

SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL

FOLK-ART

CRITERIA

DEFINITION

Folk-art is traditional painting of designs on wooden pieces, metal (antiques such as cream cans, kettles, etc.) or on furniture.

TYPES

Rosemaling – Norwegian Folk-Art

Scrolls, swirls, borders and linework.

Bauernmalerei – Bavarian and Austrian Folk-Art

Primitive tulips, roses, daisies, etc.

Russian & Ukrainian Folk-Art

Poppies, wheat, berries, leaves, birds, etc.

American

Primitive, one dimensional scenes – people, animals, fruits, etc.

Country

Cows, pigs, teddy bears, etc.

TECHNIQUES

Strokework

There are many brush-stroking, painting and loading techniques used in folk-art painting.

Comma Strokes (C-stroke)

This is a basic stroke used in most types of Folk-art. The stroke can curve right, left or straight and should have a smooth look slowly diminishing into a sharp tail. (Flowers, leaves, etc.)

S-Stroke – (thin-thick-thin)

Pressure variation and brush-loading are very important. (Leaves, borders, etc.)

Swirl Strokes

This is similar to a C-stroke and is used mainly in Rosemaling. The pressure flow of paint and an overall smooth flowing look is important along with sharp, definitive tails. In Rosemaling there is shading and blending of colour going from light to medium to dark within the swirl or scroll.

Floating

Floating is using a wash to shade, or the gradation of colour, diminishing slowly. This technique is used commonly in American and Country folk-art.

Linework

Thin flowing, curving or straight, fine lines used on borders, stems, vines & outlining swirl strokes. A thin consistency of paint is necessary to achieve the desired effect with a free-flowing motion of arm & brush.

Double-Loading

A technique of loading two colours of paint one right after the other, onto the brush. When it is laid down into a C-stroke there is a blending of the two colours.

STANDARDS

The paint and design should suit the overall shape and size of the object being painted whether it is wood, metal or furniture.

Surface Preparation

If wood is being used it must be filled, sealed, sanded, primed and base-coating should be done in a complementary colour. Other methods can also be used in base-coating the piece and these choices are important to the overall theme. Some other choices are staining, pickling, sponging, ragging, speckling and using kleistering mediums.

Choice of Colour

a) Rosemaling

The palette used for rosemaling is very structured and traditional. Usually only combinations of yellow ochre, burnt sienna, black and white are used. Most often oil paints are used to give the characteristic richness in hues.

b) Bauernmalerei

In this Bavarian folk-art the hues are usually mixtures of the primary colours – red, yellow and blue. However, the basic undertone is a dusty look achieved either by the choice of paint colour or by antiquing over the top of the paint with a patina.

c) American and Country Folk-Art

The colours usually have an antique look.

d) Russian and Ukrainian Folk-Art

The colours are traditionally very bright and true along with black and white. The varnish used is often high gloss and has a laquered look.

Sealing

The piece should be sealed with varnish after it has been painted. A matte finish should be used except for Russian and Ukrainian Folk-art. Antiquing with a patina enhances the look of Bauernmalerei, American and Country Folk-art. The finished piece should have a unity and a harmony or colours that contribute to a unique character.