family group (clan) claimed descent from a mythic animal or animal-human ancestor, from whom the family derived its name and the right to use certain animals and spirits as totemic emblems, or crests. These emblems appear frequently in Northwest Coast art, notably in carved cedar house poles and the tall, free-standing mortuary poles erected to memorialize dead chiefs. Chiefs, who were males in the most direct line of descent from the mythic ancestor, validated their status and garnered prestige for themselves and their families by holding ritual feasts known as potlatches, during which they gave valuable gifts to the invited guests. Shamans, who were sometimes also chiefs, mediated between the human and spirit

worlds. Some shamans were female, giving them unique access to certain aspects of the spiritual world.

Potlatches include feasts at which rights to the inheritance of wealth and power are displayed and validated. A great family shows it worthiness to inherit and hold titles by lavish feasting, by generous distribution of gifts to guests, and by exhibiting its crests while dramatically re-enacting or telling their stories. Among the Kwakwaka'wakw, for example, potlatches are occasions, in the words of Kwakwaka'wakw anthropologist and curator Gloria Canmer Webster, for "naming children, mourning the dead, transferring rights and privileges, and less frequently, marriages or the raising of memorial totem poles".

To call upon the guardian spirits, many Native American cultures staged ritual dance ceremonies in which dancers wore complex costumes and striking carved and painted wooden masks. Among the most elaborate masks were those used by the Kwakwaka'wakw in the Winter Ceremony that initiated members into the shamanistic Hamatsa society. The dance re-enacted the taming of Hamatsa, a cannibal spirit, and this three attendant bird spirits. Magnificent carved and painted masks transformed the dancers into Hamatsa and the bird attendants, who searched for victims to eat. Strings allowed the dancers to manipulate the masks so that the beaks opened and snapped shut with spectacular effect.

In the Winter Ceremony, youths are captured, taught the Hamatsa lore and rituals, and then in a spectacular theater-dance performance are 'tamed' and brought back into civilized life. All the members of the community, including singers, gather in the main room of the great house, which is divided by a painted screen. The audience members fully participate in the performance; in early times, they brought containers of blood so that when the bird-dancers attacked them, they could appear to bleed and have flesh torn away. Whistles from behind the screen announce the arrival of the Hamatsa (danced by an initiate), who enters through the central hole in the screen in a flesh-craving frenzy. Wearing hemlock, a symbol of the spirit world, he crouches and dances wildly with outstretched arms as attendants try to control him. He disappears but returns again, now wearing red cedar and dancing upright. Finally tamed, a full member of society, he even dances with the women.

**15. Attributed to Cotsiogo, *Hide Painting of the Sun Dance*, c. 1890-1900, Eastern Shoshone (Wind River Reservation, WY), painted elk hide**

Eastern Shoshone artist Codsiogo (Cod si-ogo/Cad-zei-go in the 1900 Wind River Agency census, but also known as Cadzi Cody, Katsakodi, Charlie Katsakodi) was born about 1866. His artwork was transitional because he adapted traditional materials and art forms familiar from prehistoric petroglyphs, pictographs and decorated leather goods, and modified these to the needs of the early reservation period which served as a bridge to modern Native American art. As a youth during the 1870s, Codsiogo certainly learned the skills of a hunter and warrior, and probably was expected to provide for and protect his family after reaching adulthood. But he also learned how to produce artistic and material goods for which white people would pay.

Chief Washakie and his sons were renowned hide-painters and, like Codsiogo, produced their works for sale to collectors. Plains tribes had long histories of decorating leather goods with paint, beads, and quills. The styles were very ancient: for example, the images painted on Washakie's tepee in the accompanying 1870 photo are similar to prehistoric rock art figures and symbols. Painted hides were both cultural and economic survival statements.

All of Codsiogo's hides were produced during the turn-of-the-century Wind River Reservation Period, with the earliest hides depicting the tasayuge or Wolf Dance (War Dance) with a U.S. Flag as the center piece of the picture. The Shoshone Wolf Dance evolved into the Grass Dance with men dancers changing from having one or two feathers in their hair to war bonnets with long streamers and feather bustles. Stylized Sun Dance hides with accompanying buffalo hunts quickly replaced earlier war dance paintings. The moderate theme was intended to attract sales from white buyers visiting the Wind River Indian Reservation to watch the Sun Dance. The flag pole of the Wolf Dance was replaced by the lodge and tree of the Sun Dance. Codsiogo's imagery quickly evolved responding to consumer demand—or perhaps to avoid using spiritually powerful icons for something so crass as public sale.

Cotsiogo's hide painting combines history with the contemporary moment. It displays elements of several different dances, including the important and sacred Sun Dance and non-religious Wolf Dance (tdsayuge or tásayùge). The Sun Dance surrounds a not-yet-raised buffalo head between two poles (or a split tree), with an eagle above it. Men dressed in feather bustles and headdresses—not to be confused with feathered war bonnets—dance around the poles, which represents the Grass Dance. With their arms akimbo and their bodies bent, Cotsiogo shows these men in motion. Men participating in this sacred, social ceremony refrained from eating or drinking.

The Sun Dance was intended to honor the Creator Deity for the earth's bounty and to ensure this bounty continued. It was a sacred ceremony that tourists and anthropologists often witnessed. However, the United States government deemed it unacceptable and forbid it. The U.S. government outlawed the Sun Dance until 1935, in an effort to compel Native Americans to abandon their traditional ways. Cotsiogo likely included references to the Sun Dance because he knew tourist consumers would find the scene attractive; but he modified the scene combining it with the acceptable Wolf Dance, perhaps to avoid potential ramifications. The Wolf Dance eventually transformed into the Grass Dance which is performed today during ceremonial gatherings.

The hide painting also shows activities of daily life. Surrounding the Sun Dance, women rest near a fire and more men on horses hunt buffaloes. Warriors on horses are also shown returning to camp, which was celebrated with the Wolf Dance. Two tipis represent the camp, with the warriors appearing between them. Some of the warriors wear feathered war bonnets made of eagle feathers. These headdresses communicated a warrior acted bravely in battle, and so they functioned as symbols of honor and power. Not just anyone could wear a feathered war bonnet! Cotsiogo shows the warriors hunting with bows and arrows while riding, but in reality Shoshone men had used rifles for some time. Horses were introduced to the Southwest by Spaniards. Horses made their way to some Plains nations through trade with others like the Ute, Navajo, and Apache. By the mid-eighteenth century, horses had become an important part of Plains culture.

By the mid-1890s, Shoshone artists, including Codsiogo, used a combination of stenciling and freehand art to create their dancers, bison, and horses on elk hides. The stenciling was to expedite the process and maintain quality. The simple earth and natural vegetable colors (e.g., charcoal, red ochre, and chalk) used in earlier hides were replaced by

brighter commercial paints and dyes obtained through white traders. The once hand-tanned buffalo hides were replaced by commercially tanned deer, elk, or even cow hides.

This was an era of terrible poverty and starvation on the Wind River Reservation. Codsiogo was fortunate to have a desired skill that could keep both long-cherished cultural traditions and his family alive. Codsiogo died in 1910 or 1912 of unknown causes. Over twenty of his paintings survive in museums and private collections around the country

**16. Maria Martinez, Black-on-black ceramic vessel, c. 1939, blackware ceramic, 11 1/8 x 13 inches, Tewa, Puebloan, San Ildefonso Pueblo, New Mexico**

Pueblo pottery continues a centuries-old tradition. Over time, styles have changed, but production techniques have stayed the same. Hand coiled and stone burnished pottery is still a part of vibrant contemporary Pueblo culture. In the 1500s people from Bandelier moved to pueblos along the Rio Grande. Their descendants continue to live in pueblos within 80 miles from Bandelier National Monument. Pueblo crafts were in decline early in the 1900s. They were revived when tourists and artists came by railroad to see the ancient cliff dwellings, and Southwestern vistas and villages. Traditionally, women and girls made pots using skills passed from generation to generation. The very fine work of Maria Martinez and other artists created an increased demand for Pueblo arts and crafts.

Maria Martinez chose to be part of a tradition that has been at the core of Pueblo life for over a thousand years. Pueblo communities of the American Southwest created regional pottery styles over time as individual potters integrated traditions from the past with their own innovations. The continuity of styles was punctuated by changes resulting from experiments in decorative techniques and pottery-building methods. Yet few changes were as significant as those introduced with the arrival of the railroad and the necessities of the cash economy that accompanied it. Born in the late 1880s, just at the height of these changes, Maria Martinez was able to draw on traditions of the past with an understanding of the demands of the present.

**An Enduring Tradition --** The Tewa-speaking pueblos of Northern New Mexico have made beautiful ceramics for hundreds of years. Manufacturing techniques have varied little, and design elements have changed only gradually over time. Some classic pottery shapes, including these jar and bowl forms, still remain part of the San Ildefonso tradition. A core repertoire of painted design elements remains in use. The knowledge of these ceramic technologies and design styles are deeply embedded into pottery-making traditions. When these designs or forms are used, they are not thought of as "revival" or "mimicry," but are mere continuations of what has always been.

**A Community Craft** -- Pueblo life is centered around community activities. Farming, harvesting, hunting, dancing, and pottery making are just a few of the many community activities that keep the pueblo together. It has always been this way.

Maria took her place in the community of San Ildefonso with many others in the production of pottery. Maria's genius was in her graceful forms, while others specialized in finishing, painting, or firing. When Maria was young, her elder sisters and aunts collaborated, and when she married and had children, her husband, sons, and daughters-in-law all helped.

**Manufactured Goods** -- The railroad arrived in Santa Fe in 1880, making manufactured goods widely available and inaugurating New Mexico as a destination for tourists. Prior to that time, Hispanic and Pueblo people of the middle and northern Rio Grande valley depended upon Pueblo ceramics for most of their household cooking and storage needs.

By the late 1800s, pottery was being replaced in Pueblo communities by manufactured metal and ceramic wares. The majority of pottery being produced at the pueblos was intended for sale to the burgeoning curio (souvenir) market, which favored exotic items and pieces that were easy to transport.

**Emergence** -- Early in her career, Maria Martinez was recognized as an exceptional potter. She soon began to develop a following in the nearby community of Santa Fe. As her contact with the non-Pueblo world grew, so too did her reputation as an artist. Edgar Lee Hewett recognized her talent as a potter. After the founding of the Museum of New Mexico, he and Kenneth Chapman drew upon her expertise in their research of the prehistoric Southwest. They and other like-minded individuals encouraged her and provided opportunities for Maria to earn a living from her craft. As she developed as an artist, she and her husband Julian traveled outside of New Mexico and demonstrated at fairs and expositions throughout the country.

**Looking to the Past** -- In an effort to breathe new life into Pueblo art and community, anthropologists encouraged potters to look to their past for inspiration. In 1907-08 the School of American Archaeology (now the School of American Research) conducted excavations at Bandelier National Monument. Maria's husband, Julian, worked as part of the excavation crew, and it was at this time that they met Edgar Lee Hewett, the archaeologist directing the excavations.

In the following years, Maria and Julian continued their contact with Hewett, then Director of the Museum of New Mexico. Maria and her sisters regularly demonstrated pottery making at the museum. Julian worked for a time as a custodian for the museum, where he continued to find inspiration in the museum's collections of historic and pre-contact pottery.

**A Market for Quality** -- As the appreciation for Pueblo pottery grew, a segment of Santa Fe's leaders took it upon themselves to help preserve what they believed was a dying art. They did this in two

major ways: establishing a fund for the Museum of New Mexico to purchase fine pieces of Pueblo pottery and by starting the Indian Fair, where prizes were awarded for the best Indian art.

Rose Dugan, a long-time Santa Fe resident, provided funds for the Museum of New Mexico to purchase Indian art. With this, Edgar Lee Hewett and others purchased pottery they thought was of exceptional quality. They were willing to pay a significant premium over the regular price if the work met their standards, thus encouraging potters to make fewer, but better pieces.

**Letting the Outside In** -- From a young age, Maria Martinez served as an ambassador of her pueblo, and of Indian people in general. As early as 1904, she and her husband Julian demonstrated at the Louisiana Purchase International Exposition in St. Louis. In the following years, she participated in fairs in San Diego, Chicago, San Francisco, and New York. Despite the prevailing cultural sentiment, in which Indian people were considered a "primitive race," she and her work were well received.

Maria's contact with the non-Native community was not limited to fairs and expositions. With the development of tourism, spurred by the opening of the transcontinental railroad, Indian pueblos became a tourist destination. Following their employment at the San Diego Panama California Exposition, Maria and Julian were hired by the Fred Harvey Company to lead tours of San Ildefonso Pueblo, allowing them to take advantage of the economic possibilities represented by the newly-mobile American tourist.

**Artistry** -- Maria Martinez was a true master of her art. Together with her collaborators, she established many of the most striking and recognizable traditions of contemporary Pueblo pottery. She worked with her husband Julian until his death in 1943, then with her daughter-in-law Santana Roybal Martinez, and finally her son Popovi Da. In the early part of the twentieth century, at the encouragement of Kenneth Chapman, Maria began signing her works. This led to the widespread recognition that each piece of Pueblo pottery was a unique work by an individual creator. Maria's greatest contribution, beyond the styles and processes she pioneered, was that her masterful technique ultimately led to the acceptance of pottery-making as a form of art. Throughout her career, Maria signed many pots with different signatures and often included many of her collaborator's names.

When Maria was first encouraged to sign her pots, she was told that the name Marie would be more familiar to non-Pueblo people, so many of her earlier work is signed "Marie." As she became known, she changed her signature to "Maria" and then "Maria Poveka." As different collaborators entered Maria's life, their names were added. The names of her husband Julian, her daughter-in-law Santana, her son Popovi, and even her grandson Tony Da have each appeared on Maria's pottery.

**Black-on-black** -- Although polished Blackware pottery was known to many of the pueblos, Maria and Julian developed the black-on-black style. The iron-rich clay used as the slip and paint of black-on-black would change color depending upon the conditions under which it was fired. In an oxygen-rich environment—one exposed to air—the clay would fire red. In an oxygen-free environment—one smothered by soil—the clay would fire black.

An important and often unappreciated part of pottery making is firing. Although shaping and painting are the most common tasks people associate with pottery, firing the finished pots is a task left to specialists. The humidity, wind strength and direction, and the air and firing temperature are few of the many variables that must be carefully monitored for a successful firing. In traditional Pueblo pottery-making, all of the firing variables are monitored by careful planning and through extensive experience without the use of modern thermal couples and kilns. Under the watchful eye of an experienced potter, the same clay that produces beautiful Blackware pottery can be overfired to produce a metallic luster known as a gunmetal finish.

**Legacy** -- The legacy of Maria Martinez extends far beyond the world of art. By helping to create a demand for well-made pottery, she enabled others in her community to make a living at the pueblo. At the time of her birth, just thirty families lived within the pueblo of San Ildefonso. Today, artists and galleries thrive there and at other nearby Pueblo communities, where many of Maria and Julian's techniques and designs have been adopted.

Maria's renown extends to others who share her name, and artists who can establish a connection to her have benefited from their family relationship. These and other artists are recognized for their individual achievements in a manner similar to that which Maria enjoyed seventy-five years ago.

**17. Master of Calamarca, *Archangel with Arquebus (Gun), Asiel Timor Dei*, before 1728, oil on canvas and gilding, 160 x 110 cm**

In Latin America, non-European artists and craftsmen were never successfully suppressed by the guild system and they found that the most effective way to get beyond government restrictions was to found workshops and confraternities of their own. These foundations arose in a piecemeal fashion

depending upon the region, but became especially prominent in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There were black artisanal confraternities, like the Confraternity of San Juan Bautista de los Pardos, which was founded for masons and carpenters in the parish church of Santa Ana in Lima, and Amerindian confraternities, like the Confraternity of San Miguel Arcangel, also in Lima, which provided Andean masons with professional representation.

Black and mixed race artists, either born free or liberated, made up a substantial proportion of the woodcarvers and sculptors in eighteenth-century Brazil. These men operated their own workshops, often executing altarpieces for black confraternities, which favored images of black saints such as Saints Ifigenia, Moses the Hermit and Elsbao. The most famous and distinguished of these non-European artists' organizations were the workshops of the so-called 'Cuzco School' in Peru, founded in the second half of the seventeenth century in the midst of an intensive building campaign that followed the 1650 earthquake.

Andean artists and artisans played a crucial role in transforming Cuzco into the splendid Baroque city seen today, several of them attaining the position of master despite Spanish reluctance to allow them this honor. More than fifty names of indigenous artists have come down to us from the seventeenth century and even more names of mestizos. Inevitably, competition broke out between these non-European artists and their European and creole rivals. In 1687-8, eight Spanish masters were ordered to reply to a complaint from Andean painters that they
were being mistreated and wanted to form their own guilds. Shaken by the possibility of such formidable competition, the minority Spanish masters resorted to labeling the Andean painters as "malicious" and as "people who are accustomed to getting drunk".

The Andean painters got their way, however, and by the end of the century indigenous guilds and confraternities overwhelmed the European competition with vivid and exquisite renditions of the Madonna, the saints and biblical scenes for Andean and non-Andean patrons throughout Highland Peru and present-day Bolivia. Among their most celebrated products were paintings of archangels, including

apocryphal ones, dressed in foppish court clothing and holding arquebuses, such as this elegant canvas of the apocryphal archangel Aspiel (c. 1660-80)) by the celebrated Master of Calamarca.

The archangel's coat is covered in delicate gold filigree and he raises his arquebus heavenwards. These apocryphal angels were associated with the stars and natural phenomena, which gave them great appeal to an indigenous Andean population accustomed to worshipping celestial bodies. The majority of documented painters in late seventeenth- and eighteenth century Cuzco were of indigenous backgrounds, and although most of them were anonymous they included better-known figures like Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumaqallo, Francisco de Moncada and Pablo Chile Tupa, as well as virtual unknowns such as Antonio Chakiavi and Lukas Willka. These artists were responsible for an astonishingly high volume of production" (203).

Throughout the Americas, Amerindians saw spirituality in many shiny things, not just the few regarded as precious by Europeans. Spiritual essence, manifested as brilliance, inhered in the celestial bodies, meteorological phenomena, fire, water, metals, minerals, shells, ceramics, feathers, bone, blood, and semen, amongst other things. Indigenous conceptions of brilliance emerged from a broader, shamanic appreciation of light and were linked to notions of a mirror-image realm inhabited by bright spirit-beings conceived as incorporeal souls, were-beings, and immanent forces.

As arbiters of a world view that infused nature with sentient spirituality, shamans move back and forth between the physical and supernatural realms in visions aglow with shimmering light suggests the shamanic experience itself is brilliant; the processes by which certain shiny materials were obtained and fashioned is considered part of a potentially dangerous, but sacred body of transformative shamanic knowledge, fenced in by ritual activity- sometimes observed, though rarely understood, by Europeans. Cosmic brilliance engendered and symbolized strength and was a potent weapon. The Inka emperor entered battle hurling slingstones of fine gold at his enemies and his warriors wore shiny metal plates (pura-pura) on their chests. The Spaniards' progress from Mexico's eastern coast up into the central highlands caused fear and consternation, not least because of their gleaming appearance and flashing weapons. Bearing in mind the symbolic associations of metals and shininess for the Aztecs described above, the Spanish came dressed in shimmering light- an indicator of their supernatural status and power.

The Bolivian art historian Teresa Gisbert writes that the Councils of Lima, which were responsible for questions of orthodoxy in the Viceroyalty: "sought to attract Indians to the new faith by the use of images that would be especially appealing to them". Why were angels appealing to them? In the Pelican History, Martin Soria tentatively puts forward the theory that angels were popular because 'they replaced similar messengers in pre-conquest beliefs.' Teresa Gisbert produces evidence to show that Diego Quispe Tito's series of paintings of the zodiac for the Cathedral of Cuzco was commissioned in order to counteract the traditional indigenous worship

Paintings of angels with guns appeared at a time when the religious orders were confronted with the stubborn persistence of pre-conquest religion amongst their Indian charges. Immense problems remained not merely in the campaign to destroy Indian idols, but in teaching and reinforcing the principles of the new faith. Sermons and catechisms were of course the primary means of conversion, but images of angels with guns were useful symbols of important teachings of the church. The Spaniards conquered the Incas with both the Cross and the arquebus. The key to understanding the religious function of these images is found in the gun motif. Firearms, unknown to the Indians at the time of the conquest, seemed a frightening manifestation of the supernatural… But since guns were also used defensively, the images functioned symbolically as reminders of the protection offered to those who embraced Christianity.

Far more important than the military aspects of the angel's costumes are the explicit references to the high social status of both Spanish colonial gentlemen and Inca royalty. Richly brocaded fabrics, ribbons, and lace characterize the opulent vice regal dress of the 17th century. The gentleman-aristocratic nature of angels with guns is defined by their elegant dress, which relates them directly to the ruling aristocracy.

Although the technical military details of loading and handling the gun and so on, of the angel paintings, is very precise- taken in fact from a Flemish military manual of 1607 – the 'common solider' of the image in the manual is not retained; he becomes the gorgeous aristocrat. The non-aggressive angel-like pose, is of course extremely seductive, which makes the threat of force oblique, only implied, as if a beautiful face was being laid over the ugly face of violent coercion.

**18. *Virgin of Guadalupe.* 16th century, oil and possibly tempera on maguey cactus cloth and cotton**

By no coincidence, Tepeyac Hill had served as an ancient pilgrimage site dedicated to several pre-Columbian earth deities, who were referred to in the early colonial period by the generic name of Tonantzin, meaning 'our revered mother.' In the ambitious program to evangelize all native peoples after the conquest, Catholic shrines were superimposed on pre-Hispanic temples. Given its traditional significance, Tepeyac would have been a logical place for a chapel or hermitage, probably dedicated to one of the many cults of the Virgin Mary imported by the Spaniards.

According to tradition, she showed herself to a newly Christianized native, whose baptismal name was Juan Diego. Using the Aztec language of Nahuatl, the Virgin asked that a church be erected in her honor. Juan Diego tried three times to convince Archbishop Juan de Zumarraga of this apparition. He

succeeded only on the last visit to Zumarraga when roses tumbled out of his opened tilmatli, or cloak, and a life-sized image of the Virgin was found miraculously imprinted on its cactus-fiber cloth. Juan Diego's cloak is said to be the same painted icon that is central to the cult of the Virgin of Guadalupe, venerated today in the twentieth-century basilica that bears her name.

Perhaps the best illustration of colonial art's continuing relevance is the sixteenth-century Mexican painting The Virgin of Guadalupe, a delicate late Renaissance image of the Virgin of the Apocalypse, whose enigmatic grey-lavender skin color has inspired generations of Mexicans to accept her as a member of their own ethnic group, whether Amerindian, mestizo or creole (people born in America of European parentage). Deriving from a medieval interpretation of a passage in the Apocalypse of John the Apostle, Mary is a protagonist in the eternal war between Jerusalem and Babylon, and appears surrounded by sunbeams, standing on a half-moon and crowned by stars. The single most famous work of Latin American colonial art today, it has been embraced by groups as diverse as Chicano labor activists, feminist artists, paranormal enthusiasts and conservative Catholics. It is painted on murals in Los Angeles, embedded in resin key chains in Lima, and Bogota, and is the focus of legions of internet sites from around the world.

This painting has enjoyed a resurgence through the canonization in 2002 by Pope John Paul II of Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoztzin, who is said to have discovered it in his cloak in 1531. Juan Diego, the bearer of the Virgin's image, thus became the Catholic Church's first Amerindian saint- even though many argue that he never existed. The Virgin of Guadalupe remains at the core of Latin American identity precisely because she embodies the heterogeneous but conflicted legacy of the colonial era. This legacy remains at the center of Latin American politics, religion, culture, and nationalism today. To ignore the colonial past is to lose critical insight into the present.

The image perfectly united old and new Latin American cultures in affirmation of divine motherhood- the very place name Guadalupe comes from Arabic Spain and a Marian shrine there, yet it was to a native that the sign of divine favor had been given, and the name sounds conveniently like the Nahuatl attribute of a goddess, Cuatlaxopeuh- she who trod the serpent underfoot. A recent study of the 'miracle' highlights the narrative achievement of the Creole priest Sanchez, who drew on both Augustine

of Hippo and John of Damascus in mediating on the Guadalupe miracle. It is an extraordinary tribute to Augustine, the source of Luther's and Calvin's Reformation, that he should also fire the imagination of this Mexican priest.

The symbols of sun and moon that appear in the painting, and even the colors used, are universal elements of religious symbolism that had special significance for the Aztecs. For the Indians, it was natural to place a goddess above one of her primary symbols, the moon. If the Spaniards had destroyed the solar cult of Huitzilopochtli and human sacrifice, this new incarnation revealed that the lunar goddess had overshadowed the solar god for a time and ushered in a new age. It was a new age of war, death, and disease, which the mother goddess ever announces with her wailing at the crossroads. But it was an age also of birth and survival, which the goddess guaranteed by her guardianship of the cyclical processes of fertility and growth.

The images of Mary Immaculate assume the posture of prayer. Prayer was the instrument both of Mary's intercession with God and of the believer's appeal to hear. The art historian Elizabeth Wilder Weismann noticed that this appeal was associated with distinctive images of the Virgin Mary that were believed to contain her power. Unlike the pinup versions of Mary that were popular in the academic art of Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries, the favorite representations from rural Mexico were friendly, approachable little women. She was the only mortal to have escaped the stain of the sins of Adam and Eve. Her purity carried the promise of redemption; her child was the source of a new beginning. Colonial Indians could have understood this new beginning as liberation in the widest sense- spiritual salvation, escape from taxes and oppressive labor service, and protest against alien power. As a symbol of liberation and the embodiment of Indian interests, Mary was proof that her faithful were a chosen people. In effect, veneration of the Virgin was a critique of the existing social order, a rejection of Spanish values and a guide to action – as if she represented a 'confrontation of Spanish and Indian worlds.'

Because the political history of the Virgin Mary has been considered largely in association with uprisings, especially with the Independence War and the Revolution of 1919, we have had the impression that this message of protest was the only one, that Guadalupe was communitas for Indians from the 1530s on, the opposite of structure and of everything hierarchical, paternalistic, and Hispanic.

***17. Spaniard and Indian Produce a Mestizo*, attributed to Juan Rodríguez Juárez, c. 1715, oil on canvas**

In 1746 Dr. Andrés Arce y Miranda, a creole attorney from Puebla, Mexico, criticized a series of paintings known as the cuadros de castas or casta paintings. Offended by their depictions of racial mixtures of the inhabitants of Spain's American colonies, Arce y Miranda feared the paintings would send back to Spain the damaging message that creoles, the Mexican-born children of Spanish parents,

were of mixed blood. For Arce y Miranda, the paintings would only confirm European assumptions of creole inferiority.

Casta paintings first appeared during the reign of the first Bourbon monarch of Spain, Phillip V (170046), and grew in popularity throughout the eighteenth century. They remained in demand until the majority of Spain's American colonies became independent in 1821. To date over one hundred full or partial series of casta paintings have been documented and more continue to surface at art auctions. Their popularity in the eighteenth century suggests that many of Arce y Miranda's contemporaries did not share his negative opinions of the paintings.

The casta series represent different racial mixtures that derived from the offspring of unions between Spaniards and Indians – mestizos, Spaniards and Blacks–mulattos, and Blacks and Indians – zambos. Subsequent intermixtures produced a mesmerizing racial taxonomy that included labels such as "no te entiendo," ("I don't understand who you are"), an offspring of so many racial mixtures that made ancestry difficult to determine, or "salta atrás" ("a jump backward") which could denote African ancestry. The overwhelming majority of extant casta series were produced and painted in Mexico. While most of the artists remain anonymous, those who have been identified include some of the most prominent painters in eighteenth-century Mexico including Miguel Cabrera, Juan Rodríguez Juárez, José de Ibarra, José Joaquín Magón, and Francisco Vallejo.

Casta paintings were presented most commonly in a series of sixteen individual canvases or a single canvas divided into sixteen compartments. The series usually depict a man, woman, and child, arranged according to a hierarchies of race and status, the latter increasingly represented by occupation as well as dress by the mid-eighteenth century. The paintings are usually numbered and the racial mixtures identified in inscriptions. Spanish men are often portrayed as men of leisure or professionals, blacks and mulattos as coachmen, Indians as food vendors, and mestizos as tailors, shoemakers, and tobacconists. Mulattas and mestizas are often represented as cooks, spinners, and seamstresses. Despite clear duplications, significant variations occur in casta sets produced throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Whereas some series restrict themselves to representation and specification of racial mixtures, dress styles, and material culture, others are more detailed in their representation of flora and

fauna peculiar to the New World (avocadoes, prickly pear, parrots, armadillos, and different types of indigenous peoples). While the majority appear to be in urban settings, several series depict rural landscapes.

What do these exquisitely beguiling images tell us about colonial society and Spanish imperial rule? As with textual evidence, we cannot take them as unmediated and transparent sources. Spanish elites' anxiety about the breakdown of a clear socio-racial hierarchy in colonial society–the sistema de castas or caste system–that privileged a white, Spanish elite partially accounts for the development of this genre. Countering those anxieties, casta paintings depict colonial social life and mixed-race people in idealized terms. Instead of the beggars, vagrants, and drunks that populated travelers' accounts and Spanish bureaucratic reports about its colonial populations, viewers gaze upon scenes of prosperity and domesticity, of subjects engaged in productive labor, consumption, and commerce. Familiar tropes of the idle and drunken castas are only occasionally depicted in scenes of domestic conflict. In addition, European desires for exotica and the growing popularity of natural history contributed to the demand for casta paintings. The only extant casta series from Peru was commissioned as a gift specifically for the natural history collection of the Prince of Asturias (the future Charles IV of Spain). And despite Dr. Arce y Miranda's fears, many contemporaries believed the casta series offered positive images of Mexico and America as well as of Spanish imperial rule. In this regard, the casta paintings tell us as much about Mexico's and Spain's aspirations and resources as they do about racial mixing. Many owners of casta paintings were high-ranking colonial bureaucrats, military officials, and clergy, who took their casta paintings back to Spain with them when they completed their service in America. But there is also evidence of patrons from the middling ranks of the colonial bureaucracy. Very fragmentary data on the price of casta paintings suggests that their purchase would not have been restricted to only the very wealthy.

The casta paintings were displayed in official public spaces, such as museums, universities, high ranking officials' residences and palaces, as well as in unofficial spaces when some private collections would be opened up to limited public viewing. The main public space where casta paintings could have been viewed by a wide audience was the Natural History Museum in Madrid.

Regardless of what patrons and artists may have intended casta paintings to convey, viewers responded to them according to their own points of reference and contexts. While much remains to be learned about who saw sets of casta paintings and where they saw them, fragmentary evidence suggests varied audience responses. The English traveler Richard Phillips, visiting the Natural History Museum in Madrid in 1803, enthusiastically encouraged his readers to go and see the casta paintings as exemplary exotica along with Japanese drums and Canopus pots from Egypt. Another English traveler, Richard Twiss, expressed skepticism about the inscriptions that described the racial mixtures depicted in a casta

series he viewed in a private house in Malaga. And, to return to Arce y Miranda in Mexico, the casta paintings for him signified a slur on the reputation of creoles in Mexico.

Although we have a good general understanding of the development of this provocative genre much remains to be understood about the circulation, patronage, and reception of the casta paintings. We know, for example, that some casta series found their way to England. One tantalizing piece of evidence comes from the British landscape painter Thomas Jones (1742-1803) who made a diary entry in 1774 about a set of casta paintings he viewed at a friend's house in Chesham. How these paintings were acquired by their English owners, as purchases, gifts, or through more nefarious means, remains an open question. We also need to know much more about patrons of the casta paintings and the painters in order to deepen our understanding about innovations and new interpretations that appear in this genre.

### 18. Portrait of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz Miguel Cabrera, Portrait of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, c. 1750, oil on canvas

Miguel Cabrera's posthumous portrait of sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648-1695) is a famous depiction of the esteemed Mexican nun and writer. Considered the first feminist of the Americas, sor Juana lived as a nun of the Jeronymite order (named for St. Jerome) in seventeenth century Mexico. Rather than marry, she chose to become a nun so she could pursue her intellectual interests. She corresponded with scientists, theologians, and other literary intellectuals in Mexico and abroad. She wrote poetry and plays that became internationally famous, and even engaged in theological debates.

Born to a creole family in 1648, sor Juana was a child prodigy. At the age of fifteen, she amazed people at court by excelling at an oral exam that tested her knowledge of physics, philosophy, theology, and mathematics.

She came to live as a lady in waiting in the house of the viceroy (the substitute or representative for the Spanish king in Mexico). Shortly afterwards, she chose to become a nun instead of marry. She entered the Carmelite convent in 1667, but left a year later to join the Jeronymite order in 1669—and in the process gained intellectual freedom. The Jeronymite order allowed her to host intellectual gatherings and live a comfortable life.

In 1690 she became involved in an ecclesiastical dispute between the bishops of Mexico City and Puebla. She responded to the criticism she received as a woman writer, which culminated in one of her most famous works: The Answer (1691). This work defended her right as a woman to write and to be a scholar. At one she claimed that "I do not study in order to write, nor far less in order to teach (which would be boundless arrogance in me), but simply to see whether by studying I may become less ignorant. This is my answer, and these are my feelings. . . ."

Despite her eloquent defense, the Church forced her to relinquish her literary pursuits and even her library. When she sold her library and musical and scientific instruments, she wrote a document that renounced her learning, which ended with "I, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, the worst in the world," signed in her own blood. After giving up her intellectual pursuits, she cared for the infirm during an epidemic but she fell sick and passed away.

Miguel Cabrera positions sor Juana in such a way that the portrait insists on her status as an intellectual. He never actually met sor Juana, so he likely based his image of her on earlier portraits of her, possibly even some self-portraits. Cabrera likely modeled this painting on images of male scholars seated at their desks. Most importantly, he possibly found inspiration in depictions of St. Jerome, the patron saint of sor Juana's religious order. Images often portray St. Jerome seated at a desk within a study, surrounded by books and instruments of learning.

In many ways this is a typical nun portrait of eighteenth-century Mexico. Sor Juana wears the habit of her religious order, the Jeronymites. She also wears an escudo de monja, or nun's badge, on her chest underneath her chin. Escudos de monja were often painted, occasionally woven, and they usually displayed the Virgin Mary. Sor Juana's escudo shows the Annunciation, the moment in which the archangel Gabriel informs Mary that she will bear the son of God. Her left hand toys with a rosary, while she turns a page of an open book with her right hand. The book is a text by St. Jerome, the saint after whom her religious order was named.

Cabrera's portrait differs from other nun portraits in several important ways. She looks towards us, her gaze direct and assertive, as she sits at a desk, surrounded by her library and instruments of learning. The library here includes books on philosophy, natural science, theology, mythology, and history, and so it reflects the types of works in sor Juana's own library. Writing implements rest on the table, a clear allusion to sor Juana's written works and intellectual pursuits. The rosary—a sign of her religious life—is juxtaposed with items signifying her intellectual life. The books, the desk, the quills and inkwell aid in

conveying her intellectual status. The red curtain, common in elite portraiture of this period, also confers upon her a high status.

**19. Thomas Cole, *View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm—The Oxbow*, 1836, oil on canvas**

During the nineteenth century—an expanse of time that saw the elevation of landscape painting to a point of national pride—Thomas Cole reigned supreme as the undisputed leader of the Hudson River School of landscape painters (not an actual school, but a group of New York city-based landscape painters). It is ironic, however, that the person who most embodies the beauty and grandeur of the American wilderness during the first half of the nineteenth century was not originally from the United States, but was instead born and lived the first seventeen years of his life in Great Britain. Originally from Bolton-le-Moor in Lancashire (England), the Cole family immigrated to the United States in 1818, first settling in Philadelphia before eventually moving to Steubenville, Ohio, a locale then on the edge of wilderness of the American west.

Cole worked briefly in Ohio as an itinerant portraitist, but returned to Philadelphia in 1823 at the age of 22 to pursue art instruction that was then unavailable in Ohio. Two years later, Cole moved to New York City where he exchanged his aspirations of painting large-scale historical compositions for the more reasonable artistic goal of completing landscapes. For instruction, Cole turned to a book, William Oram's *Precepts and Observations on the Art of Colouring in Landscaping* (1810), an instructional text that had a profound effect on Cole for the remainder of his artistic career.

Cole found quick success in New York City. In the year of his arrival, 1825, John Trumbull, the patriarch of American portraiture and history painting, and the president of the American Academy of Design "discovered" Cole, and the older artist made it an immediate goal to promote the talented landscape painter. In the months to follow, Trumbull introduced Cole to many of the wealthy and prominent men who would become his most influential patrons in the decades to follow. One such man was Luman Reed, an affluent merchant who, in 1836, commissioned Cole to paint the five-canvas series *The Course of Empire.*

It is in this series—and in many of the paintings to follow—that Thomas Cole found the aesthetic voice to lift the genre of landscape painting to a level that approached history painting. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, great artists aspired to complete large-scale historical compositions, paintings that often had an instructive moral message. Landscape paintings, in contrast, were often though more imitative than innovative. But in *The Course of Empire*, Cole was able to take the American landscape and imbue it with a moral message, as was often found in history paintings. Indeed, the landscapes Cole began to paint in the 1830s were not entirely about the land. In these works, Cole used the land as a way to say something important about the United States.

A wonderful illustration of this is Cole's 1836 masterwork, *A View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm*, a painting that is generally (and mercifully) known as *The Oxbow*. At first glance this painting may seem to be nothing more than an interesting view of a recognizable bend in the Connecticut River. But when viewed through the lens of nineteenth-century political ideology, this painting eloquently speaks about the widely discussed topic of westward expansion.

When looking at *The Oxbow*, the viewer can clearly see that Cole used a diagonal line from the lower right to the upper left to divide the composition into two unequal halves. The left-hand side of the painting depicts a sublime view of the land, a perspective that elicits feelings of danger and even fear. This is enhanced by the gloomy storm clouds that seem to

pummel the not-too-distant middle ground with rain. This part of the painting depicts a virginal landscape, nature created by God and untouched by man. It is wild, unruly, and untamed.

Within the construction of American landscape painting, American artists often visually represented the notion of the untamed wilderness through the "Blasted Tree", a motif Cole paints into the lower left corner. That such a formidable tree could be obliterated in such a way suggests the herculean power of Nature.

If the left side of this painting is sublime in tenor, on the right side of the composition we can observe a peaceful, pastoral landscape that humankind has subjugated to their will. The land, which was once as disorderly as that on the left side of the painting, has now been overtaken by the order and regulation of agriculture. Animals graze. Crops grow. Smoke billows from chimneys. Boats sail upon the river. What was once wild has been tamed. The thunderstorm, which threatens the left side of the painting, has left the land on the right refreshed and no worse for the wear. The sun shines brightly, filling the right side of the painting with the golden glow of a fresh afternoon.

When viewed together, the right side of the painting—the view to the east—and that of the left—the west—clearly speak to the ideology of Manifest Destiny. During the nineteenth century, discussions of westward expansion dominated political discourse. The Louisiana Purchase of 1804 essentially doubled the size of the United States, and many believed that it was a divinely ordained obligation of Americans to settle this westward territory. In *The Oxbow,* Cole visually shows the benefits of this process. The land to the east is ordered, productive, and useful. In contrast, the land to the west remains unbridled. Further westward expansion—a change that is destined to happen—is shown to positively alter the land.

Although Cole was the most influential landscape artist of the first half of the nineteenth century, he was not completely adverse to figure painting. Indeed, a close look at *The Oxbow*, reveals an easily overlooked self-portrait in the lower part of the painting.  Cole wears a coat and hat and stands before a stretched canvas placed on an easel, paintbrush in hand. The artist pauses, as if in the middle of the

brushstroke, to engage the viewer. This work, then, in a kind of "artist in his studio" self-portrait. For Cole, this was the nature he is most well known for painting.

Although he only formally accepted one pupil for instruction—this was, of course, Frederic Edwin Church—Thomas Cole exerted a powerful influence on the course of landscape painting in the United States during the nineteenth century. Not content to merely paint the land, Cole elevated the landscape genre to approach the status of historical painting. The landscape painters who followed during the middle of the nineteenth century—Church, Durant, Bierstadt, and others—would often follow the trail that Cole had blazed.

### 20. José María Velasco, *The Valley of Mexico from the Santa Isabel Mountain Range (Valle de México desde el cerro de Santa Isabel)*, 1875, oil on canvas

Did you know that the first art school in the Americas was established in Mexico City in the late eighteenth century? Creole artists (of European descent born in the Spanish Americas) in preceding decades had failed to convince the Spanish king to create a pedagogical artistic institution. Nevertheless, by the end of the eighteenth century, the Royal Academy of San Carlos (Real Academia de San Carlos) was established. It was modeled after the Art Academy of San Fernando in Madrid, and consequently, a new chapter of Mexican art history began.

This important school fostered Romantic and Neoclassical aesthetics through previously unexplored genres of painting. For example, beginning in the nineteenth century, students emerging from the new school at the Academy began to illustrate local vistas of the Valley of Mexico. The development of these images offered the perfect opportunity for artists to explore the Romantic qualities of “pure landscape,” which in Mexico, through the teachings of the Italian professor Eugenio Landesio, emerged as a popular genre in the Academy. However, and as observed in Velasco's The Valley of Mexico from the Hillside of Santa Isabel, the valley represented much more than a mere opportunity to practice this

newly established genre of painting. This imagery offered an opportunity to highlight symbols of patriotism valuable to a newly independent society.

After the 1821 war of independence (from Spain), Mexico sought to establish its identity through artistic endeavors. The development of the practice of national landscape painting was part of the dictator López de Santa Anna's efforts to re-establish the art academy after decades of neglect following the formation of Mexico as an independent nation. The Italian artist Eugenio Landesio (who was a well-regarded artist in Mexico) was appointed as the academy's professor of perspective and landscape painting in 1855. His mentorship and his experience uniting ancient and contemporary Roman historical subjects in his canvasses forever changed the history of Mexican landscape painting.

Monumentality While Eugenio Landesio and his contemporaries had created similar landscapes of the Valley, Velasco presented a monumentality and an open quality to his images that surpassed compositions such as El Valle de Mexico desde el Cerro del Tenayo (above) created by his Italian mentor only a few years earlier. Velasco's compositions united pre-Hispanic symbols and contemporary national sentiments. For example, the white peaks that predominate his vistas are the Popocatepetl and Iztacchihuatl volcanoes. For centuries the land's romantic topology has captured the imagination of Mexicans. Prior to the arrival of the Spanish to the Valley of Mexico in 1519, these two volcanoes were the main characters of a legendary ill-fated love between an Aztec princess (Iztacchihuatl, or "white woman") and a courageous warrior (Popocatepetl, or "smoking mountain").

Towards the composition's background [right], the spectator can admire the receding waters of Lake Texcoco and the contours of Mexico City. The ancient Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan was founded in the middle of this lake in 1325. This was a familiar site for Velasco, given that the artist's home was located at the foot of the small hill shown in the middle of the canvas. This unassuming hill was also an important sacred colonial site where the Virgin of Guadalupe first appeared to the indigenous man Juan Diego in 1531. The artist is known to have painted in this location many times. This version of The Valley of Mexico from the Hillside of Santa Isabel is perhaps the most celebrated of a dozen or so images with the same subject done by the artist between 1875 and 1892. At one point, the brushstrokes that form the peaks of the snow-covered volcanoes, the rock formations and other details were done from memory, making it possible for the artist to change and manipulate the details of the landscape as he saw fit.

The Valley of Mexico from the Hillside of Santa Isabel can be viewed as a re-interpretation of the common late eighteenth-century German subject, "pastoral idylls," where a sense of poetic harmony and daily life were united. In the tradition of artists such as Casper David Friedrich (above) and Joseph Anton Koch, Velasco introduces his figures (below) not as mere staffage, or accessories enhancing the rest of the artwork, but as key components behind the composition's poetics. Similar to his German predecessors, Velasco explored the romantic relationship between human figures and the scenery they inhabit. Two

indigenous individuals are presented in transit from the city to the country, reflecting a romantic, yet difficult socio-economic relationship between people and their ancestral land. The figures' indigenous garments intrinsically relate to the national iconography displayed throughout the image. In the words of the German poet Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller, the figures in a landscape must represent "a humanity reconciled with itself…nature purified, raised to its highest moral dignity...the ideal beauty applied to real life. Velasco has produced an image where national pride, romantic poetry, and daily life blend to transform the Valley of Mexico into a Romantic masterpiece.

Overall, The Valley of Mexico from the Hillside of Santa Isabel represents an important period in the development of Mexico's national identity and an important chapter in the history of Mexican art. Velasco's landscapes became symbols of the nation as they represented Mexico in several World Fairs. The union of romantic European sensibilities and the historical allegories observed in his compositions won him important recognition in Chicago, Paris and Philadelphia in the late nineteenth century.

**21. Mary Cassatt, *The Coiffure*, 1890-1891, drypoint and aquatint on laid paper, sheet**

Known for her perceptive depictions of women and children, Mary Cassatt was one of the few American artists active in the nineteenth-century French avant-garde. Born to a prominent Pittsburgh family, she traveled extensively through Europe with her parents and siblings while a child. Between 1860 and 1864 she attended the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia. At the age of twenty-two Cassatt went abroad, studying old master paintings in European museums. In Paris, she studied with prominent academic painters and independently at the Louvre. Returning to the United States for a short period, Cassatt went back to Europe in 1871, spending her time painting and copying the old masters in museums in Italy, Spain, and Belgium.

In 1874 she settled permanently in Paris. Although she had several works accepted for exhibition by the tradition-bound French Salon, her artistic aims aligned her with the avant-garde painters of the time. In 1877, Edgar Degas invited her to join the progressive group of artists popularly known as the impressionists; she particularly admired the work of Degas, as well as that of Manet and Courbet. A close working relationship developed between Cassatt and Degas. From similar upper-class backgrounds, the two painters enjoyed a friendship based on common artistic sensibilities and interests in bold compositional structure, the asymmetry and high vantage point of Japanese prints, and contemporary subject matter.

During her long residence in France, Cassatt sent paintings back to exhibitions in the United States. Thus, hers were among the first impressionist works seen in this country. In advising wealthy American patrons on what to acquire, she also played a crucial role in the formation of some of the most important collections of impressionist art in this country.

In the spring of 1890, shortly after visiting an extensive exhibition of Japanese prints at the Ecole des beaux-arts, Paris, Mary Cassatt wrote a note to Berthe Morisot: "You who want to make color prints wouldn't dream of anything more beautiful. . . . You must see the Japanese—come as soon as you can." Woodblock images by late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century masters such as Kitagawa Utamaro and Katsushika Hokusai had intrigued artists and collectors since the 1850s, when Japan became open to Western trade. The 1890 exhibition, organized by art dealer Siegfried Bing, included over seven hundred objects and provided an unprecedented view of the tradition of Japanese printmaking known as ukiyo-e (the floating world). Cassatt, like many other artists, made several visits to the display. Her admiration of the linear delicacy, tonal variety, and compositional strength of the works she saw there inspired her to take her own printmaking in a highly innovative direction.

The April 1890 exhibition of Japanese woodcuts at the Ecole des BeauxArts in Paris inspired Mary Cassatt to begin experimenting with different print techniques. Using aquatint, drypoint, etching, and hand-coloring, Cassatt attempted to capture the flat planes and simple lines of Japanese woodcuts. After painstakingly overseeing the execution of each print, Cassatt exhibited the resulting series of ten at the Durand Ruel Gallery in Paris the next year. Together, the prints combine the spare beauty of Japanese woodcut designs with innovative color patterns and finely tuned drawing.

This drypoint etching, *The Coiffure*, of a woman adjusting her hair is one of the hundreds that Mary Cassatt made in her in-home studio in the summer and fall of 1890 and in the winter of 1891. It was inspired in part by a woodblock print in her personal collection, Kitagawa Utamaro's boudoir image of the daughter of a prosperous Edo businessman, Takashima Ohisa Using Two Mirrors to Observe Her Coiffure (above). La Coiffure also has its art historical roots in Old Master paintings of women bathing and the odalisque though it departs from those conventional models to become a tightly crafted exercise in form and composition.

The word "la coiffure" evokes a precise image, one of wealthy women in glamorous settings. The ritual of grooming, dressing, and preparing one's hair from the seventeenth and

eighteenth century court days of Anne of Austria and Marie Antoinette was passed down to nineteenth-century ideals of femininity and beauty.

To wear an elaborate hairstyle such as those depicted in this magazine illustration by George Girard, one needed to have a maid to help with one's hair. "La coiffure" was part of a specific lifestyle. Yet the woman in Cassatt's print is tending to her hair alone. Perhaps what we are seeing is a working woman getting ready to start her day. The counterpoint of the print's title and the reality of its subject matter characterizes the ironic tension within the image.

The woman in Cassatt's *La Coiffure* sits in a plush armchair in front of mirror, her head focused downward, her back arched, as she adjusts her bun. The voyeuristic element to the scene is drawn from precedents in works by Rembrandt (Bathsheba at Her Bath, 1654) and Ingres (La Grande Odalisque, 1814), which Cassatt studied at the Louvre when she was a young student in the mid 1860s.

The woman in La Coiffure, unlike Rembrandt's Bathsheba or Ingres' Odalisque, is not sexualized. Though her breasts are exposed, her chest and the details of her body are deliberately muted into an overall structure of curves and crisp lines. This is an exercise in clarity and tone where the subject, the woman's body, is a compositional element in the picture—as vividly realized as the other significant patterns of the room—the wallpaper, the fabric of the armchair, and the carpet.

As the viewer, we are placed at a slight leftward angle from the woman in the chair so that we see her through her reflection in the mirror while she is looking away from it. The downward gaze is similar to that of the model in the Utamaro, is done partly in homage to the modesty of the female subject in the ukiyo-e prints (artists were always aware that their works were made for a male-dominated market and designed them to be enticing) and partly as a study of shape and line, so that the viewer, realizing that he or she is not looking at a psychological portrait, could focus more intently on the compositional elements of the work. The prints provided artists with an opportunity to showcase their skill in concision—using no more than is necessary to convey an idea—the way a haiku poet showcases similar skill within the three lines and seventeen syllables of the poem

The curve of the woman's sloping back and neck echoes the curves of the chair which stand in contrast to the vertical lines of the mirror—a compositional counterpoint that further enhances the tension within the tight composition. The limited color palette of shades of rose, brown, and white, enables us to focus closely on the form and clarity of line. It also mimics the quality of pastels, which Cassatt, like her friend Edgar Degas, often liked to use. Through the process of the drypoint and aquatint etching, La Coiffure combines Cassatt's propensity for hazy shading and soft tones with a bold sharpness in line allowing the artist to integrate the qualities of two disparate media.

Her desire to emulate the haziness, sensual, and suggestive possibilities of pastels is what motivated Cassatt not to use woodblock printing but intaglio. First, Cassatt carved her designs onto a

smooth copper plate with a fine metal needle. Then the plate would be dusted with a powdered resin and heated until the resin melted in tiny mounds that hardened as they cooled. Acid was then added on to the metal plate biting the channels along the resin droplets. The deeper penetration of acid produced richer, darker tones, while a lighter application of acid produced lighter shades of color and a variety of nuanced gradients could be generated within a single print. Once Cassatt had replicated a certain number of images from a plate, she would incise the plate with a needle so that no one could use the same image again.

Cassatt's motivation in making the prints was to make her art more accessible for a large audience. She believed that everyone, regardless of income or social position, should be able to experience art and to own works they enjoy:

> *"I believe [nothing] will inspire a taste for art more than the possibility of having it in the home. I should like to feel that amateurs in America could have an example of my work, a print or an etching, for a few dollars. That is what they do in France. It is not left to the rich alone to buy art; the people—even the poor—have taste and buy according to their means, and here they can always find something they can afford."*

This philosophy of art for the masses wasn't always popular with Mary Cassatt's contemporaries, like John Singer Sargent and the art historian Vernon Lee (Violet Paget), who viewed Cassatt's printmaking as a dilution of her precious talent. Yet Cassatt understood that as the world was changing with the twentieth century's new industries and technology, more and more people would have the income, education, and ability to experience art in ways they hadn't been able to before. The proliferative possibilities of the print and its evocative potential to convey so much in such a small space was just the art form to reach a wider audience.

**22. The Steerage. Alfred Stieglitz. 1907 C.E. Photograph.**

During the first half of this century, Alfred Stieglitz was America's most vigorous and persuasive champion of photography as an art form. He kept battering at the partition between fine art and what, to many, seemed the far too easily mastered practice of taking pictures. To this day, photography exhibits tend to be in the basement of museums, but better there than nowhere, and thanks in no small part to Stieglitz.

He also promoted, through his gallery and his avant-garde circle in New York, many artists associated with international and American modernism in both painting and photography, including Georgia O'Keeffe, who became his second wife. Stieglitz's legacy also includes his brilliant photographs, including The Steerage. It was his favorite, so much so that he once wrote, "If all my photographs were lost, and I were represented only by The Steerage, that would be quite all right."

The Steerage marked a turning point for Alfred Stieglitz. In it, he abandoned the idea that photographs should bear some likeness to paintings, and embarked on a new path to explore photos as photos in their own right. The man who had led the charge for photographs to take a place beside painting in the world of art now took “straight” photographs that looked like camera work, not brushwork. In 1923, Stieglitz wrote, “My photographs look like photographs and they therefore can’t be considered art.” He never even attempted to cover up the changes in his thinking.

For Stieglitz, The Steerage encodes a class-A epiphany. By 1907 Stieglitz, already enabled by a high-powered German education, had married an heiress whose wealth made it unnecessary for him to do conventional work and, therefore, freed him to promote photography and modern art. Sailing, as he said, at his wife's insistence-on the fashionable Kaiser Wilhelm II--he soon become heartily sick of the atmosphere in first class. What he hated, though, was not so much the wealth and privilege but the insufficiently knowing display of it--"the 'nouveaux riches.'" Altogether too many unsinkable Molly Browns.

On day three at sea, he went forward for a walk and found a place on the edge of the first-class deck that allowed him to look across at a lower class and also down into the lowest class, steerage. He was thunderstruck by the convergence of significant form and content. The geometry of the scene, particularly the empty gangway that went over the heads of the people on the lowest deck, and the arrangement of the people, particularly the man in the straw hat and the mother with child, summed up, as he said, "the feeling I had about life."

The most immediate and pragmatic question that faced Stieglitz is one that has faced many a writer in the Heath: "should I try to put down the seeming new visions that held me--people, the common people . . . the feeling of release that I was away from the mob called the rich." The answer was, of course, "Yes." He ran to get his camera, returned, and since there wasn't a whole lot to do in steerage, everybody was still there when he got back; nonetheless, it seemed a miracle to him that he was able to return in time to take what he, and many others, considered to be the photograph of his life. Whether it is or not is a moot question. But The Steerage does imply a great deal about Stieglitz's self estrangement and his desire to heal, evade, or mediate it through art. There are ironies and binarisms aplenty here. The view he discovered on his stroll delivered him into, and gave him a sense of release

from, some of the deepest tensions in his life. The picture, because of its strong sense of formal design and the presence of the proletariat, brought high and low art into momentary relationship. When he first looked at the scene, he thought of Rembrandt, another artist who sometimes chose common people as his subjects, even, on occasion, Jews.

Like many a Jew of German extraction at that time, Stieglitz was uncomfortable with his ethnicity and even identified Jewishness as what was most vexing about him, "the key to my impossible makeup." Yet there in the center of The Steerage is a woman wearing a shawl, striped like a tallith, or Jewish prayer garb. It would have been highly unusual for a Jewish woman of that day to wear tallith, yet perhaps the resemblance of her shawl to the garb of an observant Jew may have contributed to his identifying the scene with his sense of real "life," at least seen from above, at the remove of altitude, lens, religious identifications, and class. As Benita Eisler points out, Stieglitz, unlike his protégé Paul Strand, always photographed the poor from a distance rather than closeup. And like, for example, Hamlin Garland's protagonist in "Up the Coule," Stieglitz, in The Steerage--figuratively, at least--returns to his origins, identifies them as somehow central to his deeper life, but also exploits them as material for rejuvenating his art.

Certainly one of the central reasons for the continuing appeal of this photograph is that it iconizes the great drama of emigration to America. It's hard not to be touched by the grave bearing and the gritty dignity of people we suppose are about to land on Ellis Island. If invited to speculate, we, and our students, might guess that the figures in The Steerage are buoyed up by a sense of promise but weighed down by a sense of uncertainty about the future and, perhaps, with a sense of grief over abandoning their culture and their homelands. But if we did so guess, we might be right in general but wrong in this particular case. Perhaps the most instructive irony of all connected to this photograph is one that implicates not just Stieglitz but us. It concerns the direction of the ship. It's headed east, back to Europe! The people in this photograph are part of the tens of thousands of reemigrants. By some accounts as many as 17 percent of immigrants returned home. While the great majority of Jews, Irish, Germans, and Scandinavians who came to the United States stayed, other ethnic groups were less willing to call it home. Among men, while only 4.3 percent and 8.9 percent of Jews and Irish, respectively, returned to their homelands, 45.6 percent of Italians, 51.9 percent of Spanish, and 65 percent of Russians took the same trip that Stieglitz captures so memorably.

In the era of cultural studies, The Steerage may help our students see that photography, no less than literature, is a medium that invites everyone's projections and constructions. When we know that the chic Kaiser Wilhelm II was leaving the Promised Land, Stieglitz's photograph changes. Suddenly, we look at the scene and wonder if the travelers had become discouraged and homesick in the face of

American loneliness, or if they had been defeated, or just disgusted at the excesses and inequities of capitalism.

And as for Stieglitz himself, students might be instructed to know that he may have identified so deeply with this scene in part because, as a child, he had also been uprooted to make this reemigrant trip, albeit under different circumstances. His pro-German family, having made their fortune in America, returned to Berlin so that young Alfred could have a proper German education. In his later years, Stieglitz ran a gallery called The American Place designed specifically to support American artists. But this nationalism concealed the fact that, at some level, he always felt estranged or mid-Atlantic, neither German nor Jewish nor entirely American. And nothing more poignantly expressed those tensions than the picture he took looking down into classes removed from him but, nonetheless, expressing his sense of the essence of life


**23. Jacob Lawrence, *The Migration Series, Panel no. 49: They found discrimination in the North.* 1940–1941**

Jacob Lawrence's "Migration Series" is rightly hailed as a modern masterpiece of social realism. The series, completed in 1941, chronicles the mass exodus of over a million African-Americans from the rural South to the industrial North between the 1910s and '20s. Lured by job opportunities, and enabled by a newly accessible railway system, the migrants were also fleeing the racial discrimination and violence propagated by oppressive Jim Crow laws.

The artist completed his ambitious historical project in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City in 1941, when he was just 23 years old. Painted in modest tempera on board, the collection of same-size panels, each 12 by 18 inches, recounts an epic tale of extreme hardship and injustice, as well as buoyant hope. It begins with a group of African-Americans leaving the South by train. Their departure upends Southern black communities, who anguish over whether to make the journey, too. More and more migrants eventually decide to go North, where they face new freedoms and new forms of discrimination.

"He had a really good sense of choreography in his themes," Smithgall noted. She compared the paintings, with their cinematic ebbs and flows, to storyboards in a film. "He thought very carefully about the

progression from one image to another," bringing in "syncopated refrains that remind us of the backdrop of jazz—what he was taking in at the Apollo Theater, let's say."

The first panel, didactically titled During the World War there was a great migration North by Southern Negroes, introduces the artist's simplified palette and pared-down formal vocabulary. A restless sea of faceless, brown-skinned travelers rendered in thick outlines—a mass of green and black coats punctuated by red, yellow, and blue—stream through three ports marked Chicago, New York, and St. Louis, major Northern centers of migration. "I tried to show the excitement, the crowds, the tension, through the use of color, through the use of shapes, forms," Lawrence said. "I tried to get a surge of movement in this particular work."

This opening scene kicks off a monumental story, which Lawrence duly narrates in the title of each of the 60 panels. One major impetus for the Great Migration was the labor shortage Northern industries faced at the time. European demand for American goods was increasing while white workers went off to war. Lawrence illustrates the system—closely resembling indentured servitude—that arose to meet those demands. Labor agents began to recruit a worker pool in the South that they had previously excluded, luring African-Americans with the promise of work, education, and train fare (to be paid back by the migrant out of his pitiful wage).

In the series, this sinister practice is set in the context of abject poverty, food shortages, unemployment, discrimination, and violence. Lawrence doesn't shy away from these realities, and his cuttingly concise captions add context and poignancy to the works. A small, malnourished child looks up at the table where his mother is slicing their meager dinner in the 11th panel, Food had doubled in price because of the war. An empty noose hangs limply around a branch in the foreground in a panel titled, with brutal simplicity, There were lynchings. Crowded train station scenes punctuate the series, the refrain of migrants flooding the platforms and train cars imbuing it with a staccato-like rhythm.

Lawrence's series reveals the gains that life in the North provided, as well as the harsh disappointments. Living conditions were better, declares panel 44, a bountiful still life featuring a hunk of meat and bread. African-Americans could vote in the North, and go to school. But as more migrants flooded the Northern cities, they faced a housing crisis; the industrial companies crowded them into cramped, unhealthy tenement houses.

The black laborers depicted in "The Migration Series" struggle under the weight of their tools. Compare the worker in Lawrence's fourth panel to the heroic figures in Thomas Hart Benton's America

Today mural (1930–31). Lawrence's lone black figure lacks the brawny musculature characteristic of the federal art projects commissioned by the New Deal Works Progress Administration (of which Lawrence was a part). In the North, African-Americans were excluded from unions. White workers were hostile toward their new black colleagues, who were often unsuspectingly recruited by labor agents as strikebreakers. Things grew more complicated as white soldiers returned home from the war; at this point, black workers were given the most dangerous jobs, and paid less. Race riots proliferated, and when African-Americans, in search of better housing, moved into new areas, disgruntled residents bombed their homes.

One particularly affecting panel illustrates how this new life could both be radically better than what the Northern migrants had known before, and also insidiously unjust. It depicts a restaurant starkly divided by a yellow rope. On the left, white men, their features crudely delineated, sit reading the paper and smoking a cigar, respectively. On the right, faceless black patrons hunch over their tables, silently eating. Segregation was Jim Crow by another name. Still, life continued; Lawrence illustrates how the migrants resisted this discrimination, creating communities centered around the church, and enjoying their newfound educational opportunities and ability to vote. The series offers an open-ended conclusion. In another train station scene, black figures, suitcases in tow, line the platform: And the migrants kept coming.

Lawrence was himself the son of Southern migrants. Born in Atlantic City in 1917, he moved to Harlem with his mother and sister when he was 13, in 1930. The cultural visionaries of the Harlem Renaissance, particularly the influential teacher Charles Alston, encouraged the young Lawrence, especially his interest in art as a reflection of the black experience. In 1934, Alston moved his educational project, the Harlem Art Workshop, to West 141st Street. The new location became a popular hangout spot for artists to gather and talk.

While he had until then been busy generating genre scenes of Harlem life, Lawrence was inspired by African-American historian Charles Seifert's lectures on Pan-Africanism at the YMCA. As he later recalled, Seifert tried "to get black artists and young people such as myself…to select as our subject matter black history." In 1937, he began work on a series about Haitian revolutionary Toussaint L'Ouverture, who led a slave rebellion that established the world's first independent black republic. Lawrence

made subsequent series illustrating the hardships and accomplishments of civil rights leaders Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman.

In 1940, Lawrence won a Julius Rosenwald Foundation grant to create "The Migration of the Negro," as it was originally known. The $1,500 grant enabled him to rent his first studio, an unheated space on West 125th Street large enough to allow him to work on all 60 panels at once (artists Romare Bearden and Robert Blackburn and writer Claude McKay had studios in the building, as well). The new Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature, History and Prints, dedicated that same year, also became a tremendous resource for Lawrence, who researched the history of the migration there.

But Lawrence had never been to the South before; a 1941 trip to southeastern Virginia with his wife, painter Gwendolyn Knight, allowed him to see firsthand how the migration had impacted life for the African-Americans who traveled to the North. Around this time, he was also introduced to Mexican muralist José Clemente Orozco, whom he met when Orozco was making his murals at MoMA. Lawrence's "Migration Series," Smithgall said, "is essentially like a mural, divided into 60 parts. But he talks about as really one work. That was something he always emphasized."

To ensure consistency in the palette, Lawrence painted all 60 panels simultaneously, color by color. He started with darker colors like black, adding it to each panel before starting in with the next one. This was an intensely ambitious and practically unheard of way of working, Smithgall explained. "It's sort of like having 60 balls in the air. How do you possibly juggle that? He had preparatory drawings, but even so, he still had to have a very good sense of picturing these images in his imagination and imagining the works in their entirety, even as they were still in process." Knight helped him complete the project, preparing the gesso panels and assisting with writing the captions.

When the series was completed, it was exhibited at Edith Halpert's Downtown Gallery. The show made history for more than one reason: It marked the first time a black artist was represented by a New York gallery. Fortune magazine published a portfolio of the paintings, an unprecedented level of national exposure for a black artist, catapulting Lawrence to national fame. As Syreeta McFadden asserted in a 2015 essay in The Nation, Lawrence said that he painted the series "without worrying about who would see it. The paintings aren't as concerned with a white gaze as they are with getting the story clear and right."

Lawrence had originally imagined the works to be used to educate children about the history of the migration, but the Phillips and MoMA acquired the full set of works, divvying up the odd- and even-numbered panels. The sale made its own history: These were the first works by a black artist purchased by the MoMA. Though it never made the rounds in public schools (the series was, however, eventually translated into a children's book), after an exhibition of the complete "Migration Series" at the Phillips in

1942, the MoMA organized a widely seen 15-venue national tour. At the same time, as World War II waged on, another wave of migration was underway. The past was also the present.

When all was said and done, more than 6 million African-Americans migrated to the North between 1910 and 1970. Migration abated only when living conditions in the South began to improve with Civil Rights advances. Lawrence's project radically reimagined history painting for modern times, and dared to elevate the story of a marginalized group to the level of high art, for all people to remember and behold forever. "To me, migration means movement," Lawrence once said. "There was conflict and struggle. But out of the struggle came a kind of power and even beauty. 'And the migrants kept coming' is a refrain of triumph over adversity. If it rings true for you today, then it must still strike a chord in our American experience.

**24. Diego Rivera, *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in Alameda Central Park (Sueño de una tarde dominical en la Alameda Central),* 1947**

Diego "Rivera painted his dream of Mexican history for the dining room of the El Prado hotel, beside Alameda Park. The mural was completed in 1948, but it caused an uproar and was damaged by a protester. It was subsequently concealed behind a rapidly-erected wall, where it remained hidden for seven years. Only after Rivera had changed one small inscription did the hotel management put the mural back on display; later, in order to satisfy the public interest, the painting was even transported- wall and all- into the reception hall. The offending words were written on the piece of paper held up by Ignacio Ramirez, the dark-skinned man with the white hair. They originally read: 'God does not exist.' The words visible on the sheet of paper today are: 'Conference in the Academy of Letran, 1836' – a cryptic reference to an occasion when Ramirez had stated his atheistic views. Not especially significant in itself, it was important only as an allusion to trends hostile to the Church and religion. The power of the Catholic Church was the subject of controversy. In the 19th century, the desire to safeguard its influence and possessions brought it to side with the Conservatives. Anyone with a liberal turn of mind was automatically its enemy.

Even the unfortunate Emperor Maximilian would suffer the consequences. Mexico's Conservatives invited the Austrian Archduke to their country almost 140 years ago. Rivera portrays him with his famous pale blue eyes and flourishing ginger bread, standing below and to the right of Ramirez. Maximilian, it was hoped, would re-establish order in a Mexico which had declared itself independent of Spain and the monarchic system of government, and which had since been ravaged by decades of civil war. In May 1864 he arrived on Mexican soil with his wife Charlotte, who was now known as Carlota. But since he neither abolished the new freedom of worship, nor returned to the Church its nationalized property, he made enemies of the very Catholic forces which had appointed him Emperor. Maximilian, the liberal idealist and inexperienced politician, had failed. Three years after his landing, he was deposed and shot; the guns in Rivera's mural recall his execution. A few weeks before his death, his wife Carlota, portrayed next to her husband, went mad. She lived for another 60 years, dying in 1927.

The park lies in Mexico City, and on Sunday afternoons the capital's inhabitants still gather here to sit, stroll, chat, and picnic. The grown-ups buy balloons and windmills for their children, and the adolescents wade in the fountain which Rivera has portrayed in the center of his composition. He has placed well-known figures from Mexican history alongside many more who are unknown, and has also incorporated mythical figures such as angels and Death, as well as members of his own family. This is no official historical record, in other words, no Social Realism, but a collage just as might be experienced in a dream. The chronology of the mural nevertheless unfolds more or less logically from left to right. At the apex of three small pyramids of figures distributed across the composition, Rivera portrays three Mexican presidents: on the left, Benito Juárez, head of state from 1858 to 1872, is holding the written constitution in his hands. Just to the right of center is the uniformed, sleeping figure of Porfirio Díaz, who held office for over 30 years before being ousted by Francisco Madero. The latter can be seen, raising his hat in greeting, near the right-hand edge of the mural; in 1913 he was assassinated. Beneath them, along the lower edge of the mural, are those who have no hand in politics, but who suffer its effects: ordinary citizens, Indians, agricultural works, and the poor. The conflict between these people and those in power was one which Rivera painted many times. On the left, a thin youth is picking the pocket of a well-dressed gentleman; in the middle, an Indian woman in a yellow dress strikes an aggressively provocative pose, while further to the right a policeman is expelling a family of Indians from the park. One of the men he is threatening has already reached his hand round to the back of his belt, where he keeps his knife. Floating above all their heads is a hot-air balloon- a reference to the flight made by the aeronaut Cantolla, and at the same time a symbol of hope for 'RM', the República Mexicana.

The man with the bloody hands, Hernán Cortés, is the most contentious figure in Mexican history: he conquered the country for the Spanish crown, and in so doing slaughtered countless Indians and destroyed important testaments to their highly advanced culture. The history of modern Mexico thus

began with death and destruction. The native population remains an underprivileged class, and the figure of the conqueror is caught up and spurned in their struggle for social justice to this day. On whose side Rivera stood can be seen from the Spaniard's hands. By the standards of his day, however, Cortés was an outstanding man: daring and adept at maneuvering his small Spanish force amidst an Indian population of infinitely superior numbers. One of his soldiers, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, described the experience in great detail and recorded how, wherever he could, Cortés destroyed the Aztec temples and erected crosses in their place. He conquered this foreign land for his God and his King- not for himself. In 1519 he set off from Cuba; in 1521 he subdued the Aztec capital once and for all. It lay on the site where Mexico City today sprawls, a city of nine million people. Cortés became the first governor of 'New Spain', and Fray Juan de Zumarraga its first bishop: Rivera portrays him beside Cortés. With iron determination, seen in his own age as motivated by charity but seeming so cruel to us today, he set about converting the Indians to Christianity. He burned their writings- an incalculable loss as far as our understanding of ancient American culture is concerned.

Around 1900, those Indian villages which had managed to survive began to be squeezed out by the landowners. The railways had opened up access to the international markets, but the hacendados could only increase their profits by enlarging their estates. With the assistance of small private armies and a partisan judicial system, they proceeded to take away from the Mexican peasants their communal land and thus their own property. The Indian farmers became vassal agricultural laborers, and lost their land and their freedom.

Emilio Zapata organized armed resistance and joined forces with rebels from other villages. Together they formed a peasants' army, were victorious on some occasions, defeated on others, and in the meantime argued amongst themselves. Zapata ultimately met the same fate as most other peasant leaders: he was betrayed and murdered. He had begun his resistance in 1909; in 1919 he met his end. For a long time, it was rumored amongst his supporters that he had only gone underground and would return, and that the body put on display at the time was not that of Emilio Zapata at all.

Francisco Madero, the man raising his hat in greeting, was a revolutionary like Zapata, but from a very revolutionary like Zapata, but from a very different background. His family came from the ranks of the country's wealthy and owned haciendas, banks and industrial concerns. The two men were nevertheless united by their struggle against the aging president Porfirio Díaz, whom Rivera portrays dozing in the middle section of his mural. Díaz held power for over 30 years. With the help of the army and the large landowners, he brought a certain stability to the country, but at the expense of the poor, the Indians- and the democratic constitution. Díaz was a dictator; he suspended the article which forbad the re-election of a president after a single term in office. Madero, a liberal-minded capitalist, objected. He published a pamphlet against this violation of the law and called for universal suffrage extending to the

Indians. Díaz had him imprisoned. Upon his release, Madero became head of the revolutionaries. In 1911 Díaz fled the country. Madera entered Mexico City and was himself appointed president. His political goals are written on the banner behind him: 'Universal suffrage- no re-election!'

He proved unable or unwilling to realized his third declared aim, namely to give the Indian farmers their land back. Perhaps he had embraced this goal during the struggles more for tactical reasons than out of conviction. Had he implemented it, he would have harmed the very class from which he came. Generals of the Revolution such as Zapata, the farmer's son, immediately disassociated themselves from him and resumed fighting. Madero lost control over the country. Officers of his government placed him under arrest. On his way to prison, he was shot by his escort.

Madero was not the only president to meet an unnatural end. Murder and violence are threads running all the way through the history of Mexico, from its conquest right up to the 20th century. In Rivera's mural they are symbolized in the flames of the Inquisition's stake, as in the fires of the Revolution. There are many reasons for this bloodthirsty tradition; most can be traced back to the country's conquest by the Spaniards and to the inequality of its two cultures.

Mexico's Indians were unfamiliar with the European concept of individuality. Community was and still is more important than personal success. Competition played no great role. They thereby lacked the drive to learn how to survive, something which made them defenseless in the face of European aggression. Only when their misery became insufferable did they start to fight back, did they rally to the side of men like Zapata. Through his works, Rivera wanted to contribute towards the reconciliation of Mexico's two cultures, the establishment of unity and the creation of a Mexican identity. Hence his many history cycles, his championing of the oppressed Indians, the Mexican proletariat, and his criticism of the ruling minorities.

The artist who thus placed his talents so emphatically in the service of his people, was born in 1886. In the central section of his Dream, he portrays himself as he must have looked at the start of the century: in shorts and a straw boater, with a frog and a snake- living toys- in his pockets. He kept his plump figure and slightly bulging eyes all his life. Behind him stands his wife, the artist Frida Kahlo, who lays her hand protectively on the boy's shoulder. From 1908 to 1921 Rivera lived almost permanently in Europe, mostly in Paris, in those days the metropolis of the fine arts. He painted in the style first of the Impressionists, then of the Cubists. Later, he stated, 'From 1911 onwards, my work was entirely oriented towards one day painting large-scale murals.' In 1921 he realized that he wanted to fulfill this aim in Mexico; he returned home, where he proceeded to harness his artistic talents to his social commitment.

Since Rivera and other likeminded artists wanted to work not for museums and palaces, but for the broad masses of the Mexican people, uneducated in literature and art, they sought out the walls of public buildings. They thus became known as the muralists- the 'wall-painters'. They wanted to make

their message visible to all who passed by. In the Middle Ages, the walls of churches were used to teach and edify the populace. The mostly anti-clerical Mexican muralists of the 20th century chose schools, assembly chambers and office buildings. They thereby fused the Indians' traditional sense of the collective with new ideas from Communist Russia. Community was important both as a statement and as a form of work. The muralists founded a syndicate in which artists and craftsmen earned the same amount.

Near the hot-air balloon, the symbol of a rosier future, stands the figure of Death, dressed up as a woman with a plumed hat and a feather boa. She is holding the hand of the young Rivera on one side, and that of José Guadalupe Posada (1852-1913) on the other. Posada was the first Mexican artist to free himself from a dependency upon European art. He executed graphic works in a folk style, illustrated song sheets and achieved special popularity with his endlessly inventive skeletons. Rivera has incorporated one of these into his mural. The quotation is undoubtedly more than simply a gesture of respect for his predecessor and source of inspiration; it is probably more, too, than simply a reference to the death and violence which had left their bloody mark on Mexico's past. The costumed skeleton symbolizes something else again: standing hand in hand between the other figures, it is a natural part of any stroll in a park on a Sunday afternoon.

Those familiar with Mexico will know that this is the case not simply in Rivera's Dream. Death is not excluded in Mexico in the way it is in the cultures of Western Europe and North America. It remains omnipresent, not merely as a threat or an enemy, but also as a friend and neighbor. A visible demonstration of this can be found on All Souls' Day in every Mexican shop and apartment: they are hung full of skeletons made of card and skillfully folded paper. Coffins are bought out in doll's houses, confectioner's shops sell marzipan coffins and sugar skulls, bakers bake loaves in the shape of bones, and the Mexicans take a trip to the cemeteries to eat and drink merrily with their dead. The dead are thus remembered not in sorrow, but in joy.

This attitude to death has its roots in Indian tradition. For Mexico's inhabitants, death was not the absolute end: it was simply another form of existence. Death was followed by rebirth, in a process watched over by a god, venerated in the shape of a feathered snake. Death and future, skeleton and balloon thus all belong together. Rivera renders this unity visible in his Alameda Dream- a dream which contains more than simply an itemized history of his country.

**25.** ***Spiral Jetty*. Great Salt Lake, Utah, U.S. Robert Smithson. 1970 C.E. Earthwork: mud, precipitated salt crystals, rocks, and water coil.**

In the 1960s and '70s, a number of artists, primarily in the United States and Britain, became interested in moving out of the confines and commercial economy of museum and gallery spaces and creating art that would engage the audience in a more encompassing experience or at a more profound level than traditional painting and sculpture allowed. Land Art, also called Earthworks, developed during this period. The American Southwest, with its vast open spaces and dramatic landscapes, became an especially popular site for Earthworks in the 1970s. By the end of the decade, One of the earliest and best-known examples of Land Art from this era is Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty, which juts out into an isolated area of the Great Salt Lake known as Gunnison Bay.

Robert Smithson (1938-1973) sought to illustrate what he called the 'ongoing dialectic' in nature between the constructive forces that build and shape form, and the destructive forces that destroy it. Spiral Jetty of 1970, a 1,500-foot stone and earth platform spiraling into the Great Salt Lake in Utah, reflects these ideas. To Smithson, the salty water and algae of the lake suggested both the primordial ocean where life began and a dead sea that killed it. The abandoned oil rigs dotting the lake's shore brought to mind dinosaur skeletons and the remains of vanished civilizations. Smithson used the spiral because it is an archetypal shape that appears in nature- from galaxies to seashells- and has been used in human art for millennia. Unlike Modernist squares and circles, it is a 'dialectical' shape, that opens and closes, curls and uncurls endlessly, suggesting growth and decay, creation and destruction, or in Smithson's words, the perpetual 'coming and going of things.' He ordered that no maintenance be done on Spiral Jetty so that the work would be governed by the natural elements over time. It is now covered with crystallized salt but remains visible, as can be seen on Google Earth.

Smithson dumped some seven thousand tons of rock, to make his Spiral Jetty: a counterclockwise coil fifteen hundred feet long and fifteen wide, built with aged Caterpillars and dump trucks. The spiral form, of course, was so organic and archaic that it could have been associated with almost anything, and was: from viruses and spiral salt-crystal deposits, to legends about mysterious whirlpools forming and vanishing in the Great Salt Lake, to archetypal serpents and snail shells, scrolls and – seen from the air-

nebulae in outer space. That is could attract such a traffic jam of symbolic references was, of course, part of Smithson's design.

Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty- a giant spiral of black basalt rock and earth in the Great Salt Lake, in Utah- was inspired by mythology: the lake had come into existence, it was believed, from a whirlpool fed by a direct water link to the Pacific Ocean. Smithson's 6,000-ton spiral of earth referred to prehistoric mounds, ancient configurations found primarily in the Mississippi and Ohio valleys, of which the most famous is the Serpent Mound in southern Ohio. But Spiral Jetty also reflected the forces of entropy that fascinated Smithson. In time, nature reclaimed the jetty- the red lake waters rose, covering the work, then receded to reveal white salt crystals, and then rose again, so that the work was invisible for a number of years. Recently, the waters have receded again and the outlines of the jetty can be seen once more.

Up to the time he began to work on it, in 1969, Smithson had been preoccupied with entropy: 'evolution in reverse,' the decline of systems, enforced by the second law of thermodynamics, under which energy dissipates and all distinct form blurs and disintegrates across the span of geologic time. In 1969 Smithson took out a twenty-year lease on an abandoned lakeside industrial site. The water was red from saline algae and fouled with chemicals and tailings; the shore, littered with obsolete machinery. The whole place looked like a ruined moonscape, which suited him perfectly, since Smithson's imagination had a strong component of the higher sort of science fiction, such as apocalyptic, time-drenched landscapes.

**26.** ***The Two Fridas*****. Frida Kahlo. 1939 C.E. Oil on canvas.**

The double self portrait The Two Fridas, 1939 features two seated figures holding hands and sharing a bench in front of a stormy sky. The Fridas are identical twins except in their attire, a poignant issue for Kahlo at this moment. The year she painted this canvas she was divorced from Diego Rivera, the acclaimed Mexican muralist. Before she married Rivera in 1929, she wore the modern European dress of the era, evident in her first self portrait (left) where she dons a red velvet dress with gold embroidery. With Rivera's encouragement, Kahlo embraced attire rooted in Mexican customs.

With this work, Frida tries to assimilate her emotional crisis caused by divorce; appear two Fridas sitting on a green bench, one of them is dressed in a suit of Tehuana (typical Mexican), Diego's favorite, and the other is marked by his European roots, is what existed before meeting Diego, this ultima is dressed in a corseted suit, like the ones she wore when she had the accident. The hearts of the two women are connected to each other through a vein, but only one of the hearts is alive, that of the tehuana, because the one of the European is completely broken, this is the double vision that she has of same at that time.

The vein that connects both hearts represents your pain as a result of divorce, also represents the union between two worlds divided. This union is cut by the scissors that the European Frida has in its hand, this symbolizes that it cuts with the flow of pain that it is currently living, this cut causes a great blood stain on the white dress worn by the European. The Mexican has in her hands a mini portrait of Diego, from there comes a vein that connects directly to the heart making reference to the fact that her heart is hurt because of the loss of her great love.

At the center of the work is the union of the hands of both Fridas symbolizing the two parts of herself, on the one hand modern and current and on the other hand are her roots that should not be forgotten, she wants to be herself but wants to hide and cut that pain and do it being another.

The previous scene is located in a totally unreal landscape, the sky is gray and very closed, preaching a great storm that is coming soon but the two Fridas seem not to react as they are sitting without any gesture showing a state of trance between the sky and the earth, life and death and finally the most important contrast is that of the destroyed heart and the whole heart.

It can be concluded that Frida Kahlo through this work wanted to say or rather express the deep pain she felt because of the end of a complicated relationship full of problems and emotional wounds; that's why in a Frida the heart is destroyed, completely broken, this shows that a part of her died, because her ex-husband took her away leaving her adrift in a world full of suffering that she tries to cut with the scissors that this Frida herself in her right hand, but she can not get it since her white dress is stained by the blood that falls from the vein that is connected to the broken heart, this symbolizes that now she is a stained woman because she is divorced, something that That time was very strange and people used to judge a lot of women who went through this.

On the other hand you see a woman who was once in love, with a strong heart, large and beating at high speed, she has in her right hand a mini portrait of her beloved, is dressed in her husband's favorite dress and both are united through a vein that connects to their hearts, this means the union between the present and the past.

Frida expresses her own experiences in her works, it is exactly what she is living in her present, how she interprets it and how she believes that others live it. She paints after her divorce, as already mentioned before, "Las dos Fridas", which we can locate within Surrealism (1939), because the surrealists do not want to copy reality but prefer to capture their reality, which is what they interpret of her dreams, or in the case of Frida, her own experiences, since she was able to create wonderful works from them. Surrealist avant-garde art aims to transmit pain and seeks to break with the traditional and it is precisely because of this that her work is located within this avant-garde because she pretends to express her pain through the duality that she feels at that moment, although they represent something totally contrary are strongly linked by a blood bond (united hearts), as well as at the level of touch (the joined hands). Kahlo's work often graphically exposes human anatomy, a topic she knew well after a childhood bout with polio deformed her right leg and a bus accident left her disabled and unable to bear children when she was eighteen years old. She would endure 32 operations as a result of this accident.

Kahlo utilized blood as a visceral metaphor of union, as in the 1936 family portrait (below) where she honors her lineage through these bloody ties. She returns to this metaphor in The Two Fridas, though with the added impact of two hearts, both vulnerable and laid bare to the viewer as a testament to her emotional suffering.

The solitude produced by frequent bed rest—stemming from polio, her near-fatal bus accident, and a lifetime of operations—was one of the cruel constants in Kahlo's life. Indeed, numerous photographs feature Kahlo in bed, often painting despite restraints. Beginning in her youth, in order to cope with these long periods of recovery, Kahlo became a painter. Nevertheless, the isolation caused by her health problems was always present. She reflected, "I paint self-portraits because I am so often alone, because I am the person I know best."

**27. Andy Warhol, Marilyn Diptych, 1962, acrylic on canvas**

Andy Warhol's Marilyn Diptych is made of two silver canvases on which the artist silkscreened a photograph of Marilyn Monroe fifty times. At first glance, the work—which explicitly references a form of Christian painting (see below) in its title—invites us to worship the legendary icon, whose image Warhol plucked from popular culture and immortalized as art.

But as in all of Warhol's early paintings, this image is also a carefully crafted critique of both modern art and contemporary life.

With sustained looking, Warhol's works reveal that he was influenced not only by pop culture, but also by art history—and especially by the art that was then popular in New York. For example, in this painting, we can identify the hallmarks of Abstract Expressionist painters like Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning. As in the work of these older artists, the monumental scale of Marilyn Diptych (more than six feet by nine feet) demands our attention and announces the importance of the subject matter. Furthermore, the seemingly careless handling of the paint and its "allover composition"—the even distribution of form and color across the entire canvas, such that the viewer's eyes wander without focusing on one spot—are each hallmarks of Abstract Expressionism, as exemplified by Jackson Pollock's drip paintings.

Yet Warhol references these painters only to undermine the supposed expressiveness of their gestures: like Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg, whose work he admired, he uses photographic imagery, the silkscreen process and repetition to make art that is not about his interior life, but rather about the culture in which he lived.

Warhol takes as the subject of his painting an impersonal image. Though he was an award-winning illustrator, instead of making his own drawing of Monroe, he appropriates an image that already exists. Furthermore, the image is not some other artist's drawing, but a photograph made for mass reproduction. Even if we don't recognize the source (a publicity photo for Monroe's 1953 film Niagara), we know the image is a photo, not only because of its verisimilitude, but also because of the heightened contrast between the lit and shadowed areas of her face, which we associate with a photographer's flash.

True to form, the actress looks at us seductively from under heavy-lidded eyes and with parted lips; but her expression is also a bit inscrutable, and the repetition remakes her face into an eerie, inanimate mask. Warhol's use of the silkscreen technique further "flattens" the star's face. By screening broad planes of unmodulated color, the artist removes the gradual shading that creates a sense of three-dimensional volume, and suspends the actress in an abstract void. Through these choices, Warhol transforms the literal flatness of the paper-thin publicity photo into an emotional "flatness," and the actress into a kind of automaton. In this way, the painting suggests that "Marilyn Monroe," a manufactured star with a made-up name, is merely a one-dimensional (sex) symbol—perhaps not the most appropriate object of our almost religious devotion.

While Warhol’s silkscreened repetitions flatten Monroe's identity, they also complicate his own identity as the artist of this work. The silkscreen process allowed Warhol (or his assistants) to reproduce the same image over and over again, using multiple colors. Once the screens are manufactured and the colors are chosen, the artist simply spreads inks evenly over the screens using a wide squeegee. Though there are differences from one face to the next, these appear to be the accidental byproducts of a quasi-mechanical process, rather than the product of the artist's judgment. Warhol's rote painting technique is echoed by the rigid composition of the work, a five-by-five grid of faces, repeated across the two halves of its surface.

Here, as in many Neo-Dada, minimalist and conceptual works, the grid is like a program that the artist uses to “automate” the process of composing the work, instead of relying on subjective thoughts or feelings to make decisions. In other words, Warhol's "cool," detached composition is the opposite of the intimate, soulful encounter with the canvas associated with Abstract Expressionism. But whereas most works that use grids are abstract, here, the the grid repeats a photo of a movie star, causing the painting to resemble a photographer’s contact sheet, or a series of film strips placed side-by-side. These references to mechanical forms of reproduction further prove that for Warhol, painting is no longer an elevated medium distinct from popular culture.

Aside from radically changing our notion of painting, Warhol's choices create a symmetry between the artist and his subject, who each seem to be less than fully human: the artist becomes a machine, just as the actress becomes a mask or a shell. Another word we could use to describe the presence of both the artist and the actress might be ghostly, and in fact, Warhol started making his series of "Marilyn" paintings only after the star had died of an apparent suicide, and eventually collected them with other disturbing paintings under the title “Death in America.” Her death haunts this painting: on the left, her purple, garishly made-up face resembles an embalmed corpse, while the lighter tones of some of the faces on the right make it seem like she is disappearing before our eyes.

Warhol once noted that through repeated exposure to an image, we become de-sensitized to it. In that case, by repeating Monroe’s mask-like face, he not only drains away her life, but also ours as well, by deadening our emotional response to her death. Then again, by making her face so strange and unfamiliar, he might also be trying to re-sensitize us to her image, so that we remember she isn’t just a symbol, but a person whom we might pity. From the perspective of psychoanalytic theory, he may even be forcing us to relive, and therefore work through, the traumatic shock of her death. The painting is more than a mere celebration of Monroe’s iconic status. It is an invitation to consider the consequences of the increasing role of mass media images in our everyday lives.

**28.** ***Horn Players.*** **Jean-Michel Basquiat. 1983 C.E. Acrylic and oil paintstick on three canvas panels.**

Jean-Michel Basquiat, whose meteoric artistic career spanned less than a decade, was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1960, the son of a middle-class accountant from Haiti and a mother of Puerto Rican descent. He began drawing at an early age, inspired and helped by his mother, who also took him on frequent visits to the Brooklyn Museum, the Metropolitan Museum, and the Museum of Modern Art. In May 1968 he was the victim of a serious accident- he was hit by a car while playing ball in the street: he not only broke his arm, but also had to have his spleen removed. He spent a month in hospital, and one of the presents his mother bought him there was a copy of Gray's Anatomy, which was to have a lasting influence on his work. In the same year Basquiat's parents separated. Though he had always felt closer to his mother, his father retained custody of the children (he had two sisters) and it 1974 he moved them all to Puerto Rico, where they remained for two years.


Basquiat was already rebellious, and in Puerto Rico he briefly ran away from home. When the family returned to New York, he transferred to the City-as-School, a progressive school designed for gifted children with learning disabilities. Despite the liberal nature of the City-as-School, Basquiat ran away from home again, and this time remained absent for two weeks until his father tracked him down to Washington Square Park in Greenwich Village. He had spent his time there taking LSD.

Returning to school, Basquiat became a ringleader in the graffiti movement, which was now starting to attract attention from the press. Basquiat created a fictional alter ego called SAMO (Same Old Shit), the prophet of a fake religion. Basquiat began to frequent artists' and film-makers' parties- the three worlds of pop music, art, and film found a focus in the East Village Mudd Club, which Basquiat haunted assiduously.

In 1979 he formed his own band, frequently renamed, but continued to produce artworks to make some cash. He exhibited publicly for the first time in the 'Times Square Show', a group exhibition held in a vacant building at the corner of Forty-First and Seventh Avenue. Enthusiastically received, this event marked the emergence of a whole new generation of New York artists. The notice attracted by Basquiat's

work in particular led him to quit his band and decide to become a full-time artist. It was at this moment that he was introduced to Andy Warhol who was at first extremely reluctant to have anything to do with him.

Like Warhol, Basquiat embraced icons of popular consumer culture as appropriate subjects for art, but he chose ones with more direct socio-political subtexts. He saw in these popular cartoons and consumer items a deeper reflection of society's institutionalization of racism, discrimination, and erroneous representations of good and evil. The majority of Basquiat's black figures are concurrently anonymous, self-portraits, or representative of all black persons. The black man and the black experience are central to Basquiat's aesthetics, and the majority of his works contain these allusions, as seen in an early painting *Untitled* (1981) that presents a black man being arrested by two white policemen.

In his unusual "portraits" of his heroes, Basquiat made almost no effort to paint his subjects with recognizable facial features. Often he merely named the person on the canvas or in the painting's title. Perhaps he sought to invest his art with a votive presence, without relying on a direct visual likeness. The crown and the halo—the abstract symbols of honor—are all that are really necessary. Basquiat's use of the halo, however, cannot help but remind us that in the modern world, art is no longer primarily dedicated to the service of religious worship.


*Horn Players*, 1983, is Basquiat's homage to the great musician Charlie Parker, whose innovative saxophone changed the course of modern jazz and co-founded be-bop. Basquiat was an avid jazz fan and musician and this work shows the association between his painting and the improvisational alchemy of jazz composition. The up and down motif of heads in the work is meant to mimic the rhythms of music. "Ornithology," written many times throughout the work, refers to a 1945 Parker composition. Parker's nickname in the jazz community was "The Bird".

Basquiat started his career as a graffiti writer, but while his contemporaries sprayed colorful pictorial symbols and tags all over New York, the teenaged Basquiat addressed the public in enigmatic sentences sprayed in a plain script, such as "SAMO AS AN END TO MINDWASH RELIGION,

NOWHERE POLITICS, AND BOGUS PHILOSOPHY" and "PLUSH SAFE HE THINK / SAMO." As a professional visual artist, Basquiat made language an increasingly important feature of his work.

In some cases, words fill the entire canvas, leaving no room for images. Basquiat used words to elaborate his themes, adding layers of verbal complication to his pictorial ideas. Sometimes, following a Surrealist or stream-of-consciousness technique, he built up running lists or diagrams of related thoughts. Often, he repeated the same words over and over again, achieving an almost hypnotic effect. Basquiat's words also serve a more strictly compositional function, playing a key role in the graphic construction of a painting. He was not the only artist using words in paintings during the 1980s, but he was perhaps the most successful at integrating text and picture into a dynamic whole. In Basquiat's works, there is an especially harmonious affinity among written, drawn, and painted marks that have all clearly been made by the same hand.

Despite a brief career of less than a decade, Basquiat is a crucial figure in the story of modern art. He was perhaps the last major painter of the twentieth century to pursue a key aspect of the visual language invented by some of the century's first great artists, including Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, the German Expressionists, and others. These modern painters had turned to nontraditional sources— African art, as well as the art of children, the insane, and the untrained—for new ideas that would make their own work more direct, powerful, and expressive. Working eighty years later, and inspired by his own heritage, Basquiat not only contributed to this modern tradition but also transcended it. That is, he understood not only the African-influenced work of his predecessors from the beginning of the century, but also the state of contemporary art as his own generation had found it: austere, cerebral, exclusive, and detached from everyday life. Like many artists of the so-called postmodernist years, he was to a certain extent a revivalist in his effort to make art more immediately relevant to a larger public. But Basquiat was unique among his fellow artists of the 1980s for avoiding nostalgia, imitation, and irony in his attempt to provide a once revolutionary but now outmoded modernist pictorial language with a brilliant final voice.

**29. Pink Panther. Jeff Koons. 1988 C.E. Glazed porcelain.**

No artist among cool "postmodernists" of recent decades has flirted more openly with commercialism than Jeff Koons, nor has anyone struck so steadfastly earnest a pose in the endeavor. Unapologetically, indeed some say brazenly appropriating advertising strategies, offthe-shelf merchandise, and kitsch icons from the inventories of mass-marketers and carriagetrade purveyors, Koons pursues his ambitions with missionary zeal. Self-appointed prophet of a heaven-on-earth of unashamed materialism and sexual bliss, Koons has gone Pop art one or two better, making an art of "the pitch" and "the deal," as well as objects out of the flotsam and jetsam of consumer culture.

*Pink Panther* is from Jeff Koons's Banality series, which transforms images and objects from popular culture into ironic sculptures that comment on art as commodity. In this case, the Pink Panther, a cartoon character from the 1963 film of the same name, is embraced by a topless buxom blonde. It is unclear whether the Pink Panther is scared or nervous in the arms of the Jane Mansfield– or Marilyn Monroe–like figure. In this juxtaposition of high and low aesthetics, the refined porcelain material contrasts with the bawdy subject matter and cartoon colors.

Within its stately proportions, Jeff Koons's Pink Panther manages to capture many of the artist's themes that have made his work some of the most compelling art in a generation. Part of his famed Banality series, the image of the young starlet embracing a cartoon pink panther draws together issues of childhood, innocence and sexuality, which have dominated Koons's career to date. Pink Panther displays the artist's wry sense of humor and exacting eye for detail.

Pink Panther shows an embrace between a voluptuous young woman and a well-known cartoon character. The buxom blonde embraces the Pink Panther, but seems somewhat preoccupied. Her head is turned over her shoulder, as if distracted by someone she recognizes or maybe by the flashbulbs of a passing paparazzo. Immediately she adopts the classic pose of someone who lives her life in front of the camera; her back is arched to accentuate her ample figure, her flowing blonde hair tumbles over her bare shoulders and her scarlet lips are parted to show a flash of pristine white teeth. Her turquoise dress appears to have slipped down and her modesty is only preserved by her cupped arm on the one hand and the embrace of the Pink Panther on the other.

Yet despite this close encounter with a Marilyn Monroe-esque figure, the Pink Panther appears dejected. His mouth appears downturned and his eyebrows are heavy with a sense of dejection as he appears to be desperately clinging to his female friend. Yet even in this apparently simple narrative, all does not appear as it seems, as the meandering tale of this depressed creature wanders provocatively towards the woman's partially exposed buttocks.

By choosing both a pin-up character and the Pink Panther as his subject matter, Koons mines recent history to recast a timeless theme. The Pink Panther was created by Hawley Pratt to appear in the opening sequence for the eponymous 1963 film starring Peter Sellers. However, it was only when the character was given his own children's TV series later in the '60s that his fame really took off and he entered the mainstream contemporary consciousness. Despite the contemporary subject matter, Koons's use of porcelain delves into history, recalling the Meissen ceramics of the mid-18th century in both its appearance and execution.

Koons's careful selection of materials is part of the conceptual rigor of his sculpture, speaking to the importance of the whole work, rather than just providing a vehicle with which to display a visual communication. Just as he did in his Statuary series and would do with other works in the Banality series, Koons engages with our knowledge and acceptance of these motifs to challenge our understanding of these contemporary objects. "Banality was about communicating to the bourgeois class," the artist states. "I wanted to remove their guilt and shame about the Banality that motivates them and which they respond to". As such, for Koons, these works become objects to

celebrate precisely because of their ubiquitous appearance. “The Banality gang have found their place in the pantheon of art history. …He created the objects precisely because of their power to represent collective taste, and wanted them to be catalysts for self-acceptance.”

30. **Trade (Gifts for Trading Land with White People). Jaune Quick-to-See Smith. 1992 C.E. Oil and mixed media on canvas.**

As a response to the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus’ arrival in North America in 1992, the artist Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Indian Nation, created a large mixed-media canvas called Trade (Gifts for Trading Land with White People). Trade, part of the series “The Quincentenary Non-Celebration,” illustrates historical and contemporary inequities between Native Americans and the United States government.

Trade references the role of trade goods in allegorical stories like the acquisition of the island of Manhattan by Dutch colonists in 1626 from unnamed Native Americans in exchange for goods worth 60 guilders or $24.00. Though more apocryphal than true, this story has become part of American lore, suggesting that Native Americans had been lured off their lands by inexpensive trade goods. The fundamental misunderstanding between the Native and non-Native worlds—especially the notion of private ownership of land—underlies Trade. Smith stated that if Trade could speak, it might say: "Why won't you consider trading the land we handed over to you for these silly trinkets that so honor us? Sound like a bad deal? Well, that's the deal you gave us."

For Trade, Smith layered images, paint, and objects on the surface of the canvas, suggesting layers of history and complexity. Divided into three large panels, the triptych (three part) arrangement is

reminiscent of a medieval altarpiece. Smith covered the canvas in collage, with newspaper articles about Native life cut out from her tribal paper Char-Koosta, photos, comics, tobacco and gum wrappers, fruit carton labels, ads, and pages from comic books, all of which feature stereotypical images of Native Americans. She mixed the collaged text with photos of deer, buffalo, and Native men in historic dress holding pipes with feathers in their hair, and an image of Ken Plenty Horses—a character from one of Smith's earlier pieces, the Paper Dolls for a Post Columbian World with Ensembles Contributed by US Government from 199192.

She applied blocks of white, yellow, green, and especially red paint over the layer of collaged materials. The color red had multiple meanings for Smith, referring to her Native heritage as well as to blood, warfare, anger, and sacrifice. With the emphasis on prominent brushstrokes and the dripping blocks of paint, Smith cited the Abstract Expressionist movement from the 1940s and 50s with raw brushstrokes describing deep emotions and social chaos. For a final layer, she painted the outline of an almost life-sized canoe. Canoes were used by Native Americans as well as non-Native explorers and traders in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century to travel along the waterways of North America. The canoe suggests the possibility of trade and cultural connections—though this empty canoe is stuck, unable to move.

Above the canvas, Smith strung a clothesline from which she dangled a variety of Native-themed toys and souvenirs, especially from sports teams with Native American mascots. The items include toy tomahawks, a child's headdress with brightly dyed feathers, Red Man chewing tobacco, a Washington Redskins cap and license plate, a Florida State Seminoles bumper sticker, a Cleveland Indian pennant and cap, an Atlanta Braves license plate, a beaded belt, a toy quiver with an arrow, and a plastic Indian doll. Smith offers these cheap goods in exchange for the lands that were lost, reversing the historic sale of land for trinkets. These items also serve as reminders of how Native life has been commodified, turning Native cultural objects into cheap items sold without a true understanding of what the original meanings were.

The Artist The artist was born on January 15, 1940, at the St. Ignatius Jesuit Missionary on the Reservation of the Flathead Nation. Raised by her father, a rodeo rider and horse trader, Smith was one of eleven children. Her first name comes from the French word for "yellow" (jaune), a reminder of her French-Cree ancestors. Her middle name "Quick-to-See" was not a reference to her eyesight but was given by her Shoshone grandmother as a sign of her ability to grasp things readily. From an early age Smith wanted to be an artist; as a child, she had herself photographed while dressed as Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Though her father was not literate, education was important to Smith.

She received a bachelor of arts from Framington State College in Massachusetts in 1976 in art education rather than in studio art because her instructors told her that no woman could have a career as an artist, though they acknowledged that she was more skilled than the men in her class. In 1980 she

received a master of fine arts from the University of New Mexico. She was inspired by both Native and non-Native sources, including petroglyphs, Plains leger art, Diné saddle blankets, early Charles Russell prints of western landscapes, and paintings by twentieth-century artists such as Paul Klee, Joan Miró, Willem DeKooning, Jasper Johns, and especially Kurt Schwitters and Robert Rauschenberg (see image below). Both Schwitters and Rauschenberg brought objects from the quotidian world into their work, such as tickets, cigarette wrappers, and string.

In addition to her work as an artist, Smith has curated over thirty exhibitions to promote and highlight the art of other Native artists. She has also lectured extensively, been an artist-in-residence at numerous universities, and has taught art at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico the only four-year university dedicated to teaching Native youth across North America. In her years as an artist, Smith has received many honors, including an Eitelijorg Fellowship in 2007, a grant from the Joan Mitchell Foundation to create a comprehensive archive of her work, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Women's Caucus for the Arts, the College Art Association's Committee on Women in the Arts award, the 2005 New Mexico Governor's award for excellence in the arts, as well as four honorary doctorate degrees.

Smith's art shares her view of the world, offering her personal perspective as an artist, a Native American, and a woman. Her work creates a dialogue between the art and its viewers and explores issues of Native identity as it is seen by both Native Americans and non-Natives. Trade (Gifts for Trading Land with White People) restates the standard narratives of the history of the United States, specifically the desire to expand beyond "sea to shining sea," as encompassed in the ideology of Manifest Destiny (the belief in the destiny of Western expansion), and raises the issue of contemporary inequities that are rooted in colonial experience.

**31. Darkytown Rebellion. Kara Walker. 2001 C.E. Cut paper and projection on wall.**

Kara Walker is perhaps best known for her cut-paper silhouettes. She began working with these images around 1993 while a graduate student at Rhode Island School of Design. She mentions being drawn to early American silhouettes as she explored an interest in kitsch.

The history of paper-cut portraits dates back to the court of Catherine de Medici in the late 16th century in France. This decorative practice, which grew increasingly popular during the second half of the 18thcentury, was named for Etienne de Silhouette (1709-1767), Louis XV's widely unliked French finance minister who cut black paper portraits as a hobby. Beginning in the 1700s, silhouette-cutting gained credence as art form in the United States because of its popularity among the aristocracy and haute bourgeoisie. However, by the mid-1800s, "shadow portraits" had lost most of their prestige. Being deemed a craft rather than an art form, secured this portraiture technique a place at carnivals and in

classrooms devoted to the training of "good ladies." During the early 20th-century, silhouettes gained favor as sentimental keepsakes and souvenirs at fairs.

Such imagery was also tied into the 18th-century phenomenon of physiognomy, a pseudo-science claiming that one's character and intelligence were inscribed on one's profile. This reduction of human beings to their physical appearance presented Walker with a tool from which to deploy other characterizations found in the history of racial representation.

For Walker, the simplified details of a human form in the black cut-outs seem cartoonish, and resonate with racial stereotypes (see Representing ) that are also reductions of actual human beings. To create a silhouette, Walker draws her images with a greasy white pencil or soft pastel crayon on large pieces of black paper, which she then cuts with an X-ACTO knife. As she composes her images, she thinks in reverse, in a way, because she needs to flip the silhouettes over after she cuts them. The images are then adhered to paper, canvas, wood, or directly to the gallery wall with wax.

> *"I was really searching for a format to sort of encapsulate, to simplify complicated things...And some of it spoke to me as: 'it's a medium...historically, it's a craft...and it's very middle-class.' It spoke to me in the same way that the minstrel show does...it's middle class white people rendering themselves black, making themselves somewhat invisible, or taking on an alternate identity because of the anonymity ... and because the shadow also speaks about so much of our psyche. You can play out different roles when you're rendered black, or halfway invisible."*

*Darkytown Rebellion* is born from a desire to translate the past into visual form. Walker discovered a landscape painting in *American Primitive Painting*, a book featuring artwork by unschooled artists. One anonymous landscape, mysteriously titled *Darkytown*, intrigued Walker and inspired her to remove the over-sized African-American caricatures. She placed them, along with more figures (a jockey, a rebel, and others), within a scene of rebellion, hence the re-worked title of her 2001 installation. Darkytown Rebellion does not attempt to stitch together facts, but rather to create something more potent, to imagine

the unimaginable brutalities of an era in a single glance. Through Darkytown Rebellion, Walker is not attempting to correct a late-nineteenth century depiction of African-Americans but rather to broach a discussion: are these merely images from the past or do these caricatures still resonate in the twenty-first century?

In *Darkytown Rebellion*, stereotypes of African Americans in the antebellum South abound. A female African American teenager holds a flag that looks more like a colonial ship sail. Two malnourished boys walk to their master. Three figures partake in ambiguous erotic perversity, including a man whose leg has been cut off. One woman takes care of multiple newborns, her breast for nursing prominently displayed to draw attention to her "purpose" in life. Another woman sweeps where a baby's leg appears, suggesting a black woman aborting her child so as not to give her master another possession; or, perhaps a white woman disposing the evidence of her husband's affair with a slave. An African American man sits up in a tree, perhaps a musician with a harmonica or just a man enjoying a pipe. .

The shapes projected are abstract both in shape and color. It is art that is suggestive of something real. The figures are silhouettes that, in their ambiguity, leave it up to the viewer's imagination to decide what the image is communicating. What is most remarkable about these scenes is how much each silhouettes conceals. Without interior detail, the viewer can lose the information needed to determine gender, gauge whether a left or right leg was severed, or discern what exactly is in the black puddle beneath the woman's murderous tool. The color projections, whose abstract shapes recall the 1960s liquid light shows projected with psychedelic music, heighten the surreality of the scene.

The projectors also serve to show viewers the structure of the piece at the same time they view and experience it. Walker doesn't just show the skin covering it, you get to see the skeleton too. The viewer can experience the content of the piece while at the same time be fully aware of its structure. Psychologically, this reminds the viewer that the piece is all a construct. Walker succeeds in provoking dually a visceral response as well as an intellectual one. The viewer is brought back and forth to simultaneously experience the piece's creation and presence in the world. This serves to reinforce the idea that how we understand slavery is as much our interpretation of history as the reality that transpired.

Then the projectors remind us "Oh, yeah, this is just a set up." In this way, if the viewers' interpretation is too disturbing, they can look at the construction: "This can't hurt me. It's just plastic gel, light bulbs and construction paper." To continue the cinema in the round analogy, one could say, "It's just a movie." Except that, of course, slavery did happen.

The projectors also serve yet another function. Walker's construct shows us the engine, so to speak, of history and how it is built and presented to us. Today a lot of our information comes from the media. We don't necessarily see how information gets to us, the way we come to see or perceive things, or what specifically is influencing our thought process. We only see what we see. While the media disguises the history of slavery as one-dimensional absolute history, Walker peels away the skin to show us the ugly truth beneath: Slavery produced terrible events and these events shape and influence our experience with race today.

The most engaging result of "Darkytown" is that Walker forces us to be in the same picture plane as the shadows projected. This confronts us. We as contemporary people are now summoned to be a part of the experience of the past. The past and present live together in this picture. As we move through the piece, we see ourselves inspecting the past and are made self-conscious of our actions. Our reactions are part of the "dialogue," part of the piece. Today, in real time, we are living with the reality of the past. As we weren't around in the time of slavery, viewers may not be stationary cut outs, but we're still a part of its legacy and still—literally—interact with it. The piece suggests that, yes, slavery happened but it's how we react today that counts.