



GLENCAIRN

MUSEUM

***DIGITAL
SUMMER
CAMP***

Week 3

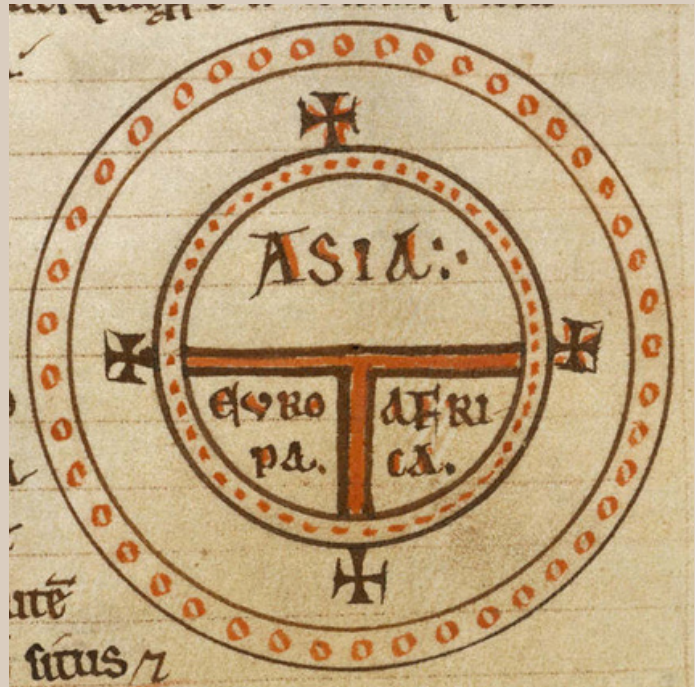
MEDIEVAL CULTURES

This week, we're exploring the Middle Ages! The Middle Ages, or medieval era, gets its names from historians (people who study history) who wanted to name the time in European history between the ancient world and the Renaissance. Although it first described just European history, the word "medieval" can describe the time period of about 500 CE - 1500 CE across the whole world. In many places, this was a time when religion was the leading force behind art, architecture, and culture.

There is lots of medieval art in the Glencairn collection. Raymond Pitcairn was very interested in medieval Christian sculpture and stained glass. He also collected Buddhist sculpture, and Islamic tiles and prayer rugs. All of these medieval objects tell us something about how people understood and practiced their faith.

Religious art is often full of symbols and deeper meaning.

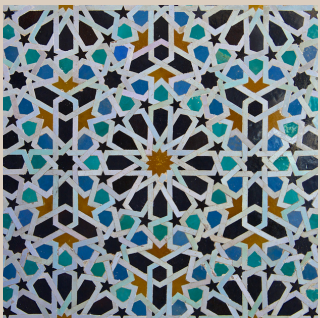
Symbols are designs or images that have a special meaning. Let's look at some objects that show how different faiths like Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism used symbols to communicate their beliefs during medieval times!



This is called a "T and O Map". It was first made in medieval Spain. It was made from the point of view of Spanish Christian men and breaks up the world into the three continents they knew of at the time. Maps help remind us of how people understood themselves and others on earth throughout history!

Islamic Tiles

In Islamic buildings, tiles often decorate the walls. Part of the Islamic faith includes a belief against idolatry (eye-dole-a-tree), which is the worship of images. Because of this Islamic art for religious spaces, like mosques, doesn't often include animals and people. Usually plant-like designs decorate the walls of mosques on tiles. These designs are inspired by **nature** and **geometry** to reflect the beauty and serenity of Allah (God). Words are also used to decorate the space. Parts of the Qur'an, the holy text of Islam, are written in Arabic calligraphy - or handwriting. The Islamic faith spread throughout the Middle East, North Africa, Asia, and even parts of Europe during the Middle Ages. As it spread, so did its art and architecture!



Click the image to the left to learn more about different places that are famously known for their tilework!



Click the video button to learn about how these intricate designs are created!



The inside of mosques can be covered in geometric tiles, decorated with plant-like designs and Arabic calligraphy!

Christian Stained-Glass Windows

During the Middle Ages, Christian art developed in many new ways. The art of stained-glass windows started during this time. Stained-glass windows not only change the color of the sunlight they let in, but also tell important Christian stories!

Medieval stained-glass windows tell stories about holy figures in Christianity like Jesus, Mary, and the saints. A medieval Christian person would look at these windows and understand the stories they told or the people in them because of **iconography** (eye-con-og-raf-ee). Iconography means "written image". A medieval person would look for symbols that helped them to "read" the images in the windows!

This is a window at Glencairn of David, a Biblical King. He was known for writing the Psalms (songs in the Bible). He is often shown holding a lyre or harp. The instrument and his crown are part of his iconography. - this is how a medieval person would recognize him!

Here is David carved into a medieval choir bench for monks. Do you see his harp and his crown? Iconography was in all forms of Christian art - not just stained-glass.



This window of Jesus Christ shows Him surrounded by four different creatures. The creatures represent or symbolize four important followers of Jesus - Matthew (man), Mark, (lion) Luke (bull), and John (eagle). This is a great example of iconography! Also, do you notice the T and O map in Jesus' hand?



Buddhist Stelas

This object is a votive stela, a kind of religious statue that was paid for and ordered by a faithful Buddhist person or family. It could be displayed in someone's home, or out in a public space, or in the courtyard of a temple. If you remember from last week, a votive is something that it was given as an offering. By having one of these statues made, a Buddhist person believed that they would earn good credit and spiritual blessings as they worked towards enlightenment - a kind of spiritual state where you no longer experience the suffering of living in the world. This stela is full of symbols and holy figures!



On the left and right sides are more carvings. At the top of each side are monks and below them are Buddhas. Below the Buddhas are figures and inscriptions (carved letters) showing family members of the person who paid for this stela named Yin Tianxing.

Seated in the center is **the Buddha**, the man whose teachings are at the center of Buddhism. Next to the Buddha are two standing **Bodhisattvas** (bo-dee-sut-vah). A Bodhisattva is an enlightened being who has delayed entering paradise to help others to reach enlightenment. The **lotus flower** is a common Buddhist symbol of cleanliness and purity. The two **guardian lions** are guardians and protectors of the Buddhist world.

Now that we've explored a little about the beautiful ways in which these faiths expressed their beliefs during the Middle Ages, pick an activity to add another object to your museum model from Week 1!

If you would like to do more than one, or even all three activities, go for it!

Create your own . . . Stained Glass Window



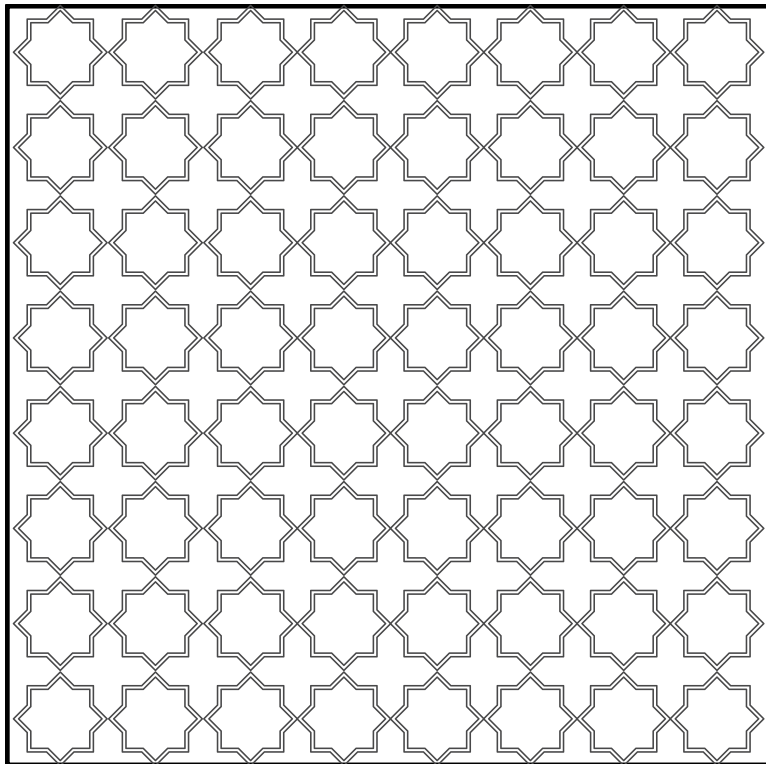
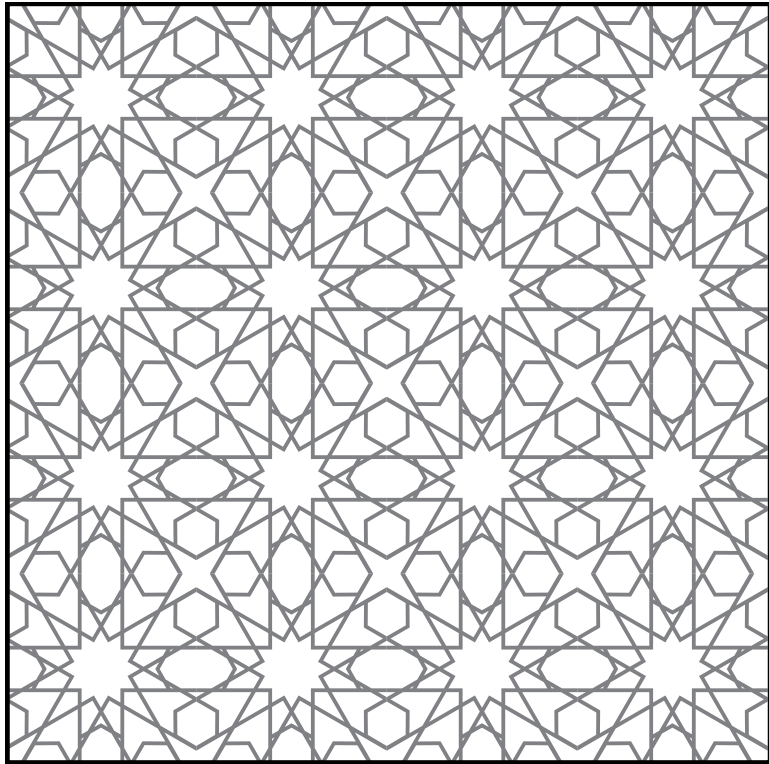
Click to watch this video on how to make your own stained glass window! Be sure to make it small enough to fit in your museum model! Remember to cut a hole in the wall of your model for the window to be placed. If you're drawing someone, think about iconography - what about them makes them easy to remember, like David and his lyre!

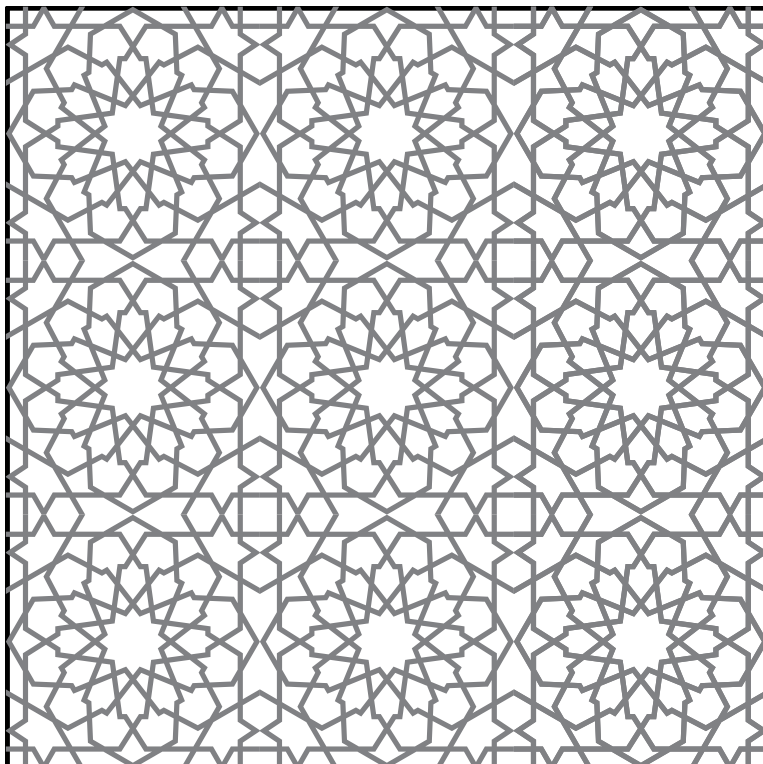
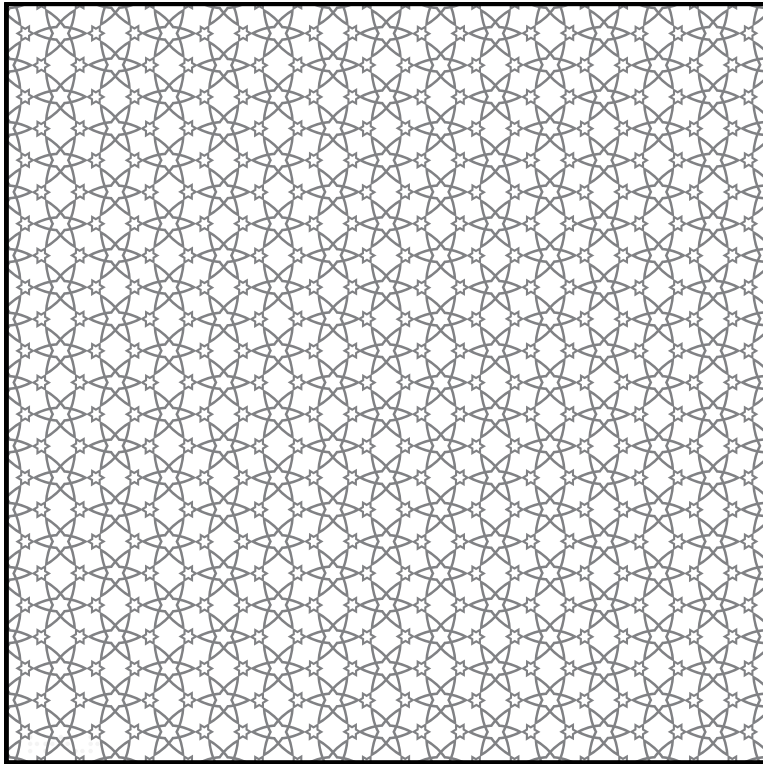
Tiles

Choose from different patterns on the pages below that you can print out, color, and then cut your design to be placed in your museum! If you don't have a printer, try to create a simple pattern of your own. If you're up for a challenge, try to create the patterns in this [video](#) - you might need a compass and a ruler!

Stela

Scroll past the tile patterns below to see a step-by-step on how to create your own votive stela!





Steps to create a mini votive stela

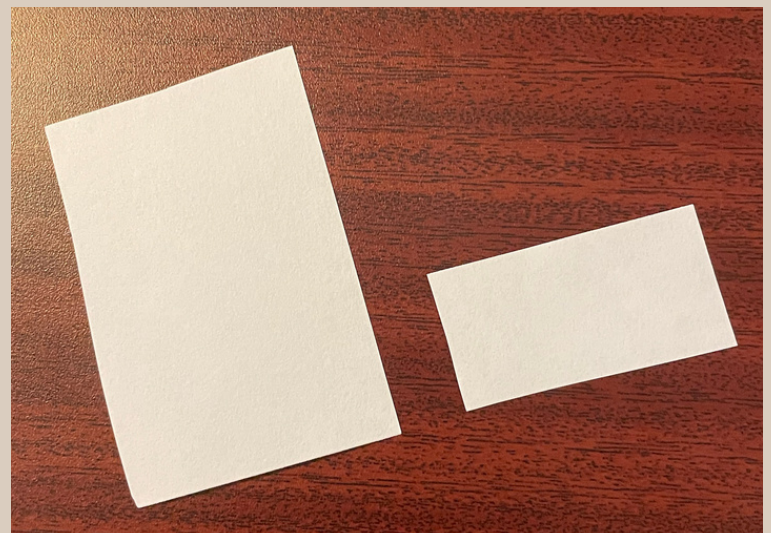
1. Find a small box, about the size of a box of soap. You will also need a blank piece of paper, scissors, glue, and a pen or pencil. If you only have larger pieces cardboard, you can try to form a box by cutting it and gluing the cardboard together. Always ask an adult for help if using sharp objects or a hot glue gun.



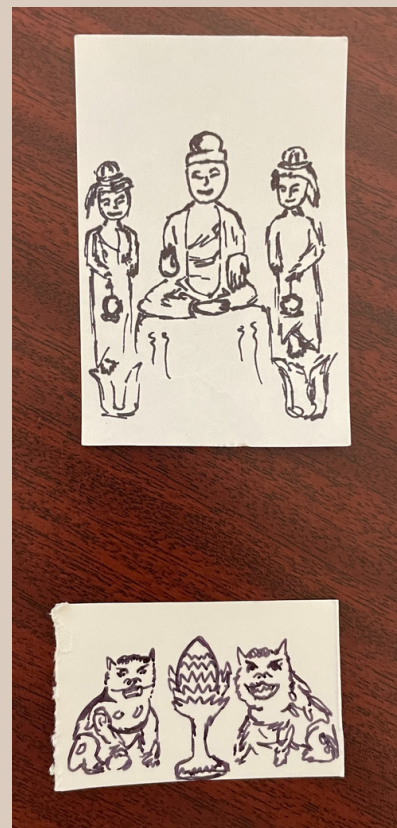
2. Using scissors, cut your box so that it has four short walls.



3. Next, cut a piece of paper so that it is small enough to fit into the bottom of the box. Cut another, smaller piece that is about 1/3 the length of the first piece.



4. On the larger piece, draw the Buddha and the two Bodhisattvas. On the smaller piece, draw the fu lions and the lotus flower.



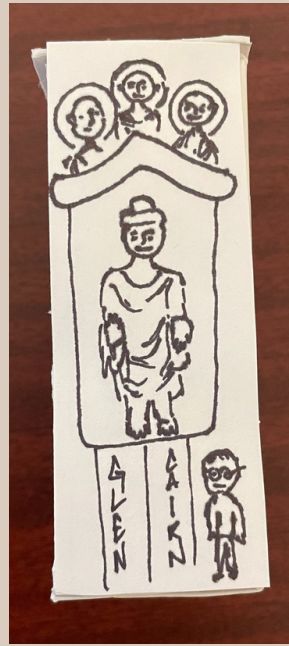
5. Cut away the extra paper above the guardian lions and lotus flower.



6. Glue the larger piece of paper with the Buddha into your box. Then place the piece with the guardian lions and lotus flower in front of it. Stand it up, and you have your Buddhist stela!



7. (OPTIONAL) If you would like to add yourself to the stela, cut another piece of paper to cover the out side of the box. You can draw the Buddha, the monks, and yourself with an inscription of your name! Be sure to glue it to the side of your stela.



8. Lastly, place your stela in your museum model!



Remember take a picture of your latest addition to your museum and send it to info@glencairnmuseum.org or tag us on Facebook or Instagram @glencairnmuseum.