



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

Guide to Franz Boas drawings of
Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl) designs, circa 1895

National Anthropological Archives
Museum Support Center
4210 Silver Hill Road
Suitland, Maryland 20746
Business Number: Phone: 301.238.1300
Fax Number: Fax: 301.238.2883
naa@si.edu
<http://www.anthropology.si.edu/naa/>

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	
Administrative Information	1
Biographical Note	1
Scope and Contents	2
Names and Subjects	
Container Listing	

Collection Overview

Repository:	National Anthropological Archives
Title:	Franz Boas drawings of Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl) designs
Date:	circa 1895
Identifier:	NAA.MS87824
Creator:	Boas, Franz, 1858-1942
Extent:	3 Drawings (visual works) (graphite and crayon)
Language:	No linguistic content; Not applicable .
Container:	Box 87819 / 87824, Folder 2; Box 87819 / 87824, Folder 2

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The drawings were found in the USNM collection; no catalog or accession numbers have been identified. The drawing was transferred from the object collections of the Department of Anthropology to the National Anthropological Archives in 1969.

Preferred Citation

Franz Boas drawings of Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl) designs (MS 87824), National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

The collection is open for research.
Access to the collection requires an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

Biographical Note

Franz Boas (1858-1942) was a German-American anthropologist and pioneer of modern anthropological practice. He studied physics and geography at the universities at Heidelberg and Bonn before completing a doctoral program in physical geography at Kiel in 1881. After graduation, he joined an expedition of Baffin Island (1883-1884), which influenced his decision to him to focus on cultural tradition rather than biological and physical influences. In 1885, Boas emigrated to the United States, where he took an editorial position with the journal *Science* and started what would become his most famous ethnographic project, working among the Kwakiutl (Kwakwaka'wakw) Indians, in 1886. Boas spent three years teaching at Clark University in Massachusetts, then took an appointment at the Field Museum in Chicago in 1892. Boas then moved to New York, where he joined the American Museum of Natural

History (1895-1905) and began teaching at Columbia University in 1896. For 37 years, Boas established himself as an academic and mentored numerous future influential anthropologists, including Margaret Mead, Alfred Kroeber, Edward Sapir, and Zora Neale Hurston. He also served as one of the founders of both the American Anthropological Association and the International Journal of American Linguistics.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of three (3) drawings of Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl) designs made by Franz Boas for publication in his article "The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians." "Dr. Franz Boas" is stamped on the back of one page.

Please note that the contents of the collection and the language and terminology used reflect the context and culture of the time of its creation. As an historical document, its contents may be at odds with contemporary views and terminology and considered offensive today. The information within this collection does not reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution or National Anthropological Archives, but is available in its original form to facilitate research.

Publication Note

The drawings were reproduced in:

Boas, Franz. "The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution 1895*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1897. Figure 12 and Plate 40.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl)

Cultures:

Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl)

Types of Materials:

Drawings
Works of art

Places:

North America

Container Listing

The sī'siul

1 Drawings (visual works) (10 x 6.5 inches)

Image(s): ["Se-\(S\)A-Yukl"/One Side of Drum Carved in Si-Siul \(Double-Headed Snake Which Protects Warriors\) Motif \(Redrawn by Franz Boas From Painting by Kwakiutl Artist\) Drawing](#)

Notes: NAA INV 08533600

Depicts a design from one side of a drum carved in a sī'siul (double-headed snake) motif. Drawing is labeled: "Redrawn / one side of drum-- / Fig. 13 Se sa yukl." The caption on the published version of the design states that is "From a painting by a Kwakiutl Indian."

Initiation Into Tlokosla

1 Drawings (visual works) (4.75 x 6.25 inches)

Image(s): ["Initiation Into Tlokosla" Drawing](#)

Image(s): ["Initiation Into Tlokosla" Drawing](#)

Notes: NAA INV 08533701

Drawings from sides of a bedroom are identified as specimens belonging to the Royal Ethnological Museum in Berlin, collected by A. Jacobsen. Presumably then the drawings were copied by Boas from original artifacts (in Germany or elsewhere) for use as illustrations.

Hawina-Witl

1 Item (4 x 5 inches)

Image(s): ["Hawina-Witl" Drawing](#)

Notes: NAA INV 08533702

Drawings from sides of a bedroom are identified as specimens belonging to the Royal Ethnological Museum in Berlin, collected by A. Jacobsen. Presumably then the drawings were copied by Boas from original artifacts (in Germany or elsewhere) for use as illustrations.