

Join Us for a Fabulous Fall Course!

Anthropology of Art

ANTH 329 CRN# 45888

Instructor: Rebecca Robertson

(email: rer3@humboldt.edu)

MWF 11:00 – 11:50

4 units

Hybrid Course

This hybrid course will meet face-to-face 75% and then engage in asynchronous online activities during the remaining 25% of the time.



Creative expression is one of the hallmarks of the human species– it is even said that art makes us human. This course will begin by asking - what is art? and when does it begin? In attempts to answer these questions we'll view artistic origins within the framework of human evolution; analyzing drawings by chimpanzees and gorillas, incised markings by early hominids, and Upper Paleolithic cave paintings. Next, we will investigate how archaeologists and art historians "read" signs, symbols, and representations of ancient art in the absence of written records. Finally, we will turn our attention to living traditions and explore how art is produced and perceived by a variety of cultures including the Xhosa, San, Yurok, Zulu, and others. How does art express their religion and cosmology? Social and economic structure? Relationship with the natural environment? What is the role of art and artists within society?