

ARTS & CULTURE

ASSIGNMENT IN READING VISUAL ARTS

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BSCS 4B

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AFRICA

NIGERIA

Known for its vibrant traditional art forms, including Nok terracotta sculptures, Yoruba masks, and contemporary art scenes in cities like Lagos.

NOK

The earliest-known sculpture of large size in the Sudan is the ceramic art of the Nok culture, which flourished extensively in northern Nigeria from the 5th century bce into the early centuries ce. These people were the first known manufacturers of iron in western Africa, furnaces at Taruga having been dated between the 5th and early 3rd century bce; they continued, however, to use stone tools. Their sculptures, of well-fired clay, represent animals naturalistically; human figures, however, are depicted with heads that are cylindrical, spherical, or conical. The subtractive technique used to create these objects suggests the presence of a significant woodcarving tradition. The art of Nok indicates the antiquity of many basic canons of West African sculpture, but the precise relationship between ancient and modern forms is obscure.

YORUBA

One of the three largest ethnic groups of Nigeria, concentrated in the southwestern part of that country. The Yoruba have traditionally been among the most skilled and productive craftsmen of Africa. They worked at such trades as blacksmithing, weaving, leatherworking, glassmaking, and ivory and wood carving. In the 13th and 14th centuries Yoruba bronze casting using the lost-wax (cire perdue) method reached a peak of technical excellence never subsequently equaled in western Africa. Yoruba women engage in cotton spinning, basketry, and dyeing.

LAGOS

Africa's most populous city, is a powerhouse of creativity and innovation. From music and literature to film and fashion, Lagos has an ever-evolving artistic scene that reflects the city's dynamic energy. The city's bustling markets, such as the Lekki Arts and Crafts Market, showcase an array of traditional crafts and contemporary artworks, providing a platform for local artisans to display their talents.

EGYPT

Famous for its ancient art, including the pyramids, hieroglyphics, and the Sphinx. Contemporary Egyptian art continues to thrive, blending traditional influences with modern themes.

HIEROGLYPHICS

A feature that is quite remarkable about Egyptian art is that text was attached to almost all of the images produced. This is most notably seen in the statues and relief paintings created, as hieroglyphics were attached to these works. On the statues, identifying and explanatory text usually appeared on the back pillar or base that supported the work, while relief paintings and panels tended to have longer captions that explained and completed the stories in the scenes.

PYRAMIDS OF GIZA

Classified as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the great pyramids of Giza are perhaps the most renowned and talked-about structures in history. For thousands of years, these gigantic monuments were unmatched in height, as individuals marveled over their unique and complicated construction, as they seemed almost too perfect to be real.

THE GREAT SPHINX

Carved from the bedrock of the Giza plateau is the Great Sphinx, which is the 4500-year-old limestone statue that sits near the entrance to the great pyramids leading from Khafre's valley temple into the mortuary. Measuring 20 meters high and 73 meters long, the Great Sphinx exists as one of the world's largest and most iconic monuments, in addition to being one of the most identifiable relics constructed by the ancient Egyptians.

SOUTH AFRICA

Home to diverse art forms, from ancient rock paintings by the San people to contemporary art showcased in places like the Zeitz MOCAA in Cape Town.

SAN ROCK ART

Ancient drawings hidden away in caves and overhangs. This rock art depicts the San tribe's daily life, hunting, rituals, spiritual beliefs, and wildlife. These drawings offer a snapshot of what they experienced thousands of years ago, mostly long before the first Europeans arrived.

NDEBELE ART

The Ndebele are a tribe of South African people located in the provinces of Mpumalanga, Gauteng, Limpopo, and North West. Ndebele art initially served as a visual language, and it has told centuries of stories while conveying Ndebele cultural values.

ZEITZ MOCAA

Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (Zeitz MOCAA) is a public non-profit museum in Cape Town, South Africa. Zeitz MOCAA opened on September 22, 2017 as the largest museum of contemporary art from Africa and its diaspora.

ASIA

JAPAN

Renowned for its traditional arts like ukiyo-e woodblock prints, tea ceremonies, and contemporary art scenes in Tokyo.

SADO — TEA CEREMONY

Dating back over 1,000 years and with heavy Zen influence, the tea ceremony is the ritual preparation and service of matcha. Matcha is a thick, rich-tasting green tea and is often accompanied by traditional sweets to balance the bitter taste. The focus of the ceremony isn't on the drinking but on the process and preparation. Every movement is carefully choreographed, and even the seating arrangement is taken into consideration. As such, there are many etiquette guidelines to be aware of.

UKIYO-E

One of the most important genres of art of the Tokugawa period (1603–1867) in Japan. The style is a mixture of the realistic narrative of the emaki (“picture scrolls”) produced in the Kamakura period and the mature decorative style of the Momoyama and Tokugawa periods. The ukiyo-e style also has about it something of both native and foreign realism.

BONSAI

Dating back over 1,000 years, bonsai is the art of producing small trees in containers that mimic the shape and scale of the full-size trees. This art became tied to Zen thought early on and is meant to invoke thought from the viewer. It takes years of experience and effort to grow a bonsai tree (which can be nearly any species that can be kept small long-term).

INDIA

Known for its diverse art forms, from ancient rock art and Indus Valley sculptures to Mughal miniatures and contemporary works, Indian art reflects the country's complex history and cultural exchanges.

STONE SCULPTURE

The beginning of stone sculpture in India goes back to a very remote age. The Indus Valley or Harappan Culture flourished from C.2500 B.C. to 1500 B.C. The discovery of statues, figurines of men and women in terracotta, stone, and metal, seals indicate that people of the time had a vivid imagination and a profound artistic sense. There were three types of sculptures found there, which are Stone sculptures, Metal sculptures, and Terracotta sculptures.

MUGHAL PAINTING

Style of painting confined mainly to book illustration and the production of individual miniatures, that evolved in India during the reigns of the Mughal emperors (16th–18th century). In its initial

phases it showed some indebtedness to the Şafavid school of Persian painting but rapidly moved away from Persian ideals. Probably the earliest example of Mughal painting is the illustrated folktale Tuti-nameh ("Tales of a Parrot") at the Cleveland (Ohio) Museum of Art.

CHINA

Famous for its ancient calligraphy, porcelain, and contemporary art movements.

CALLIGRAPHY

Traditional Chinese calligraphy (shū fǎ) is very different from the calligraphy you see on wedding invitations. To start, the writing tools are different. Whereas Western calligraphy tools are usually ballpoint pens or markers, Chinese calligraphers use brush pens made from the finest animal hair.

POTTERY

Chinese pottery goes back all the way to the prehistoric period when it was utilized for utilitarian purposes as well as for burial purposes as many have been excavated from burial sites, known also as funerary jars. Chinese pottery has been throughout the ages, developing into many different styles and forms as traditional Chinese art. Neolithic pottery was also painted and decorated by carving bands of patterns into form.

PEKING OPERA

Praised as one of the national treasures of China, Peking opera (jīng jù) combines skillful singing, graceful acrobatics, elaborate colorful costumes, and soulful storytelling to create a stage experience unlike any other. Peking opera was extremely popular during the Qing dynasty, and is currently preserved as an art form throughout China.

EUROPE

ITALY

Italy is home to some of the most iconic and influential artworks in history. Renowned for the cradle of the Renaissance, with masterpieces by artists like Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael.

CENACLE

The Cenacle, also known as the Last Supper, is the most famous representation of Christ's last supper. It is a wall fresco, dating back to between 1494 and 1498, created by Leonardo da Vinci and commissioned by Ludovico il Moro, regent of the Duchy of Milan. The fresco is in the refectory of the Sanctuary of Santa Maria delle Grazie, in Milan.

SAINT MARK CATHEDRAL

It is the most important and stunning church in Venice as well as one of the most famous in the world, the Patriarchal Cathedral Basilica of Saint Mark, better known as Saint Mark Cathedral. With its five iconic domes and its bell tower, it surely deserves a visit for its unique architecture and for the breathtaking treasures kept inside like the Pala d'Oro (the altarpiece). Built using different architecture styles, Byzantine, Islamic and Gothic.

FASHION

Italy is a world leader in high fashion, an industry centred in Milan, a haven for models, designers, and photographers who come to work in the houses of Versace, Gucci, Krizia, Ferragamo, Valentino, Dolce & Gabbana, Prada, and Armani, among many others. Italian design houses such as Modigliani and Alessi have also been strongly influential.

ENGLAND

Known for its rich history in art, including the works of William Shakespeare, the British Museum, and contemporary art scenes in London.

LITERATURE

The Elizabethan era of the late 16th century fostered the flowering of the European Renaissance in England and the golden age of English literature. The plays of William Shakespeare, while on their surface representing the culmination of Elizabethan English, achieve a depth of characterization and richness of invention that have fixed them in the dramatic repertoire of virtually every language.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

The British Museum's artifacts, such as the Parthenon 'Elgin' Marbles and the Rosetta Stone, reflect England's rich art culture and its history of collecting and preserving global art. This tradition is mirrored in England's own artistic evolution, from medieval religious sculptures to the landscape paintings of J.M.W. Turner and John Constable, and contemporary works that explore social issues. The museum's diverse collection highlights England's significant role in the global art scene, making it a central piece of the country's cultural heritage.

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

Destroyed by the Great Fire of London in 1666, the current building was designed by Sir Christopher Wren and completed in 1710. Its iconic dome is 111 metres (364ft) high and is one of the largest cathedral domes in the world.

SPAIN

Known for its rich history in art, including museums are renowned for their exceptional collections and masterpieces, featuring artists like Goya, Dalí, and Picasso. The dance of Soul and Passion, Flamenco Tradition.

FRANCISCO DE GOYA

Spain has been home to some of the art world's most influential figures. **Francisco de Goya**, with his dark and dramatic scenes, shows us a world where beauty and brutality coexist. His works, like "The Third of May 1808," not only capture historical moments but also express profound human emotions.

PABLO PICASSO

Pablo Picasso, a name synonymous with innovation, shattered conventions with his Cubist visions. His "Guernica," a poignant response to the bombing of a Basque town during the Spanish Civil War, remains one of art's most powerful statements on the horrors of war.

SALVADOR DALI

Dalí, the flamboyant surrealist, took us down a rabbit hole of melting clocks and dreamlike landscapes. His works, such as "The Persistence of Memory," challenge our perceptions and invite us to explore the depths of our imagination.

FLAMENCO

Step into the world of **flamenco**, a world where every stomp of the foot and strum of the guitar tells a story of passion, sorrow, and joy. Plus, in 2010, UNESCO recognized flamenco as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, acknowledging its value as a cultural treasure not only for Spain but for the world.

NORTH AMERICA

UNITED STATES

Diverse art scenes from Native American art to modern art movements like Abstract Expressionism.

WINSLOW HOMER

Few events left as much of a lasting impression on the whole of American culture as the Civil War. Winslow Homer was a painter that created a piece of work which gained instant fame for its image of life after the war, shown in a simple, yet picturesque wheat field. Painted in 1865 just after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Homer shows a weary soldier who has turned his focus away from fighting and back to farming.

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM

Abstract Expressionism, broad movement in American painting that began in the late 1940s and became a dominant trend in Western painting during the 1950s. The most prominent American Abstract Expressionist painters were Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, and Mark Rothko.

POP ART

Perhaps one of the most iconic pieces of American pop art is Andy Warhol's Marilyn Diptych. The painting is a tribute to American actress Marilyn Monroe and was created shortly after her death in 1962. The actress was a household name in the early 1960's and Warhol's work captured Monroe's image in a wide range of contrast and color differences. The image was originally featured on one of Monroe's most popular films, Niagara, that was released in 1953.

MEXICO

Famous for its vibrant murals, folk art, and artists like Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera.

MURALS

The post-Mexican Revolution government were the main driving factor behind the muralist movement as they used murals for political and propaganda reasons, they often would commission paintings with political messages with the hopes of reunifying the country through the power of self-expression and art. It was during this period that artists completely broke with European traditions, the leading artists to have been involved at the time were Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros. Many of the paintings from these artists depicted vivid scenes of Mexican life as they believed that Mexican art should reflect Mexican culture and life.

ARTESANIA

Throughout Mexico, you can find tons of different folk arts and crafts which are called "artesanía". There are such vast selections of different kinds of artesanía in Mexico, this is mainly due to the fact of the Mexican people being so diverse and also having so many unique and raw materials to work with. Many of the common resources used by people to create folk art and crafts are different types of clay, wood, stones, metals and plants, some if not all of these materials can be combined together to create colourful, decorative and unique pieces of art.

CANADA

Known for Indigenous art, the Group of Seven, and contemporary art scenes in cities like Toronto and Vancouver.

GROUP OF SEVEN

If there's a defining style of Canadian visual art it's probably the landscape. Canada's exotic natural beauty was tremendously alluring to European artists in the 19th century. By the early 20th century depictions of the Canadian landscape gradually became more harsh and realistic, as Canadian-born artists sought to depict more accurate and varied scenes of nature. The most famous artists of this latter tradition were the so-called Group of Seven, seven artists who produced a number of great pseudo-impressionist works in the 1920s and 1930s.

TORONTO

Toronto, Ontario, is often at the forefront of the Canadian contemporary art scene. Home to numerous galleries, art spaces, and cultural events, Toronto offers a dynamic environment for contemporary artists. The Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) is one of the city's premier institutions, showcasing a vast collection of contemporary works alongside classical pieces.

SOUTH AMERICA

BRAZIL

Renowned for its colorful street art, Carnival, and modernist architecture by Oscar Niemeyer.

FEIRA DE CARUARU

Feira de Caruaru, located in Caruaru, Pernambuco, is renowned for its traditional fair held for over 200 years. Spanning two kilometers, it features numerous colorful tents offering a variety of handicrafts, including hats, baskets, and ceramic objects. The city also hosts one of the world's largest June festivities, São João.

SELARÓN STAIRS

The Selarón Stairs, also known as Escadaria Selarón, were created by Chilean artist Jorge Selarón. He began the project in 1990, transforming a set of dilapidated steps in Rio de Janeiro into a vibrant mosaic of over 2,000 tiles from more than 60 countries. Selarón dedicated over 20 years to this work, considering it an ever-evolving piece of art until his death in 2013.

OSCAR NIEMEYER

Brazilian architect known for his significant contributions to modern architecture, Oscar Niemeyer. He is celebrated for his innovative use of abstract forms and curves, which are prominently featured in his designs for Brasília, the capital of Brazil. Niemeyer's work includes iconic structures such as the National Congress of Brazil, the Cathedral of Brasília, and the United Nations headquarters in New York, which he co-designed.

COLOMBIA

Colombian art is a vibrant tapestry that reflects the country's diverse history and cultural influences. From the intricate gold work of the Quimbaya civilization to contemporary pieces.

QUIMBAYA CIVILIZATION

Before the Spanish conquest, the territories of present-day Colombia were inhabited by various indigenous cultures known for their sophisticated craftwork and symbolic artistry. The Quimbaya civilization, noted for their intricate gold craftwork, left behind a legacy of exceptional metallurgical skill and artistic expression. These indigenous groups, encompassing a range of Amerindian ethnicities, established a rich artistic tradition that influenced the later colonial arts.

DORIS SALCEDO

Artistic narratives surrounding pain, violence, loss, and mourning are poignant in the works of Colombian artists, particularly in response to the country's historical conflicts and societal challenges. Doris Salcedo is well-known for her moving installations and sculptures that embody the themes of grief and healing.

BOTERISMO

Colombian art is also distinguished by its use of humor and satire. Artists often employ these devices as tools of political criticism or to offer a different perspective on personal history and societal norms. The whimsical nature of Botero's "Boterismo," with its plump and jovial figures, provides a platform for subtle social critique, highlighting issues within the Colombian society with both affectionate humor and sharp insight.

ARGENTINA

Known for its tango music and dance, as well as contemporary art in Buenos Aires.

THE HANDS CAVE

In Argentina, there's a Cueva de las Manos (The Hands Cave). UNESCO designated this one as a World Heritage Site. In the north of Córdoba, there is more significant prehistoric art.

FILETEADO

Fileteado is a form of decorative painting that originates from Buenos Aires, Argentina. The painting is characterized by its use of bold and intricate patterns, often with geometric shapes and bright colors. Fileteado paintings can be found on the sides of buildings, buses, and other public places in Buenos Aires.

MODERN ARGENTINE PAINTING

Modern Argentine painting is characterized by its strong use of color and brushstrokes, as well as its focus on light and shadow. This style of painting emerged in the early 20th century, and

quickly gained popularity among Argentine artists. Modern Argentine painting has also been influenced by European styles, such as Cubism and Surrealism.

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

Home to Aboriginal art, contemporary art scenes in Sydney and Melbourne, and the Sydney Opera House.

ABORIGINAL ART

Aboriginal art is a vibrant and significant cultural expression that encompasses a rich history and deep spiritual connection to the land. Originating from Indigenous Australian communities, this art form encompasses a diverse range of styles, techniques, and themes, reflecting the deep-rooted traditions, stories, and beliefs of the Aboriginal peoples. The term “Dreamtime” or “Dreaming” represents the Aboriginal understanding of the world, its creation, and its great stories. Aboriginal Art is a vehicle through which these Dreaming stories are expressed and preserved.

DOT PAINTING

Dot Painting is a hallmark of Aboriginal art known for its intricate patterns and use of color. It evolved as a way to veil sacred and clandestine elements of their *Dreamings* when paintings were increasingly exposed to outside audiences.

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

Sydney Opera House, opera house located on Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour), New South Wales, Australia. Its unique use of a series of gleaming white sail-shaped shells as its roof structure makes it one of the most-photographed buildings in the world.

NEW ZEALAND

Known for Maori art, including carvings and tattoos, and contemporary art.

DUNEDIN FRINGE FESTIVAL

The world’s southernmost festival of its kind, the Dunedin Fringe Festival is an eclectic mix of theatre, music, dance, comedy and visual art. Held annually every March, this 11-day extravagant theatre festival highlights innovative and avant-garde art to support the work of emerging artists.

MĀORI ART

Toi, or Māori art, centres around four primary art forms; raranga (weaving), whakairo (carving), tā moko (tattooing) and peitātanga (painting). Te Papa Tongarewa and the Auckland Museum both have impressive collections of traditional Māori arts and crafts. The centuries old tradition of tā moko (Māori tattoo) is an important custom that is still practiced today. Historically, these beautiful tattoos were a bit like a résumé, telling the wearer's story through visual symbols. Today, the practice has evolved to be an expression of cultural pride and unity, often carried out to mark a significant occasion, such as university graduation or the passing of a family member. One thing that hasn't changed though, is that to receive tā moko is a great honor.

FIJI

Famous for its traditional crafts, including tapa cloth and wood carvings.

POTTERY

A craft that dates from the original settlement of Fiji around 1290 BC, pottery-making is still practiced in the lower Sigatoka Valley, the islands of Kadavu and Malolo, western Vanua Levu, the Rewa Delta and the province of Ra. Each district has its own distinct signature in its pottery style.

MASI

Masi and tapa are names for bark cloth. This art form is practiced in many regions of the South Pacific and in several areas of Fiji. Masi has many uses, including as ceremonial dress, wall decorations and more recent innovations such as table mats and handbags. It also makes a fine souvenir for visitors.

WOODCARVING

Woodcarving is a declining art in Fiji, no doubt another victim of the modern era. The woodcarver's role was a highly specialized one, important because of the cultural value of the items he produced. The war club, for example, was a vital part of Fijian culture. Not only was it the primary weapon in a warrior's arsenal, it was a symbol of authority used in ceremony and dance. Likewise, the tanoa, or yaqona bowl, also played (and still plays) an important part in Fijian society. Artist clans were so specialized that carvers in the old days only produced one particular kind of artifact – say clubs or yaqona bowls – and that was it.

ANTARCTICA

While Antarctica doesn't have indigenous art, it inspires many contemporary artists and photographers who capture its unique landscapes and wildlife.

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