



Longwood Center for the Visual Arts
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Professional Development Teacher Workshop
Power and Beauty: New in the African Art Collection
October 5, 2012

Lesson: Making Bògòlanfini (African Mud Cloth Painting)
Grade Level: 5

Bògòlanfini is a painted textile art which originated among the Bamana regions in Mali, West Africa. In the process of bogolan, plain white cotton cloth is woven by men, and the thin strips are sewn together to make shirts and robes. Black, grey, red, and white are the main colors featured in this art, though black is by far the most common. Women create a mixture of fermented mud and organic material that permanently dyes the cloth. In traditional practice, the women paint the backgrounds onto the cloth, leaving the design to be the unpainted areas. This textile art has become a symbol of national identity in Mali, even reaching mainstream fashion after influencing Parisian designers.

Goals	Virginia Standards of Learning	
TSW integrate a variety of Malian bogolan symbols into their mud cloth paintings.	5.9	The student will demonstrate an understanding of symbolic meanings by incorporating symbols in a work of art.
TSW create a mud cloth painting that reflects the style of traditional Malian bògòlanfini.	5.16	The student will produce fiber art that reflects the qualities of the fiber art of another age, culture, or country.
TSW evaluate the changes that have occurred over time between the uses of traditional bògòlanfini and its uses today.	5.18	The student will compare contemporary and historical art and architecture.
TSW discuss the meaning behind the Malian symbols they chose to incorporate into their paintings.	5.31	The student will articulate reasons for establishing preferences among works of art, using appropriate art vocabulary.

Supplies and Materials:

- Canvas
- Clay slip or mud
- Fabric dye in dark colors
- Gloves
- Paintbrushes
- Buckets
- Examples of Malian bogolan symbols
- Bògòlanfini PowerPoint

TEACHER AND STUDENT PROCEDURE

TIME	TEACHER PROCEDURE	STUDENT PROCEDURE
MIN 15	The teacher will introduce the culture of Mali and the tradition of bògòlanfini with a PowerPoint presentation displaying examples of mud cloths. The teacher will discuss the textile's role in Mali's culture and its increasing popularity in today's society and fashion world.	The students will learn about the art of bògòlanfini and participate in discussion. The students will sketch out the preliminary design of the symbols which they will paint on their cloths.
MIN 10	The teacher will explain that the students will be creating their own bogolan cloths that display traditional Malian symbols. The teacher will show the students an example he or she has made of bògòlanfini. The teacher will then pass around a sheet of paper with a variety of Malian symbols used in traditional bògòlanfini. The teacher will tell the students that they may use these symbols or create their own symbols to represent something about themselves. The teacher will also pass out pre-cut 1'x2" pieces of canvas and other necessary supplies to each student.	The students will sketch several designs for their cloth, then transfer their final design to their canvas and begin painting.
Remainder of class	The teacher will walk around the room and provide assistance to any student in need while they work.	
Next class period	The teacher will facilitate a critique with the class about the meaning behind their bogolans and what choices the students made during the creation process.	Students will discuss the reasons why they selected certain symbols and what meaning they give to their cloths.

References:

"African Textiles." Indianapolis Museum of Art, 2012. Web.

www.imamuseum.org/.../African%20Textiles%20Resource%20Guide

"Discovering Mudcloth." *Discovering Mudcloth*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Sept. 2012.

<http://www.mnh.si.edu/africanvoices/mudcloth/index_flash.html>.

"Malian Bogolan." *Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage* -. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Sept. 2012.

<http://www.folklife.si.edu/education_exhibits/malian_bogolan/index.aspx>.

Rovine, Victoria L. *Bogolan: Shaping Culture through Cloth in Contemporary Mali*. Bloomington: Indiana

University Press, 2008.

