

The way cultures use natural resources to express themselves.

- How can natural resources help cultures show and express themselves?
- In what way can art represent a culture/country?
- Which cultures specialize in a natural resource? If yes which natural resource?

Many cultures, old tribes and various countries make art either from natural resources (e.g. wood, clay, rock/stone, plants/flowers, hay/straw, ice) or get their inspiration from nature or natural things/resources. There are many ways the cultures and tribes can express themselves, their legends or beliefs through their art and at the same time use or get inspiration from nature and natural resources.

Canadian Art

I focused on Canadian Totem Poles and how they help(ed) Native American Tribes to express themselves and show their beliefs/legend(s) throughout art. It usually depends in which legend you believe in, on how you carve your totem pole and, sometimes it also matters which wood you use. The two types of wood I know about are: White Pine and Western Red Cedar wood, White Pine is more colourful and easier to carve than Western Red Cedar wood, it is easier to carve because the White Pine is more plastic-like and the Western Red Cedar wood is more hard and coarse. It can also depend on how good you are in carving because with the Red Cedar you need sharper tools and more experience.



This is a totem pole that has been carved, painted on and glazed over to prevent it from getting cracked and broken either from the rain or from other natural causes.

An owl on a totem pole is supposed to be wise and the smartest. This is a picture of a Haida Coastal Native Totem Pole in British Columbia, Western Canada. In this totem two birds were carved into it, and underneath the top bird there is a small human face that is being ‘watched over’ and taken care of, by the big bird on top of it.

There are also many Canadian painters who like to paint from nature and enjoy watching nature and how it lives and works. Emily Carr and Levine Flexhaug who have painted so much from nature and used many techniques to catch the details of the beautiful Canadian landscapes. These are two pieces of art that Emily Carr and Levine Flexhaug made:



Levine Flexhaug



Emily Carr

Canadian Totem Poles are very different from the different Totem Poles from different places. For example the totem poles in New Zealand have different symbols and ways of carving the different symbols and animals/creatures/human faces into the wood. New Zealand totems are also different Canadian totems, because they use different wood and have different symbols, ways to show their beliefs, and their totems are also sometimes thinner than Canadian ones.

This is a picture of a New Zealand Totem Pole:



I have learnt that nature can be a huge influence and inspiration for artists or sculptors. Some artists work with natural resources and others use them for inspiration, so they are all somehow connected.

Bibliography

I got the painting from Levine Flexhaug off of this site:

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→ “Spilling Out!” *Spilling Out!* N.p., n.d. Web. 22 May 2015. <<http://felinehangout.blogspot.co.at/2006/09/totem-poles.html>>

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→ “Cathedral Grove | Totem Pole Websites.” *Cathedral Grove | Totem Pole*

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