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Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form (Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State M)

Bill Holm

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The masterworks of Northwest Coast Indians are admired today as among the great achievements of the world's primitive artisans. The painted and carved wooden screens, chests and boxes for storage and cooking, dishes, rattles, crest hats, and other ceremonial paraphernalia reveal a rare artistic virtuosity and document the unique involvement of these craftsmen with their environment.

After many years of examining countless artifacts, from Bella Coola to Yakutat Bay, and after himself creating objects in the same style, artist-teacher Bill Holm makes available the results of his investigation in this handsomely illustrated volume. With his deep knowledge and understanding of Indian art, the author has recognized how these pieces, although varied in origin, material, size, and purpose, are related to a surprising degree in the organization and form of their two-dimensional surface decoration.

The author presents an incisive analysis of the use of color, line, and texture; the organization of space; and such typical forms as ovoids, eyelids, U forms, and hands and feet. The evidence upon which he bases his conclusions constitutes a repository of valuable information for all succeeding researchers in the field.

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