



# The Language of Ornament (World of Art)

*By James Trilling*

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## The Language of Ornament (World of Art) By James Trilling

An introduction to the art of decorative patterning, of equal value to craftworkers, collectors and students of art history. Trilling analyzes the historical importance of ornament across the world, whether in the monumental architecture of Mycenaean Greece or the inlaid vessels of Zhou Dynasty China, in the bronze mirrors of early Celtic Britain, or the carved and woven ornament of Native Americans. An impressive variety of ornament from the paleolithic age to the present day enables the reader to appreciate both its inherent form and beauty. Individual styles and patterns are traced through their evolution and interaction between cultures through trade, conquest and religious influences.

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

Although the ornamental has, in mainstream art-history circles, become "acceptable again" after long-running modernist attacks, its "rehabilitation is far from complete," laments James Trilling (*Ornament*), former curator at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C. *The Language of Ornament*, a visual and historical study with 246 illustrations (68 in color), begins in the Paleolithic era (an English hand-axe) and ends with Matisse and a back-to-the-future look at one of the oldest forms of ornament: tattoos. Trilling's unabashed apologia for the beleaguered art form will speed its recovery.

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From Library Journal

Considered one of the four major categories of art along with architecture, sculpture, and painting, ornament is broadly defined as a complicated decorative patterning device that may exude intense emotion, give pleasure, and enhance beauty. Trilling, who was curator of Old World Textiles at the Textile Museum in Washington, DC, and who taught at the Rhode Island School of Design, provides historical context for ornamentation and traces its use, development, and meaning from Paleolithic times to the present. His beautifully integrated text is accompanied by descriptive illustrations and dazzling examples. Broad chapters highlight the appreciation of ornament, sketches in art history, ornament as conventional system, and ornament in the age of modernism. A welcome addition to all libraries with a focus on design and design techniques. Stephen Allan Patrick, East Tennessee State Univ. Libs., Johnson City Art Instruction By Daniel Lombardo, formerly with Jones Lib., Amherst, MA

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About the Author

James Trilling taught at the Rhode Island School of Design before he became a fulltime independent scholar. He is the author *Ornament: A Modern Perspective* has written extensively on Byzantine art.

## **Users Review**

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**James Edwards:**

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**William Rose:**

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