



KALINAWA ART FOUNDATION

Question: How do you define art?

Answer: We don't. It is the position of the *Foundation* that this is an inherent right of the artists and the communities from which they emerge. What we provide is an opportunity for the modest commercialization of their art by building a larger audience. As with any creative activity, there are a wide variety of discussions and debates as to what is to be included and what is not. The perspectives offered below may have a certain amount of applicability in the consideration of the evolution of the Indigenous Peoples' visual art industry here in the Philippines, and are intended to encourage discussion and debate.

- "The diversity of approaches of Aboriginal arts practice from traditional to contemporary forms covers a wide variety of subjects and concerns. ... One approach may be characterized as Aboriginal arts practice that contemporizes traditional aboriginal composition and theme to meet the restrictive expectations of contemporary market-driven genre. Conversely, a custodial approach to traditional forms of Aboriginal arts practice, which asserts a pre contact historical regimen of standards, theme and concern, may be described as freeze-framing an arts practice from a cultural reality which no longer exists. Another approach is distinguished by an obvious hybridity of contemporary discipline and genre fused with authentic traditional Aboriginal art forms explicitly configured as medium of resistance." (Jeannette C. Armstrong, En'owkin Centre, "[Aboriginal Arts in Canada: Points for Discussion](#)".)
- "Indigenous languages in Australia do not have a directly translatable term for the word 'art', although art is an integral part of life and community activity. Art has become part of the land claim process, often used to demonstrate ceremonial links to the land. In urban communities, art expresses Indigenous identity and addresses many socio-political issues." (Doreen Mellor and Terri Janke, "[Valuing Art, Respecting Culture: Protocols for Working with the Australian Indigenous Visual Arts and Craft Sector](#)"

- ""Toi Maori" is now used to cover the wide range of creative activities that Maori artists engage in. Toi Maori refers to all the traditional arts such as whakairo (wood carving); kowhaiwhai (rafter patterns); raranga (weaving); tukutuku (lattice work); ta moko (tattooing); waiata (songs and chants); haka (dance); taonga puoro (traditional musical instruments); karanga (traditional call of welcome); whaikorero (oratory); and mau rakau (the art of weaponry). Toi Maori also refers to all the artforms that contemporary Maori artists are exploring." ([Hirini Moko Mead, "Nga Toi Maori: Maori art in Aotearoa New Zealand"](#))
- "Art is the creative process and production applied to culture. Artform is used to apply to a particular media used in artistic _expression - painting, pottery textiles, dance, etc. It should be noted that Indigenous artists often do not separate artistic activity into categories. However, marketing of cultural products and providing support for production recognizes that art forms have different characteristics and needs." ([National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Industry Strategy](#))

However, the *Foundation* is mindful of a distinction between an object that might be considered to be a craft, and one which would be considered as art. As an example, a basket that is produced by hand for normal use, regardless of the skill and technique involved, would be considered a craft. On the other hand, that same basket, composed with different colors, materials or designs is more likely to be considered art. One element that could be considered for distinguishing between the two is the amount of imagination, vision and expression that goes into the creation and production of art. See [Judges Criteria](#)