

VIKING ART

Learning Objective:

To explore Viking art and identify its key characteristics and features.

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This is a picture stone. Picture stones were often used as memorials, although not often next to graves.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT VIKING ART FROM THIS?

WHAT COLOURS, PATTERNS, IMAGES AND STYLES CAN YOU SEE?

BACK

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This is a brooch. Brooches were used by Vikings to hold clothing, such as capes, closed as they didn't have zips.

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WHAT COLOURS, PATTERNS, IMAGES AND STYLES CAN YOU SEE?



BACK

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Here are some examples of Viking jewellery.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT VIKING ART FROM THIS?

WHAT COLOURS, PATTERNS, IMAGES AND STYLES CAN YOU SEE?



By: Nationalmuseet - The National Museum of Denmark from Denmark - Viking gold jewellery - Hidden treasure - VIKING exhibition at the National Museum of Denmark - Photo: The National Museum of Denmark - Photo: Peter Skov, CC BY-SA 4.0, 2019

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This decorated plaque is made from whale bone. These kinds of plaques were often found in female graves. No one is quite sure what they were used for.

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SEE?**

BACK

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NEXT

This decorated wood panel is on a surviving church in Norway.

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**WHAT COLOURS, PATTERNS,
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BACK

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NEXT





This illustration shows the pattern that was engraved into an iron Viking axe head.

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WHAT COLOURS, PATTERNS,
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BACK

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NEXT

This is the handle of a
Viking sword.

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ABOUT VIKING ART
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BACK

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This Viking ring is made from gold and silver.

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WHAT COLOURS, PATTERNS, IMAGES AND STYLES CAN YOU SEE?

BACK

NEXT

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This is part of the famous Oseberg ship which was excavated in 1904. It is one of the best preserved Viking ships that has been discovered. It was built around 820 and is the tenth oldest surviving ship in the world.

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WHAT COLOURS, PATTERNS, IMAGES AND STYLES CAN YOU SEE?

BACK

NEXT

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This is a reconstruction of the serpent head from the Oseberg Viking ship.

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WHAT COLOURS, PATTERNS, IMAGES AND STYLES CAN YOU SEE?



BACK

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NEXT

Just like with any culture or civilisation, Viking art changed and evolved over time. Historians now recognise six distinct art styles from the Viking era:

THE OSEBERG STYLE



This style takes its name from the discovered ship. The main **motif*** of the Oseberg style (which lasted most of the 9th century) is a 'gripping beast' motif. Beasts are seen gripping borders, other creatures or their own bodies.

THE BORRE STYLE



The Borre style continued with the 'gripping beast' motif but animals now had a triangular head, a cat-like face with round eyes and protruding ears. Geometric knots and patterns were also features of this style.

*A motif is a decorative image or design, often used in a repeating pattern.

BACK

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THE JELLING STYLE



The Jelling style often overlapped with the Borre style. It was used for about 75 years from the beginning of the 10th century. Animals are S-shaped and intertwined. Their heads are usually seen in profile as opposed to front-on.

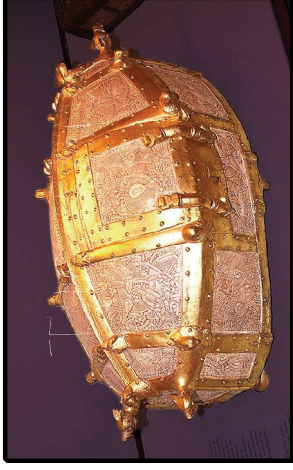


BACK

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THE MAMMEM STYLE

The Mammem style was popular in the first half of the tenth century and gets its name from an axe that was found at Mammen in Denmark. This style used animals such as lions, snakes and birds in its designs, as well as plants and leaves.



This is a replica of a chest that was found at the Mammen excavation site.

NEXT

THE RINGERIKE STYLE

The Ringerike style gets its name from Ringerike in Norway where red sandstone was used to carve patterns. Animals in the Ringerike style were often very long and thin. Runes (Viking writing) were becoming more popular and were used a lot in this style of art.



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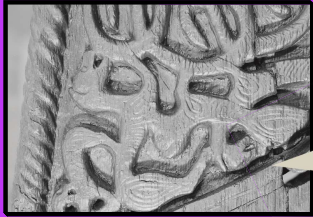
THE URNES STYLE

The Urnes style was the latest style of Viking art which lasted from the mid-11th to mid-12th centuries. The main features of this style are animals that are interwoven into tight patterns. They have long, almond-shaped eyes and their faces are in profile.



NEXT

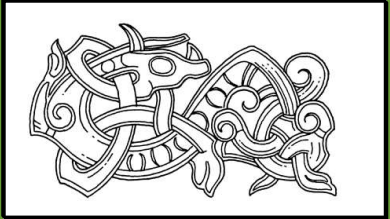
THE
OSEBERG
STYLE



THE
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MAMMEM
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URNES
STYLE



WHICH OF THESE STYLES OF ART DO YOU LIKE
BEST? WHY?

BACK

NEXT