How can the exploration of images from the Addison complemented by materials from public and private sources contribute to the study of world history and the understanding of our place in the world?

Explorations of ideas that occur across cultures, nations, and time can enhance our understanding of the world and our place in it. This Portfolio Guide features a sampling of historic and contemporary photographs, paintings, ship models, prints, sculpture, and drawings from the Addison’s collection that contextualize world events and global themes both past and present. Educators are encouraged to use this Guide and the expanded Portfolio Image List as a starting point, a place from which to dig deeper, ask questions, and make new connections for class plans and projects.

For online use, click the images in this guide to access digital images in the Addison’s online database.

Images highlighted in grey are ideas for materials from outside the Addison’s collection of American art that can enhance the potential for both personal and global connections.

For more information about resources from the Sidney R. Knafel Map Collection, contact Geographer-at-Large Nile Blunt at nblunt@andover.edu.
For more information about resources from the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology, contact Curator of Education Lindsay Randall at lrandall@andover.edu.

SELECTED THEMATIC APPROACHES

Exploration, Migration, and Travel – How do images, objects, and maps illuminate the intentions and effects of expansion, exploration, colonization, migration, and travel?

Cultural Interactions – What do images reveal about the biases and impact of cultural contact?

Architecture as Storyteller – What stories and values do buildings and monuments convey about intersecting cultures and histories?
Exploration, Migration, and Travel: Movement

Using ship models, what can we learn about the connections between ship design and purpose, and the evolution of marine technology?

What types of histories could be written using these ship models as sources?

Just as reading the symbolic details of pose, setting, and 18th century costume in a portrait can support the composition of a character narrative, representations of the mechanisms for the movement of peoples and groups can speak to cultural, religious, and political impulses behind travel.

The intricate details of the quarter-inch scale ship models in the Addison's collection indicate intention behind ship construction, design, and ornamentation. Ferdinand and Isabella's sanctioning of Columbus's expedition aboard the Santa Maria is reflected not only in the flags flown but by the letters "F" and "I" painted on the back of the ship. The Mayflower, although fleeing England, still flies the flag of Great Britain for protection from pirates and privateers. The more narrow construction of the Half Moon perhaps indicates its intention to navigate rivers in exploration, as opposed to crossing oceans.
Exploration, Migration, and Travel: Mapping

What are the visual languages used in mapping?

How do maps simultaneously convey information about land and societal values and identities?

The 1375 Catalan Atlas describes a cultural view of the world gained through travel, as prevailing winds for navigation and existing narratives of exploration are illustrated with images of contact with rulers and native peoples. A 1493 map from the collection of the Sidney R. Knafel Map Collection presents its own understanding of the world, with known geography surrounded by figures representing the theology-centered medieval perspective, a decorative motif of the twelve wind-heads, and a sidebar of grotesque creatures based on mythologies and traveller accounts of unexplored lands.

Just as the visual language of these representations of land speak to the values and identities of earlier societies, the print Andover Mass. from the North-West portrays a 19th century view of a town defined by its educational institutions, as identified in the bottom rectangular vignettes. Similarly, the 1855 print View of the City of Lawrence, Mass. depicts the growing industrialized city from a bucolic hilltop, described by a list of its churches and its mills and companies with their capital, employed hands, and amount of annual production.
What happens when cultural groups come into contact?

What can images tell us about the impact of preconceptions and expectations of cultural interaction?

Countless images have been created over time narrating the voyage of Christopher Columbus from many perspectives and with many differing intentions, but few explore his interaction with native peoples. Created in the nineteenth century as a lithographic print which made mass distribution possible, the image of Christopher Columbus and his crew showing objects to Native American men and women establishes a clear hierarchy between the European explorer and the peoples he encountered.

From 1890 to 1891, American painter John La Farge traveled the islands of the South Pacific, documenting cultures through a pointedly Euro-American lens. His portrait of Maua is editorialized by observational notes painted directly onto the canvas. In contrast, contemporary artist and educator Wendy Ewald worked closely and collaboratively with her subject from Saudi Arabia to create a portrait incorporating the subjects’ own marks and words directly onto the image.
Cultural Interactions: Cultural Exchange

What can objects and images tell us about the ways in which one culture influences or changes another?

How do images speak to the evolution of communities as diverse groups come into contact?

Early 17th-century Onondaga copper projectile points, from the collection of the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology, demonstrate a traditional form created from a new material introduced to native peoples by European interactions. Evidence of the impact of cultural contact on goods can also be explored through the work of photographer William Henry Jackson, who, as part of US Government-sponsored surveys of the American west during the 1870’s, expanded his photographic documentation of Native Americans with biographies, comments, and details about the subjects’ physical stature. While surviving records narrate the lineage of True Eagle, the costuming in Jackson’s photograph of Ascension Rios indicates assimilation without context of biography and description.

Narratives of cultural contact can also be explored through documentation of communities, including photographer Berenice Abbott’s extended study of New York in the 1930s in which storefronts represent the influences of immigration and cultural exchange on the city’s evolving identity and landscape.
Architecture as Storyteller: Sacred Spaces

What are the characteristics of a sacred space and how do these characteristics shift as we look through the lenses of various cultures and time periods?

How do the ways in which sacred spaces are documented reflect religious and cultural values and beliefs?

Artist representations of sacred spaces speak to both the environmental and cultural landscape in which they are constructed and utilized. The New England colonial architecture depicted in Childe Hassam’s lithograph nestles neatly into a wide tree-lined path, while Ansel Adams photographs a Mormon temple in Manti, Utah in high contrast, soaring above closed gates that limit access. Printmaker John Taylor Arms captures in his etching the rich detail of the ornamental surfaces of Chartres Cathedral, while Walker Evans’ frontal approach to a church in the Southeastern United States emphasizes its stark geometry and modest, efficient design.

Modern architecture often echoes the symbolism of sacred spaces, as the influence of classical Grecian temple architecture is echoed in both the columns of the Addison Gallery’s façade and the Greek Revival style of Samuel Phillips Hall on the Phillips Academy campus.
Architecture as Storyteller: The Spread of Ideas

What stories do images of buildings and monuments tell about the interaction of cultures?

What can we learn by comparing architecture from different places and times?

Historically, information and knowledge were dispersed among societies through conquest, trade, and migration; as such, architecture unique to particular cultures was assimilated into other cultures. The architectural influence of the Hagia Sophia was widespread and enduring in the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Muslim worlds alike, as it was built in the fourth century in Constantinople as a Christian basilica and was later used as a mosque and became an inspiration for further eastern Islamic architecture. This influence continued in cathedrals in Europe in the Early Middle Ages, which were built using mathematical and architectural knowledge gained from the Muslim world.

In Egypt, the pyramids served as monuments to house the tombs of the pharaohs. Pointing skyward, the shape of the structure may have symbolized the rays of the sun as ancient texts claimed that pharaohs reached the heavens via sunbeams. Today, cathedrals, mosques, temples, and other religious structures around the world utilize design characteristics of steeples, spires, and other structures that point skywards.
SUGGESTED CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

History/Social Studies
- travel, commerce, and the spread of ideas
- exploration
- colonialism and expansion
- the spread of Islam
- cultural relations
- race relations
- the immigrant experience
- primary source documents
- mosques, cathedrals, and religious architecture
- the influence and symbolism of architecture

English
- the immigrant experience
- travel and exploration
- gender studies
- cultural relations
- *Pillars of the Earth*
- *Things Fall Apart*
- *The Kite Runner*
- *A Room of One's Own*

Art
- architecture
- portraiture
- self-portraiture
- symbolism
- landscape
- representation
- narrative
- social documentation

Science
- technology and transportation
- the physics of architecture and engineering
- social conditioning
- race and biology

CONNECTIONS TO ADDITIONAL THEMATIC PORTFOLIOS

Representing the Land
Industrialization
Identity Construction
The Immigrant Experience
Portraits/Self-Portraits
Documentation and Art
Race and Otherness

TEACHER AND STUDENT RESOURCES


The Sidney R. Knafel Map Collection at Phillips Academy, MA.
http://maps.bpl.org/explore/subject/knafel-sidney-r-map-collection-phillips-academy-andover-ma

Selections from the Sidney R. Knafel Map Collection’s atlases, maps and globes dating from 1434 into the 19th century have been digitized by the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library.