

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC MUSEUM

EXHIBIT EXPLORER

Third Floor

Art in the Pacific Islands & Australia

The traditional artistic styles of different cultures are reflected in objects used during rituals and ceremonies, as well as in everyday life. The cultures of the Pacific Islands and Australia provide us a closer look at how their art and traditions are bound together.

1. Aboriginal Bark Painting: As you enter the third floor, walk past the escalator to the right of the *Guatemalan Marketplace* and locate the *Bark Paintings* of the Aboriginal Australians. These artists may spend more time selecting the bark for a painting than applying paint.

How was the bark flattened for painting? _____

2. Indonesian Shadow Theatre: Turn right at the trees and walk down the short hallway, just beyond the bathroom. Look for the puppeteer on your right. *Wayang Kulit* is the Indonesian term for theatre with light and shadow. Most stories told in Indonesian Shadow Theatre were adapted from the traditional Indian epic tales.

What materials were used to make the shadow puppets? _____

3. Sepik River Art: Turn around and head back the way you came, turning right at the trees and heading past the house with skulls. At the end of the wooden walkway, look to your right to find *Sepik River Art*. The tribes along the Sepik River in Papua New Guinea are known for their elaborate wood carvings, including masks, drums and totems. These carvings represent ancestral and natural spirits. Masks with displayed tongues are meant to frighten enemies. What natural resources are used to make paints? _____

4. Gilbert Island Warrior: Turn and walk down the hallway and look for the small room on your left. Do you see the *Gilbert Island Warrior* standing in the corner? This warrior wears a fierce looking hat, made from puffer fish, and a shield to protect his head from thrown rocks. Even today the young men of the Gilbert Islands continue cultural traditions by training with the same type of armor and weapons. What materials are used to make the warrior's weapons? _____

5. Easter Island Head: As you exit the room, turn left and continue around the corner, down the short hallway until you come face to face with this "gum-gum" loving statue. On *Rapa Nui* there are hundreds of tall stone carvings called *Moai*. When Easter Island was first discovered, the large full body statues were seen buried up to their necks, leaving only the heads visible. This statue is a replica.

How tall is the real statue? _____

What will you find around the next corner?

Each culture in the world has its own style of art. In the European Village you may see a Frenchman painting a landscape from his upper floor apartment. On the museum's second floor, a sand painting graces a kiva in the Southwestern Indian Pueblo. What will you find as you explore?