

## Introduction to World Art

**Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia**  
**Course leader: Mary Nay**

The idea of 'World Art' is being generated and promoted here at UEA, and comes from having the Robert & Lisa Sainsbury Collection in our midst. It began with the School of Art History transforming itself into the School of World Art Studies more than 15 years ago, in recognition of the fact that the presence of the range of art in the collection meant that we are no longer thinking only historically, but also in many other ways about art, taking account of the many different ways in which art is and has been produced around the world.

So, in this course, as well as looking at specific ideas which arise from looking at art from different places, different cultures, made by different peoples, we will also look at some of the generic issues. We will try to address as many of these kinds of issues as possible, but we would very much like this course to be partly an exchange of ideas with the whole group, as that is often the best learning method.

This course is being delivered by Sainsbury Centre education and academic staff and Sainsbury centre volunteer guides. For us it is quite a ground-breaking venture and we hope it will be for participants as well.

Dr Veronica Sekules  
Head of Education and Research  
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### **Examples of some of generic themes:**

- Issues of interpretation, and from where we derive our point of view, and how we value the points of view of others.
- Ideas of continuity and change – looking at innovations in ideas, as opposed to traditions.
- The role of different environments in which people live and how these condition the way people see the world and use it creatively.
- The use of materials (which relates to environmental issues).
- Status and power – how these are expressed in different cultures.
- Beliefs, religion, spirituality and how these are manifest (for example in an open way through ritual or through secrecy, mystery).
- Canons of beauty and how these vary – and the extent to which beauty is an important factor in art.
- Myths and legends and the extent to which they are reflected in the kind of art which is produced, and how they appear.
- The use of colour, the reflection of mood and emotion.
- Formal characteristics, such as line, mass and volume, proportions – different attitudes to eg. figure proportion.