

EDUCATIONAL PACKET

DEVELOPED FOR K-12 TEACHERS

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING ART MUSEUM 2009



Adornment: Native American Regalia

PURPOSE OF THIS PACKET:

To provide K-12 teachers with background information on the exhibitions and suggest age appropriate applications for exploring concepts, meaning, and artistic intent of work exhibited, before, during, and after the museum visit.

CURRICULAR UNIT TOPIC:

To examine clothing and adornment as a means of artistic and cultural expression. The focus of this educational packet and curricular unit is to observe, question, explore, create, and reflect.

OBSERVE:

Students and teachers will observe the examples of adornment in *Adornment: Native American Regalia*. Students will notice the different kinds of adornment and make comparisons between them.

QUESTION:

Students will have the opportunity to discuss the purpose of each type of adornment and what it says about culture. What does what you wear say about you? Your friends? Your family? Your community? How does climate impact what you choose to wear? What materials are available? How does trade impact the development of clothing? How do clothing styles change over time? What influences these changes? How is clothing an art form?

EXPLORE:

Students are encouraged to examine the various purposes for adornment displayed in this exhibit. How does adornment express your position within your culture?

CREATE:

Students will be given time to create (sketch, draw, collage, etc.) a design for clothing that expresses their personal culture.

REFLECT:

Students will discuss their finished artwork with the other students and teachers and write a reflective paper about the process they used to complete their work.



Peter W. Doss Crow Indian Artifact Collection, Installation *Adornment: Native American Regalia* at the UW Art Museum.

INTRODUCTION:

Native American Indian regalia and adornment is a complex assemblage of cloth, ornaments and body decoration. In the past, it served as a major form of visual artistic expression for the various tribes with a strong emphasis on the connection between clothing and identity – a holistic world view where everything was linked to a complex pattern of both ritual and mythology. In the absence of written languages, personal adornment became an important element of Indian communication, conveying many levels of information.

The traditional clothing of the Northern Plains Indians was made of tanned animal hide, decorated with colorful geometric and floral designs in quill or beadwork. Various forms of adornment and motifs were used to embellish this basic attire for men, women, and children. Glass trade beads, brought by European fur traders in the early 1800s allowed women to decorate clothing and accessories in symbolically beaded geometric and floral motifs. After 1870, beadwork became even more intricate and varied with recognizable regional, tribal and reservation style.

Other types of adornment such as eagle feather war bonnets, headdresses with buffalo horns

and dance roaches, were worn by tribal men of distinction. Although both men and women wore jewelry, hair bone breastplates and bear claw necklaces were primarily male ornamentation. Beaded vests, armbands, and gauntlets adapted from the white man's world were worn by men and boys and served as an additional clothing enhancement.

Exotic adornment, such as horn dance wands, eagle wing fans, and war shields helped to identify and consolidate power among tribal leaders, warriors, and medicine men. Bags and pouches, which held paints, sewing equipment, mirrors, tobacco and “personal medicine,” were both decorative and functional. Fancy trailers, along with leg bells, added both movement and sound during spiritual and traditional dance ceremonies.

The final step in completing an outfit was footwear. Moccasins, for men, women, and children, came in all shapes, sizes, and designs. Those for everyday wear were plain while ceremonial moccasins were beautifully adorned with vibrant, multi-colored designs.

Today, the Northern Plains area and its people continue as a vital region of Indian identity and creativity.

Modern Native American regalia draw upon ancient concepts, and are still viewed as deeply meaningful in communicating the spiritual values of harmony and balance. Created by Native artisans who move with ease among multiple realities, today's finest adornment designs still remain a major statement of tribal and individual identity

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND:

Edited from Adornment: Native American Regalia cell phone tour.

PATTERNS OF TRADITION

The Plains Indians women displayed a high degree of skill in making and decorating clothing made of tanned animal hide with colorful geometric and floral designs. Various forms of adornment were used to embellish the basic attire for men, women, and children, including shells, animal bone and teeth, and bird and porcupine quills. The introduction of European trade made an abundance of new materials available to the Indian artisans. Metal bells and sequins, silk thread, trade cloth and glass beads, in a great range of color and sizes, provided the women a wide range of resources for their artistic self-presentation.

SYMBOLS OF AUTHORITY

Plains Indian men of distinction wore feather headdresses with buffalo horns. The use of feathers to signify war deeds and status was common in most tribes of North America Indians. Eagle feathers were most coveted for these headdresses and were full of war symbolism. The soft downy eagle feathers attached at the tips of each feather in the headdress were symbolic of mysterious forces with the continuous movement of the feathers suggesting communications with higher powers. Ermine skin and buffalo horn embellishments added to headdresses served to evoke courage and strength.

Feathered war bonnets were a military decoration

developed by the Plains Indians. Since the eagle was considered by the Indian as the greatest and most powerful of all birds, the finest headdresses were made out of its feathers. Each feather signified deeds earned through bravery in battle. Worn only on special occasions, the headdress' real value was in its power to protect the wearer.

In some tribes, men wore an artificial roach made of porcupine quills attached to the man's own hair. This style was frequently given the name Mohawk or Mohican after two Eastern Indian tribes in which roached hair was common. The roach is a common headdress worn during dances at modern powwows.

ORNAMENTS OF DISTINCTION

The Plains Indians, with their love for decoration, wore all types of jewelry. Both men and women prized necklaces made of shells, bones, quills, beads, animal claws, teeth, antlers, and fur.



Mirror Case Crow, Not dated Hide, seed beads (Crow stitch), straw beads, cloth, bell, thread 5 x 18 inches University of Wyoming Art Museum, Peter W. Doss Crow Indian Artifact Collection, no. 159

Women often wore long strings of shells hanging from their pierced earlobes to their waist. The elaborate hair bone breastplates were popular as ornaments and denoted status and wealth of the wearer. Necklaces made with Grizzly bear claws were highly valued and worn only by important tribal leaders and medicine men.

The bone breastplate was worn on occasion in battle, but because they could be penetrated easily by an arrow or a bullet, they were mainly a decorative or medicine item. The long bones called hair-pipes, were originally hand-made from the bones from birds, buffalo, and other animals, and later produced commercially. Since the hair-pipe bones were difficult and expensive to obtain, the number of bones in the plate often indicated the wealth of a warrior.

In North American Indian tribes, bear claw necklaces were worn by a variety of religious and war leaders. Men's societies of bear healers and bear

dreamers were ubiquitous across the west. Dreaming of bears, seeing them in a vision, or experiencing an unusual encounter was believed to indicate that the bears wanted to adopt or assist an individual. That person would then be instructed, through visions or other ways, on how to establish and maintain a relationship. In some communities, the close association with bears that individual warriors and shamans sought was also cultivated and managed by social groups such as clans and associations.

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the U. S. Government removed all necklaces from Indians on the reservations because they represented a tie to the past. It was not until after World War II that necklaces were reintroduced. Indian Peace Medals were circular silver medallions distributed to Native American tribal representatives by representatives of the United States government in the late 1700s and 1800s. The most common feature of Indian Peace Medals was the portrait of the current U.S. president. These were highly valued items and could be adapted into necklaces or medallions.

BLENDED TRADITIONS

The turn of the 19th century saw the continued change in Northern Plains Indian material culture. This evolution entailed not only the increased adoption of newly available trade materials for use in tribal regalia, but also the assimilation of external styles and fashions borrowed both from neighboring tribes and from the white man's world. During this time, many Plains peoples began to make elaborately beaded versions of store-bought vests. Women also began to create detachable dance capes of trade material rather than make the more traditional and time-consuming beaded dress bodices.

Leather gauntlets, worn by the American soldiers until 1912, were among the objects that Indians of the Plains, Great Basin and Plateau adopted and chose to embellish with glass beads and silk thread.



Woman's Leggings and Moccasins, Crow Not dated Seed beads (spot stitch), sinew, leather 9-1/2 x 13 inches, leggings; 7-1/2 x 10 x 4-1/2 inches, moccasins University of Wyoming Art Museum, Peter W. Doss Crow Indian Artifact Collection, no. 239, 384c



Detail of *Girl's Beaded Dress*, seed beads (Crow and spot stitch), sinew, native tanned buckskin, ca. 1920s University of Wyoming Art Museum, Peter W. Doss Crow Indian Artifact Collection, no. 380

By the end of the 19th century gauntlets were being paired up with fringed leather ensembles to create showy outfits. Indian artists also created a great number of beaded gauntlets for sale or trade with the settlers. The tourists from back east took them home as souvenirs of their Western adventures.

CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS

The contact with the white culture changed many aspects of the Plains Indians clothing styles. It is noted that as early as the mid-1800s, Plains men were wearing “chief’s coats,” a military style uniform valued for the gold buttons and braid. Later armbands, cuffs and gauntlets were also adopted, but changed to fit the Indian vision in both material and style.

VISIONS OF SPIRITUALITY

The Indians of North America shared a holistic philosophy which recognized man as part of nature; not outside of it. This belief in a power or moving force of the universe was viewed as an

attribute which could be used by individuals as a source of status and power. Various objects, such as dance wands, rattles, and fans, were used by a medicine man in ceremonies to guide visions, heal individuals, and interpret dreams.

Among many Native American peoples, the eagle is a sacred bird and is considered to be a spiritual messenger between gods and humans. Its feathers are central to many religious and spiritual customs. For example, during the Sun Dance, which is practiced by many Plains Indian tribes, a medicine man may direct his eagle feather fan to people who seek to be healed. The medicine man touches the fan to the center pole and then to the patient, in order to transmit power from the pole to the patient. The fan is then held up toward the sky, so that the eagle may carry the prayers for the sick to the Creator.

Current eagle feather law stipulates that only individuals of certifiable Native American ancestry enrolled in a federally recognized tribe are legally authorized to obtain Bald or Golden Eagle feathers for religious or spiritual use.

POWER AND PROTECTION

War honors and the insignia, rank, and status of each warrior were sanctioned by the Plains Indian tribe in which the individual lived. These honors were public tokens of an individual's courage and ability. Counting coup - striking an enemy with a relatively harmless stick without killing him, was regarded as a war honor of the highest grade.

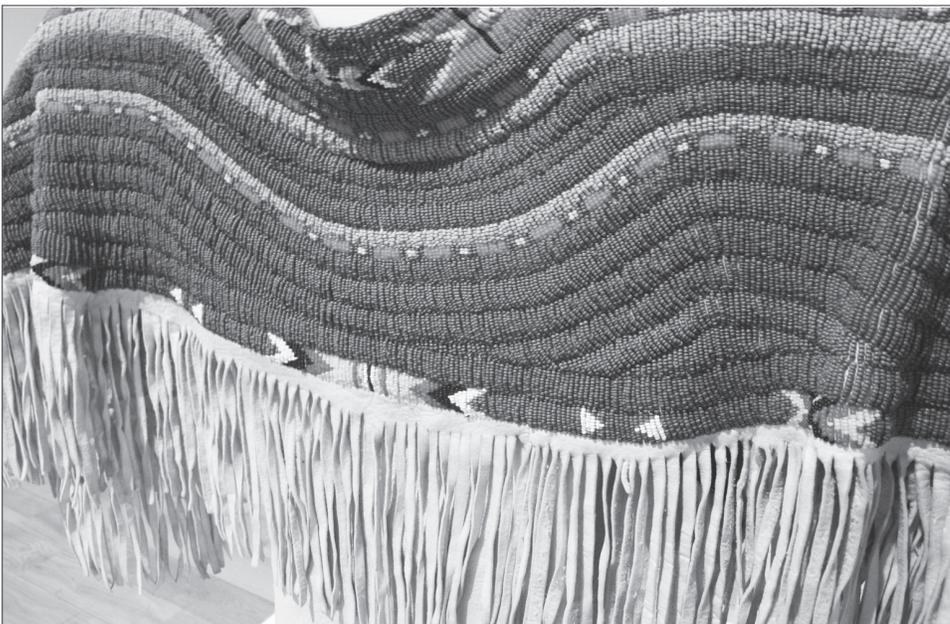
One of the distinguishing features of the Plains war complex was the counting of coup, which depended on a system of graded war honors with specific acts of bravery arranged on a fixed scale. The coup counting system had a marked impact on war motivation where the striking of an enemy with a bare hand or with a harmless implement demanded exceptional bravery.

The use of body and face paint along with the symbols of protection and power in shields, war clubs and other war implements were necessary aids in battle. Each shield belonged to a warrior who followed strict guidelines to preserve its protective power. For some traditional Plains Indians, the power of these shields is still alive and the shields must be cared for properly.

Shields were seldom taken on the warpath, even though they were always associated with war medicine bundles. They were considered too cumbersome and hampered the movements of the warriors in close combat. Instead, most men either took the shield cover only, a miniature reproduction, or carried some lightweight embellishment from the shield. These were believed to impart the same protection as the shield itself since it was not the physical protection given against the arrows and bullets of the enemy. Rather, it was the supernatural power which was represented in various forms on the shield which had been received through a vision

BEADED SPLENDOR

Since Plains Indians did not have pockets, bags, pouches, along with awl and knife sheaths were attached to beaded belts. These bags, both decorative and functional, contained items such as individual "medicine," articles for the wear, mirrors, face and body paints, and sewing equipment. Fringed decorated pipe bags, inserted over a belt, were used for storing and transporting the pipe by Plains Indian men.



Detail of *Woman's Beaded Cape & Dress*, seed beads (Crow and spot stitch), sinew, native tanned buckskin University of Wyoming Art Museum, Peter W. Doss Crow Indian Artifact Collection, no. 380

A pipe bag was considered as important as a horse or a weapon for a man going into battle.

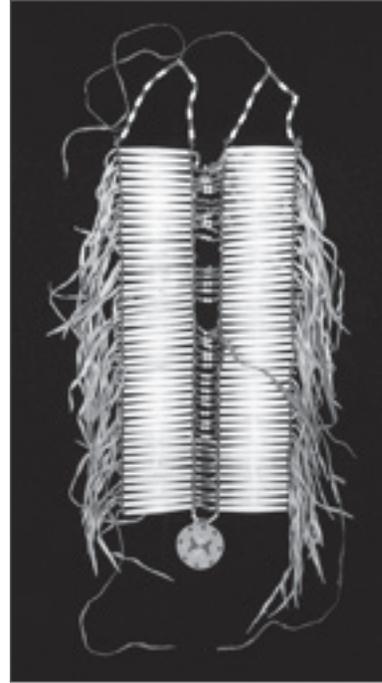
Pipes have remained an enduring symbol for Indian peoples of North America. Used both for secular and ceremonial purposes, pipes were usually brought out at group functions such as war rallies, trading, ritual dances, healing ceremonies, marriage negotiations, and dispute settlements. Tobacco was considered to be a gift from the supernatural powers to man, although leaves, roots, grasses, various barks and herbs also were used. The smoke produced by the pipe helped carry prayers to their destination.

Throughout the North American Indian tribes, tobacco was smoked for a variety of social, medical, and religious ceremonies with the belief that it was a gateway to the spiritual realm. Among the Crow Indians, there is still a ceremony held at the beginning of the planting season to celebrate the virtues of tobacco. In Crow mythology, the tobacco seed (known as the Sacred Seed) is the spiritual life's blood of the community. In the course of healing the sick, practitioners of the medicinal arts smoke cigarettes as a part of the intense healing ritual. The intention of this action is to carry the thoughts and prayers of the community to the supernatural world and the great Creator spirit.

RITUAL AND REGALIA

Dance still occupies an important position within many Indian groups that continue to practice the old religions and dances vital to their way of life. Because many dances and songs have spiritual and supernatural sources, they retain their original significance and value. These traditional dances, often tied to seasonal or life-cycle events, are regionally or tribally specific; the singers usually perform in native languages and the ceremonies unfold according to ancient calendars and belief systems. Few traditional dances offer individual freedom of expression.

In addition to public dances, there are private and semi-public dances for curing, prayer, initiation,



Breastplate Crow, Not dated Bone hair pipes, trade beads, seed beads, ribbon, hide 19 x 9 inches University of Wyoming Art Museum, Peter W. Doss Crow Indian Artifact Collection, no. 369

storytelling, performing magic, playing games, courting, hunting, and influencing nature. In performing these songs, dances, and rituals, the Indians of today reaffirm their ties to a living culture.

Trailers were worn with traditional dance outfits which add a graceful dimension to the gliding motions of the straight dancer. It is worn by slipping a belt through a tube, made by folding over and sewing the top few inches of the dance trailer. Fastened around the waist at the back, the trailer hangs down to within about four inches of the ground. Additional decorative elements using beads, feathers, metal fringe, brass sequins and buttons were often added to enhance the overall effect.

Many American Indian dancers attach bells or other tinkling objects to their dance regalia. These objects are set into motion when the dancer moves, adding another layer of sound to the performance. Crow outfits are considered incomplete without a string of dance bells.

SOLES OF BEAUTY

Indians of the Northern Plains essentially wore two styles of moccasins, hard sole and soft sole. Hard sole moccasins began to appear in the mid-1800s. They were necessary on the plains where cactus and thorns could pierce soft-soled moccasins. Cuffs were sometimes added and could be turned up and tied around the ankle with a leather thong in bad weather.

Inter-tribal marriage, trade, and outside influences which led to a blending of moccasin and beadwork styles, often makes it difficult to identify moccasins with a specific tribe.

Moccasins continue to be made by tribal artists. While many follow traditional patterns, others incorporate modern or exotic materials creating contemporary works of art. Both styles continue the long-standing Native American tradition of creating beautiful footwear.

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will learn about the concept of adornment. They will examine how and why Plains Indian peoples chose to adorn themselves, and what that illustrates about individuals and cultures.

Students will also learn about materials. They will look at the variety of materials used in Adornment: Native American Regalia, where those materials come from and how that impacts the development of adornment over times.

During their time in the gallery, students will be asked to use a sketchbook or journal. For classes/students without journals, sketch paper will be provided. Students will be asked to respond to the exhibit by building word lists, writing down thoughts or questions, and by sketching objects on display. These journals will be used as reference to create art in the Shelton Studio.

In the Shelton Studio, students will extend their knowledge of Native American adornment by thinking about their own culture and how individuals within it adorn themselves. With what

do they choose to decorate themselves? Why? What do their choices say about them?

Art projects in the Studio will reflect this discussion. Student will be asked to design their own adornment. This can take many forms; t-shirts, hats, shoes, belts, etc. and will be determined through discussions between the museum educator and the classroom teacher.

Two-dimensional designs will be created and students will be asked to reflect, in writing, about the design.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

GRADES K-6

- What is culture?
- What is adornment?
- Why do people choose to decorate or adorn themselves?
- What materials are used to create the objects in Adornment: Native American Regalia?
- How do the artists obtain these materials?
- What designs are used in these objects? What do they tell us about the Plains Indians?
- How has trade influenced the art created by the Plains Indians?
- How do you adorn yourself? What do you think that says about you?

GRADES 7-12

- What designs are used in the objects on exhibit? How do they impact the purpose of the adorned object?
- How is status or position conveyed through adornment?
- How did Plains Indians adapt their artistic styles and why?
- How is material important to the creation of adornment? What does that say about the culture producing the adornment?
- How do you adorn yourself? How is that informed by materials? What does your



Eagle Wing Fan Crow Not dated Golden eagle wing, cut glass beads (gourd stitch), native tanned leather, thread 41 x 16-1/2 inches University of Wyoming Art Museum, Peter W. Doss Crow Indian Artifact Collection, no. 27

choice of adornment say about you and your place within your culture?

ART QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What materials are used to create the works in this exhibit? What are the challenges of using these materials?
- What types of designs are used?
- How are pattern and repetition used in this exhibit?
- What skills are needed to create the works on display?
- What role does shape and symmetry play in this artwork?

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

In order to prepare students for their museum visit and extend learning possibilities, we suggest teachers and students consider the following activities:

- Read about the Crow and other Plains Indian tribes.
- Learn about the traditional lands of the Crow and other Plains Indian peoples. Where is it? What is the climate? What plants and animals are plentiful in this region?
- What trade networks were available to the Plains Indians?
- Read stories, fiction and non-fiction, about life among the Crow, Sioux, Arapaho, or Shoshone. Journals, oral histories, newspaper articles, etc. can be useful.
- Discuss the concept of adornment across many cultures.
- Look at photographic evidence. There are many good photograph collections that show clothing styles. Many of these collections are available online.
- Look at clothing styles within your school or community. Compare that to national or international trends.

PREREQUISITE SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

Museum educators will work with teachers to ensure that all projects are age and skills appropriate.

Teachers may select words from the following vocabulary word list for students to look up and understand:

Adornment
Regalia
Authority
Adaptation
Pattern
Ritual
Motif
Gauntlets
Geometric design
Symmetry

MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

These activities are suggestions. Museum educators will work with teachers to carefully tailor all classes to their students' needs, in support of classroom goals and district and state education standards.

PART 1

TIME FRAME: 30 - 45 MINUTES

(IN THE GALLERIES)

- Students will closely observe the objects in Adornment.
- Students may be given worksheets or journals so that they may respond to the exhibit by recording their observations and impressions through sketching and writing.
- Students will create word lists about the exhibit that help them describe the art work or explain how they feel about it.
- Students will identify the materials used to create each work in the exhibit.
- Students will examine the purpose of each example of adornment in this exhibit.
- Students will discuss what they see with museum educators.
- Students will engage in discussions about their observations, sketches, and reflections with one another, teachers, and museum educators.

PART 2

TIME FRAME: 45 - 60 MINUTES

(IN THE SHELTON STUDIO)

The following projects may be considered individually, or combined, or museum educators will work with teachers to develop specific projects which support ongoing classroom work.

- Students will explore artistic devices that are also found in nature, and in other areas of study, such as pattern, repetition, and shape. They will create their own adornment design using these artistic

devices. This adornment should take into account their individual expressions and students should be able to reflect on how their designs are similar to or different than their peers and community.

- Students will examine the mathematical concepts of geometry, volume, and shape/ mass to create and decorate a three-dimensional form that best describes them. They should be prepared to discuss their art work with their peers, teachers, and museum educators.
- Students may write a reflective paper that describes their favorite piece on exhibit in Adornment.

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

To achieve maximum benefit from a museum visit it is important to schedule time to complete post-visit activities. These allow for deeper understanding as well as provide opportunities for assessment of standards.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

- Use individual adornment sketches to produce a three-dimensional object. For example, turn the design into a t-shirt, hat, shoes, etc.
- Use writing to reflect on the museum visit. What process was used to design the t-shirt? What your intent as the artist? What does your design say about you?
- Research traditional beadwork patterns.
- Use mathematics concepts to make a new beadwork pattern. Address the concepts of space, volume, pattern, etc.
- Pick a favorite object in the exhibit and write a creative story about the piece. When was it used? Who made it? Who wore it? What experiences did they have?

SUGGESTED CURRICULUM USE

Adornment: Crow Regalia will tie into a variety of curricular areas including, but not limited to the following:

- Multiculturalism
- History
- Art
- Math
- Language Arts
- Science

Museum educators will work with teachers to address specific Wyoming Standards and align museum projects and activities with classroom lessons and assessments.

SOME RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- University of Wyoming Art Museum website, <http://www.uwyo.edu/artmuseum/>
- Exhibition materials such as the Cell Phone tour
- Use the Wyoming Arts Council speakers roster to find Native American presenters <http://wyoarts.state.wy.us/Apps/Roster/index.asp> .
- Research online about Plains Indian peoples, styles of dress, artistic styles, etc.
- Research online about the Plains region, its geography, climate, flora and fauna, and natural resources.
- National Museum of the American Indian, 2001.
- From the Heart of the Crow Country: The Crow Indians' Own Stories. by Joseph Medicine Crow, Bison Books, 2000.
- Grandmother's Grandchild: My Crow Indian Life. by Alma Hogan Snell, Bison Books, 2001.
- Tarbescu, Edith. The Crow. by Edith Tarbescu, Franklin Watts, 2000.
- The Crow Indians by Robert H. Lowie, Bison Books, 2004.
- Beauty, Honor, and Tradition by Joseph D. Horsecapture and George P. Horsecapture, National Museum of the American Indian, 2001.
- Splendid Heritage. edited and published by John

Warnock and Marva Warnock, 2009.

- Identity by Design Edited by Emil Her Many Horses, Smithsonian, 2007.
- North American Indian Jewelry and Adornment by Lois Sherr Dubin, Harry N. Abrams, 2003.
- Encyclopedia of American Indian Costume by Josephine Paterek, W.W. Notron & company, 1996.
- Daily Life in a Plains Indian Village 1868 by Michael Terry and Michael Bad Hand Terry, Sandpiper, 199.

MATERIALS TO BE SUPPLIED TO EACH STUDENT

Materials for selected Shelton Studio projects are provided by the art museum.

ASSESSMENT & DOCUMENTATION

In order to ensure that our museum tour program is meeting the needs of teachers and students, we may ask that participants help us assess the activities and learning that take place.

Examples of evaluation tools include:

1. Students will self-assess using a quick survey that asks them to consider their response to the gallery discussions and explorations, and their studio experience,
2. Teachers will assess the overall visit by completing a quick-survey that asks for their observation and assessment of students' experiences, as well as assessment of the overall process of the museum visit.
3. Museum educators will record their observations and assessments.
4. When studio time permits, we will ask students to briefly discuss their art completed in the Shelton Studio.
5. Museum staff may take photographs of students and teachers to document the learning taking place and the work produced during a museum visit. These are available to teachers upon written request for use in teaching and student portfolios.