

Week 2: Art & Community

The episodes of Craft in America and Art21 you watched this week examined the role of art & culture within communities. Sometimes artists are working in a community with others. Sometimes they are doing work in response to their community. Ground your response to the questions which follow by considering the example(s) that resonate with you the most from this week:

- 1. As you consider the ways in which these artists utilized collaboration: (a) Where did you see collaborations taking place? Who was collaborating with whom? Is collaboration necessary for these artists to create their work? (b) How do these collaborations go beyond the work of an individual artist to impact a larger community?**

Collaboration happened everywhere within these videos. On a community level, artists would perform in front of a wide range of people from everywhere. On a more individual level, women offered workshops and worked alongside each other. One interesting thing one lady said was, "My work wouldn't be a quarter as good if I wasn't surrounded by what other people were doing....stay on my creative edge". I thought this was really beautiful. She is sharing that working alongside other women is necessary for her creativity. My idea of what collaboration used to be was two people getting together and sharing ideas. But the reality of collaboration is so much bigger and deeper. The largest quilt was also a beautiful piece and the footage really inspired me. It was a joint effort from people of all skill levels. The art was not exclusive. Another place I saw collaboration was between a lady and her ancestors; she felt like creating art that honored them would continue their legacy, pass down tradition, and protect cultures that aren't as dominant in society.

- 2. As you consider the ways in which artists are impacted by their community, in your opinion, what was the (a) most important, (b) most interesting and (c) most challenging example from the course material this week?**

I partially touched on some of this already, but the most important to me was the women learning from each other. Teaching forgotten skills such as looming and weaving. The most interesting point was the idea of beauty as nourishment that one man mentioned. He stated that beauty is an element that is an aspect of nourishment, and I can't wait to consider that more in my own life and decide if I am fulfilling my personal needs. The most challenging for me was seeing the art and creativity in some arts. I am not a very artistic person, and I found myself "measuring" the artwork from the videos, such as the first guy in the second video who wore sticks. I found myself laughing but I had to stop and toward the end of the video, I could appreciate it more.

- 3. What grabbed your attention this week that you want to learn more about? Why?**

I would love to learn more about examples of women coming together and learning and teaching each other, such as the woman who set up the workshops for women to teach them loomig.