

# THE PACIFIC

## BIG IDEA 1: Artists manipulate materials and ideas to create an aesthetic object, act, or event.

### 1. What is art and how is it made?

Materials (Environment/Geography)  
 Art making techniques  
 Why make art? (Function)

### 2. Themes:

Power and Authority  
 Funereal Traditions  
 Sacred Objects and Spaces  
 Historical Record

### 3. Form, function, content, context:

Form and Content = VISUAL  
 Function and Context = CONTEXTUAL



What is the FUNCTION of this art work?

Gardner's Art through the Ages: A Concise Global History

STOKSTAD, 5th Edition, Chapter 28, pgs 861 - 879

## CONTEXT

### 1. Geography and Materials:

Variety of media due to varying ecological situations, social structure, impact of external influences (commerce/colonialism/missionary activities).

Media: fibers, pigments, bone, sea ivory and shell tortoise shell, wood, coral, stone

Organization of 25,000 islands into **micro** (small), **poly** (many), **mela** (black), **nesia** (islands)

Objects give form and preserve human history/social continuity, remind people of heritage and shared bonds, temporary constructions destroyed once memory is created

### 2. History and Tradition:

The sea as a theme is pervasive/connecting and separating force

Settled by Lapita culture 4,000 years ago - 800 CE the subdivision of regions established

Sailing culture - migration of cultures creating devices of navigation, ships, personal charts, objects believed to provide protection/safe passage

3. **Power and Authority:** arts are expressions of beliefs, social relations, essential truths and information held by designated members of society - objects/acts/events are forces of social life

Power/forces of deities, ancestors, founders, hereditary leaders are protected to prevent human access

Ritual dress/armor/tattoos encase and shield the focus of power from human interaction

**Mana** - a person's vital force. Identity or strength expressed and protected by rules/prohibitions as well as wrapping/sheathing practices or **tapu**. Objects that project status /sustain structure hold and become **mana** - made secure through **tapu**

## ARTWORKS

213. Nan Madol	Micronesia
214. Moai on platform	Easter Island
215. Ahu 'ula (feather cape)	Hawaii
216. Staff god	Cook Islands, Polynesia
217. Female deity	Micronesia
218. Buk (mask)	Torres Strait
219. Hiapo (tapa)	Niue
221. Navigation chart	Marshall Islands, Micronesia
222. Malagan display and mask	New Ireland, Papua New Guinea
223. Presentation of Figian mats and tapa cloths to Queen Elizabeth II	Fiji, Polynesia
From Prehistoric: Apollo 11 stones, Running horned woman	

### Power and Authority in the different cultures:

Nan Madol - ambitious residential/ceremonial complexes  
 Hawaiian rulers - feather capes announce status and shield  
 Polynesian - sacred ceremonial spaces announce legitimacy, power, life force  
 Melanesia - earn status and power marked by exchange of objects

4. **Performance and Ritual:** Performed (dance/sung/recited/displayed) - colors/scents/textures/movements that enact narrative/proclaim primordial truths connected to epics of human history and experience - costumes/cosmetics/constructions

Objects and performance presented to stimulate response/outcome using dress/ritual settings - utilize all senses

How the object is used in performance - carries the meaning of the work of art rather than the work of art carrying the meaning, rituals that evoke memory, reaffirm shared values/important truths

## TIMELINE/CULTURES

700 - 1980 C.E.

Melanesia	Polynesia
Micronesia	Hawaii

## VOCABULARY

deity	tapa
tatu	mana
malangan	tatanua masks
moai	pukao
monolith	'ahu 'ula