

Kansas City Young Audiences

Teacher Program Guide

African Textiles

Artist: Jamie Root

Workshop Description

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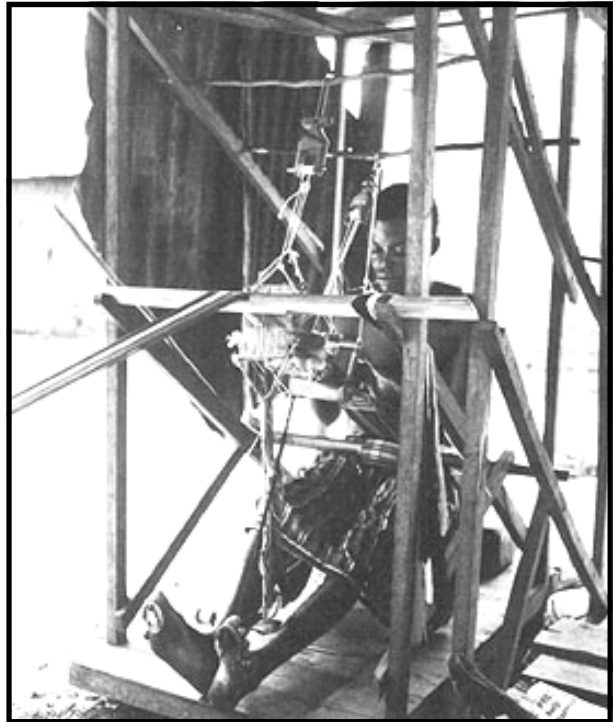
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Jamie Root presents the diverse textile traditions found on the African continent and in rituals among varying tribes.

Using slides, woven examples, and other visual aids, Jamie illustrates the Akrete looms from Nigeria, strip looms of West Africa, pit-looms from the Northeast, raffia textiles of Zaire, and ground looms of the Bedouins.

She discusses the role of both men and women in the production of these textiles, the importance of dyes, and how adornment with beads and certain types of cloth are important in defining a person's status



Educational Objectives and Standards

Students will:

- examine the significance of textiles in African cultures
- compare African and American attitudes toward clothing
- explore how clothing can indicate class, region, etc., across cultures

Behavioral Standards:

- Knows how a culture's art works and artifacts reflect its values and culture
- Geography
- Knows major places and regions serve as cultural symbols

Special Points of Interest:

The largest known kente cloth, the tikoro nko agyina, measuring about 12 x 20 feet, was presented to the UN when Ghana joined the council.

Special REQUIREMENTS:

Several large tables; screen (set up in one location) or AV cart

Artist Bio: Jamie Root

Growing up in a talented and creative family, Jamie was encouraged to express her artistic tendencies in paint and sculpture. She continued to explore new media while earning a Bachelors of Science in Animal Science.

Jamie's teaching career started serendipitously during an internship in the exhibits department at the Kansas City Museum. She was drafted to develop and teach history and

nature classes to preschoolers. More recently, she spent 11 years teaching life sciences in the public schools.

A single lamb purchased in 1991 for these classes began a new passion. Wool from her flock of sheep is the material of her art now. Jamie loves spinning yarn and all forms of felt. She is a member of the Fiber Guild of Greater Kansas City and a known fiber art enabler.



Jamie Root

Vocabulary

Adire cloth: a type of resist-dyed cloth made by Yoruban women in Nigeria.

Bartar: Royal colors.

Cottage industry: usually a small-scale industry carried on at home by family members using their own equipment.

Kente cloth: a brightly patterned, hand-woven ceremonial cloth of the Ashanti; symbols in the cloth represent specific val-

ues and beliefs.

Nomad: a member of a people who have no permanent home, but move about according to the seasons.

Stencil: stiff paper with a design cut into it as a template for a shape meant to be copied

Post-Workshop Activities

1. Use a map to locate the geography of the cultures explored in this workshop. How does the environment and resources of these regions affect the designs?
2. Try to find parallels between the weaving designs of African cultures and other native peoples who weave, such as the Indians of North, Central, and South America.
3. Examine the beliefs and values of your family. Try to create a series of graphic designs that reflect these ideals. Can the symbols be incorporated into a piece of woven cloth?



List of Resources

BOOKS

The Spider Weaver: A Legend of Kente Cloth by Margaret Musgrove, Julia Cairns Scholastic; (February 1, 2001) ISBN: 0590987879

The Art of African Textiles by Duncan Clarke Thunder Bay Press (CA); (September 1, 1997) ISBN: 1571451323

African Majesty: The Textile Art of the Ashanti and Ewe by Peter Adler, Nicholas Barnard Thames & Hudson; Reprint edition (October 1, 1995) ASIN: 050027844X