

Dear Educator,

Thank you for booking a tour with the Museum of Glass. We look forward to your visit!

We're sending you this curriculum to help enhance the museum visit for you and your students. These activities have been carefully prepared to go with the exhibit you will visit. You can use them as pre-visit materials or post-visit, but we strongly encourage that you spend some time with the packet before your visit. We've found that students understand and learn so much more if they are prepared before they come.

Along with this packet, we have extensive curriculum and interactive activities on our website about glassblowing and working with hot glass as an art form. Please visit www.museumofglass.org and click "**Learn**" on our home page. From there, visit the **Virtual Hot Shop**, where your students will get a chance to experience glassblowing by creating a **macchia**. Participants walk through the process step-by-step until they get a finished work of art! Along the way they can also choose to learn more about glass. You and your students can even watch the Hot Shop Live, by clicking "**Watch**" on our home page and selecting the "**Live Web Streaming of the Hot Shop**" link.

We sincerely hope you enjoy these materials and your visit to the Museum of Glass.

Preston Singletary: Echoes, Fire and Shadows



**“I see my work as an extension of tradition and a declaration that Native cultures are alive and developing new technologies and new ways of communicating the ancient codes and symbols of this land.” --
Preston Singletary**

Curriculum Guide for Educators

- Essential Academic Learning Requirements
- Student reading before museum visit
- Glossary for Tlingit and Art terms
- Guided classroom reflection after museum visit

Preston Singletary: Echoes, Fire and Shadows

July 11, 2009 – September 19, 2010

Washington State EALRs

The Arts:

- 1.1 Understand arts concepts and vocabulary.
- 1.3 Understand and apply arts styles from various artist, cultures, and times.
- 1.4 Apply audience skills in a variety of arts settings and performances.
- 2.3 Apply a responding process to an arts presentation.
 - **Engage** actively and purposefully.
 - **Describe** what is seen and/or heard.
 - **Analyze** how the elements are arranged and organized.
 - **Interpret** based on descriptive properties.
 - **Evaluate** using supportive evidence and criteria.
- 4.1 Demonstrate and analyze the connections among the arts disciplines.
- 4.2 Demonstrate and analyze the connections among the arts and other content areas.
- 4.4 Understand that the arts shape and reflect culture and history.

Social Science:

Geography

The student uses a spatial perspective to make reasoned decisions by applying the concepts of location, region, and movement and demonstrating knowledge of how geographic features and human cultures impact environments.

- 3.1 Understands the location, physical characteristics, cultural characteristics, and spatial patterns of places and regions on the Earth's surface.
- 3.2 Understands human interaction with the environment.

History

The student understands and applies knowledge of historical thinking, chronology, eras, turning points, major ideas, individuals, and themes of local, Washington State, tribal, United States, and world history in order to evaluate how history shapes the present and future.

- 4.1 Understands historical chronology.
- 4.4 Uses history to understand the present and plan for the future.

Communication:

- 1.1 Uses listening and observation skills and strategies to focus attention and interpret information.

Students read before museum visit...

Preston Singletary, Kuchéin, Ch'aak' ka Gooch Naax Sitee Preston Singletary's Tlingit name is Kuchéin of the Kaagwaan Taan Eagle/Wolf family from Sitka, Alaska. His house is the Kook Hít, the Box House of the Kóokeitaan family. A special branch of the Kaagwaantaan Eagle/Wolf family.

Preston Singletary is part of a renaissance, or re-birth, of native artists who are rediscovering their heritage and seeking new ways to revitalize their traditional artforms. Through his mother's family, Preston inherited a rich cultural and spiritual legacy inspired by the rugged landscape of southwestern Alaska – a land rich in natural resources where the dense temperate rainforest meets the waters of the inside passage and home of the Tlingit tribal groups. He is unique as a native artist who trained specifically in the medium of glass. Preston has commented that glass felt particularly appropriate to him as a continuation of Native American culture's long history with glass that began centuries ago with the introduction of trade beads.



Preston grew up in Seattle and, as a teenager during the 1980s, was introduced to glass by his good friend, Dante Marioni whose father, Paul Marioni, was an established artist working with glass. Preston went on to develop his skills through study at Pilchuck Glass School and Kosta Boda in Sweden. While working with local artists such as Dale Chihuly and Benjamin Moore, and Italian masters including Lino Tagliapietra and Pino Signoretto, he further honed his skills. His early works reflect the influences of his mentors and are infused with Scandinavian and Venetian design sensibilities.

During the 1990s, Preston began experimenting with sandcarving Northwest Native formline designs onto handblown forms. To achieve this effect, he placed a thick rubber tape over the entire surface of the artwork and executed his design by cutting away all of the negative space to reveal the glass underneath. Then, the exposed glass was sandblasted, or sandcarved. When the tape was removed, the sandblasted (negative) elements contrasted with the glass (positive) areas revealing the design. Preston initially experimented with solid colored glass forms which when sandblasted would create a contrast of transparent and translucent matte finishes. His technique later became more sophisticated by his use of layered colors. Using the same process, Preston sandblasts the top layer of color to reveal another underlayer of colored glass thereby creating a contrast of two colors. During this time, he also devoted himself to mastering the complex system of formline design used by his Tlingit ancestors and other tribal groups along the Northwest Coast.

As a leader in the nascent Native glass movement, Preston has been instrumental in helping other Native artists such as Tammy Garcia (Santa Clara Pueblo), Joe David (Nuu-chah-nulth) and Archie Noisecat (Salish) to explore the expressive possibilities of glass within their own native art traditions. One of his recent collaborations included Maori artists from New Zealand with whom Preston worked to execute their traditional artforms into glass. It is interesting to note the similarities in the surface design vocabularies of the Maori and Tlingit as both use a complex formline system, but with their own unique style.

For many Native artists, art is a vehicle through which they explore the realm of imagination, reveal the invisible spirit world, and keep their cultural traditions alive. Preston Singletary has mastered the art of straddling two cultures by incorporating his Tlingit heritage within the contemporary studio glass movement infusing both with new life and enriching them with his creative spirit.

GLOSSARY OF TLINGIT TERMS

Clan

Tlingit clans are groups of extended families that claim a common ancestor. Each clan possesses its own crests and forms a social network that functions as a distinct political unit within Tlingit society.

Crests

Crests represent creatures with which a family ancestor has interacted in the legendary past. The right of ownership of a crest was typically purchased by the ancestor, often in exchange for his life. Ownership of crests forms a valuable part of a family's wealth and often includes imagery, stories, songs, dances and names.

Formline

Artists often abstract their subject matter by simplifying or exaggerating what they see. Formline design uses a unique system of simplified shapes including ovoids, u-forms, split u-forms and s-forms. Tlingit artists use these basic shapes combined with more realistic images of hands and eyes to construct abstracted representations of crest beings.

Moiety

The Tlingit people of Southeast Alaska have two moieties or descent groups, the raven and the eagle, to which each person belongs. According to Tlingit legend, around the time of the great flood, all the animals separated into two distinct groups which humans later followed. Traditionally, Tlingits were required to marry someone from the opposite moiety and children determined their moiety through their mother.

Potlatch

The potlatch is an important ceremony traditionally performed by many of the native tribal groups along the Northwest Coast. During the ceremony, clans celebrate and pass on to their descendants their important crest names and the right to display the accompanying artworks, images, songs and dances. Guest clans are invited as witnesses and receive gifts and lavish amounts of food. By accepting their hospitality, the guests validate the right of their host to display their ownership of specific crests.

Yeks

Yeks are spirit helpers enlisted by Tlingit shamans to perform duties in the spirit world. The most common yeks are characterized by their ability to exist in two different environments such as the frog and land otter that inhabit both the water and land. Typically acquired through a vision quest, yeks are specific to individual shamans and are portrayed on their paraphernalia such as rattles, amulets and soul catchers, to infuse these objects with their supernatural power.

GLOSSARY OF ART TERMS

The visual elements and principles of design are an artist's vocabulary through which they communicate. Traditional Tlingit design is based on formal design principles that emphasize line, contrast, symmetrical balance, and pattern. Through its strong emphasis on balance and pattern, this style communicates a sense of order and stability.

ART ELEMENTS

Line can describe a shape, suggest movement, and organize an artwork into a structured whole. Lines are defined by their type (angular or curved), direction (horizontal or vertical) and their quality (thick or thin).

Shapes are two dimensional and can be geometric (straight lines, precise angles and uniform curves) or organic (curvilinear with irregular outlines and contours). Geometric shapes communicate feelings of logic and structure while organic shapes echo the natural world. Forms are three dimensional shapes.

Texture is the surface quality of a shape or form. Interesting textures increase visual interest. Rough, prickly or jagged textures increase the viewer's emotions of avoidance of the subject matter. Soft, smooth textures increase the viewer's desire to interact with the subject matter.

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Contrast is created when two things that are different are combined. The greater the difference, the greater the contrast. Contrast works to draw the viewer's eye and guide it through the composition.

Symmetrical balance evokes feelings of stability and harmony and is created by the mirror like repetition of two halves. If the composition of an artwork were folded in half, both sides would look similar.

Pattern is created by the repetition of one or more shapes or motifs. In this way, pattern is closely related to texture. Because the human mind is comforted by the perceived sense of order, most patterns are pleasing to our eyes. Pattern can also be created with line, color and texture.

Artwork Spotlight

OYSTERCATCHER RATTLE

Use this image to explore shamanism, yeks and the concept of the spirit quest. This artwork is rich in iconography (the study of symbols).

Background

Shamans play an important role in Tlingit society. They are thought to be able to control the weather, cure the sick, influence battles and banish evil spirits under the control of witches. They perform these duties with the aid of their yeks, or spirit helpers. In order to acquire their yeks, shamans typically perform a vision quest. During their quest, spirit helpers are said to come to the shaman and, through their tongues, transfer their supernatural powers. Most yeks are creatures with the ability to function in two distinct environments in the same way that a shaman operates in both the natural and supernatural worlds. Yeks are specific to individual shamans and are portrayed on the shaman's paraphernalia such as amulets, rattles, masks and soul catchers to infuse these objects with their supernatural power. The oystercatcher rattle was an artform commonly included in a shaman's kit. We know this because when a shaman died, all of his possessions, which were considered spiritually potent and therefore dangerous, were buried with him. During the early 20th century, many shamans' graves were pilfered and their contents sold to museums.

Iconography

Because they spend most of their time in the border region between the land and the ocean coupled with their ability to fly, shorebirds figure prominently in shamanic art. Shamans have a special affinity for the oystercatcher, a distinctive type of shorebird that has black feathers, a long orange beak and yellow rimmed eyes. Oystercatchers are recognized for their strange call and ability to sense danger and therefore make powerful yeks who can alert the shaman to potential threats. The oystercatcher rattle is a form favored by Tlingit shamans and features this bird as the body of the rattle.

Mountain goats live at high elevations on rocky cliffs inaccessible to predators. Their most distinguishing characteristics are their curved black horns and white wooly coats that allow them to exist in their often frozen environment. Typically staying above the tree line, these creatures had a special significance to Tlingit shamans because of their ability to inhabit such a rugged and desolate terrain which was likened to the supernatural sphere through which the shaman moved to perform his magic. Therefore, the mountain goat was considered a powerful yek capable of safely leading the shaman through the dangerous territories of the spirit world.

Can you identify the shaman who is torturing a witch on this oystercatcher rattle? (The shaman is the one holding the hair of the witch)

What characteristic of the mountain goat can you identify in this artwork? (His horns, which are rendered in a pale color, are visible on either side of the witch)

Can you find the chief enemy of the land otter, the dog, resting on the mountain goat's tongue?

Within the exhibit, did you see any other yeks? (Other yeks include the land otter, frog, woodworm and wolf. Note: some creatures such as the frog and wolf appear both as yeks and as crests)



Spotlight on Shamans' Paraphernalia

Use these images to explore art forms associated with Tlingit shamans.

Background

Shamans created a variety of objects to assist them in their work such as rattles, masks, amulets and soul catchers. Often these objects depict yeks specific to the shaman, but some are more formulaic in their iconography such as the soul catcher. Tlingit shamans often cultivated a frightening appearance by never cutting or washing their hair. They further distinguished themselves by wearing a special costume consisting of a hide apron, shoulder cape and crown made of mountain goat horns. When they performed their work, they would often act as if in a trance by throwing their body in contorted poses and making shrill cries and hissing noises that sounded otherworldly. While in a trance, they could summon the supernatural powers of their various yeks by wearing headdresses and masks representing the spirit whose power they hoped to harness and wield. Sickness was often thought to be caused by malicious sprits that the shaman would need to extract, conquer and finally banish.

FROG MEDICINE FRONTLET

Frontlets are different from masks as they are worn on the top of the head. Tlingit shamans often used a collection of masks and frontlets through which they harnessed the power of their yeks to cure people suffering from a sickness thought to be caused by malicious spirits. The frog that is depicted in Tlingit art is actually a type of amphibious toad that defends itself by producing toxic skin secretions. This substance is not harmful to humans unless it comes into contact with their eyes in which case it will cause a painful burning sensation. Because of this, Tlingits traditionally view frogs as dangerous and associate them with witchcraft fearing that contact with them will make their eyes bulge out of their head.



What type of canine is the frog resting on? (A wolf)

Some yeks were also used as crests by certain clans. Can you recall other frogs and wolves in the exhibit that are used as crests?

Can you identify all the materials that were used to create this artwork? (Horsehair and iridized black Bullseye glass) How do the different textures contribute to the visual expressiveness of the artwork?

SOUL CATCHER

Soul catchers were worn by Tlingit shamans and used to draw out and contain unwanted spirits. They were traditionally created from bone or ivory and embellished with abalone shell inlay. Although many soul catchers seem to portray a spirit flanked by wolf heads, the imagery is elusive because it depicts beings from the spirit world of the shaman.



What features create the impression of wolves on this object? (long snouts and teeth)

Compare and contrast the imagery of this soul catcher with the Frog Medicine Frontlet. Which is more realistic, and which is more abstract? Which conveys greater visual power as a magical object, and why?

Artwork Spotlight

CLAN HOUSE

Use this artwork to explore the Tlingit concepts of clan, moiety and crest. This artwork can also be used to explore the formline design system.

Background

Ownership of crests forms a valuable part of a clan's wealth and often includes stories, songs, dances and names in addition to visual imagery. Tlingit society was divided into two moieties, or descent groups, symbolized by the eagle and the raven. According to Tlingit legend, prior to a large flood, all the animals separated into two distinct groups. After the flood, humans also divided themselves along with the animals thereby creating the two moieties. Traditionally, Tlingits were required to marry someone from the opposite moiety, and children determined their moiety through their mother. Preston belongs to the eagle moiety which acquired their crest when one of their ancestors was killed by an eagle. In compensation, they were given the right to use the image of the eagle and display the accompanying story in their ceremonial art and performances.

Technique

Screens such as this one were traditionally created from painted wood planks and situated in the back of the clan house. Not only did they display the clan's most important crests, but they also provided privacy for high ranking family members. To create this large scale artwork, Preston used a casting technique in which the glass panels were essentially formed and baked in a large oven called a kiln. To create the design, he layered black glass on top of the colored glass. When the glass had cooled and stabilized, he placed a thick tape over the entire panel and executed his design by cutting away all of the negative space to reveal the glass underneath. Then, the entire panel was sandblasted, or sandcarved. During this process, sand is applied to the glass with enormous pressure thereby carving away the glass much like using sandpaper on wood. When the tape is removed, the sandblasted (negative) elements reveal the undercolor while the taped (positive) areas retain the top layer of black glass.

Formline Design

Formline design is essentially an artistic vocabulary of shapes that are used to construct a composition. Notice how this artwork is composed from these basic shapes: ovoids, u-forms, split u-forms and s-forms. Eyes are often used as joints to express the vital life force of these body parts. Symmetrical balance is a characteristic of many formline designs. If you split this eagle down the center, it would be symmetrical, or the same on both halves) *Horror vacui*, an art term meaning the fear of empty space, is also a characteristic of this design tradition.

This artwork represents an eagle. But, the face is not where you might think at first. Find the beak of the eagle, and you will find its face. (The beak is just above the middle of the opening – its tip is placed in the center of the overall composition. The face at the top of the composition is a decorative device that may be used to symbolize or evoke the human aspect of the eagle)

Can you find the feather motifs composed of split u-forms that identify this creature as a bird? (These motifs are next to the eyes of the eagle and at the bottom of the composition creating the wings)



Eyes are often used as joints or other important body parts to express the vital forces and animating energies of those body parts. How many eyes can you find? (Preston has used eyes to articulate the ears, nostrils, wings joints and leg/claw joints)

Artwork Spotlight

RAVEN STEALS THE SUN

Use this image to explore storytelling traditions among the Northwest Coast tribal groups.

Recommended Read Aloud Book:

How Raven Stole the Sun (Tales of the People) as retold by Tlingit tribal member Maria Williams. Includes a glossary of Tlingit words, historical photos of Tlingit people, and photographs of artifacts from the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian collection.

Other renditions of the Raven tale:

Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest by Gerald McDermott.

How Raven Brought Light to People by Ann Dixon.

Background

Raven is perhaps the most popular character of Tlingit legends, and many clans claim this mischievous bird as a crest. There are numerous stories about raven which feature him as a great shape shifter able to change from human to animal, male to female, and old to young. Not only did he release the sun, moon and stars into the world, he also taught humans the arts of hunting, fishing and construction. But, raven could also cause destruction and was well known for his gluttony, trickery and cruelty. According to Tlingit legend, he is the one who taught witches their craft.

Stories, like artworks, were owned by clans as a valuable form of property. Traditionally Tlingits would not tell stories that they did not own. Without a written language, Tlingit storytellers were valued for their ability to guard and translate these important cultural traditions. Often stories were accompanied by special dances and names. During the potlatch, these stories would be related and transferred as a valuable form of inheritance.

Iconography

According to Tlingit legend, in primeval times humans lived in darkness. Raven discovered that the sun was being hoarded in a box by a rich man and determined to steal it. To execute his plan, he impregnated the man's daughter by changing himself into a hemlock needle that she swallowed in her water. As a youngster, Raven cried until his grandfather relented and let him play with the box of daylight. When he finally had the sun in his grasp, he changed back into his bird form narrowly escaping the old man's wrath by flying through the smokehole of his house blackening his feathers in the process.

Preston has captured one moment of the Raven story in this artwork. What is that moment?

Most of Preston's forms echo traditional Tlingit forms. What do you think about this one? (This sculpture is not a traditional form, but Preston's own unique interpretation of this popular story)

What do you think about someone's right to own a story? Do we have examples of this in our culture? Why do you think the Tlingit peoples are willing to share their stories now?



There are different versions of the Box of Daylight within the Tlingit clans and other tribal groups along the Northwest Coast. Why do you think this is? How do you think the oral tradition contributed to these different evolutions?

Spotlight on Gunakadeit

Use these images to explore the concepts of mythological creatures and wealth in traditional Tlingit societies.

Recommended Read Aloud Book:

The Wave of the Sea-Wolf by David Wisniewski. This story, based on Tlingit legends, weaves together historical references, including the first appearance of Europeans along the Northwest Coast, with textured cut paper illustrations.

Background

Gunakadeit is a special type of supernatural sea monster that is a hybrid of a wolf and a killer whale. This creature is said to have claws like copper, a big head with upright ears, two great fins on its back, and a curly tail. In one well-known story, the sea monster is trapped and killed by a young man who then secretly uses his skin to catch fish to feed his village. He eventually dies while trying to catch a pair of whales and is magically transformed into the sea monster whose house and extensive riches he then appropriates.

GUNAKADEIT (SEA WOLF)

This artwork is rendered as a round composition and is inspired by Tlingit traditions of drum design. The sea wolf can be identified by the long snout and curly tail which characterize the wolf, and the dorsal fin and tail fluke that reference the killer whale.

How is the formline body of Gunakadeit composed? (It is created from a face) What is the artist suggesting with this? (This artistic convention references the spirit of the killer whale that is contained within its form)

How is balance achieved in this composition? Can you find elements of the formline design that are symmetrically balanced and elements that are informally balanced? (The body is symmetrically balanced in the center while the head, tale and appendages are informally balanced creating a sense of movement)



COPPER

Gunakadeit is often associated with copper, a valuable mineral/metal that was used as a wealth object and status symbol by the Tlingit. Coppers were a traditional potlatch gift exchanged between high ranking individuals in elaborate rituals of wealth transfer. During a potlatch a chief would “count his coppers” to show his wealth and prestige. Although there may have been some native copper that was collected from the Copper or Chitina River regions, these distinctive shield shaped objects were produced from sheet copper obtained in trade.



Can you find the sea monster's face depicted in the formline design of the copper? What other body parts can you identify?

Copper became popular as an artistic medium for jewelry and status objects after it was made readily available through European and Euro-American traders. How does this compare to Preston's introduction of glass as an artistic medium for traditional Tlingit art forms?

Image Credits & Visual Aids (*)

Preston Singletary

Clan House, 2008

Kiln-cast and sandcarved glass; water-jet-cut, inlaid, and laminated medallion

16 feet x 10 feet x 2 ½ inches

Collection of Museum of Glass, Tacoma, WA with funds provided by Leonard and Norma Klorfine Foundation

Preston Singletary

Oystercatcher Rattle, 2006

Blown, hot-sculpted, and sandcarved glass

Overall: 24 x 17 x 6 1/2 in. (61 x 43.2 x 16.5 cm)

Preston Singletary

Frog Medicine Frontlet, 2005

Blown and sandcarved glass; horsehair and iridized black Bullseye glass

7 1/2 x 12 1/2 x 5 in. (19.1 x 31.8 x 12.7 cm)

Preston Singletary *

Soul Catcher, 2001

Blown and sandcarved glass; iridized black Bullseye glass inlay; hand-woven cedar-bark rope

6 1/4 x 21 3/4 x 4 1/2 in. (15.9 x 55.2 x 11.4 cm)

Preston Singletary *

Clan House, 2008

Kiln-cast and sandcarved glass; water-jet cut, inlaid, and laminated medallion

Overall: 120 x 192 x 2 1/2 in. (304.8 x 487.7 x 6.4 cm), 2007

Preston Singletary

Raven Steals the Sun, 2001 *

Blown, hot-sculpted, and sandcarved glass

15 3/4 x 6 x 6 in. (40 x 15.2 x 15.2 cm)

Preston Singletary

Wasco, 1999

Blown and sandcarved glass

Glass: 4 x 20 in. (10.2 x 50.8 cm)

Preston Singletary

Copper, 2001

Cast and sandcarved glass

Object: 16 1/2 x 11 x 2 in. (41.9 x 27.9 x 5.1 cm)

Overall (Dimensions with mount): 20 x 8 x 8 in. (50.8 x 20.3 x 20.3 cm)

Preston Singletary: Echoes, Fire and Shadows

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