

ARTIFACT ILLUSTRATION BRINGING THE PAST TO LIFE

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY CELIA MORET-FERGUSON

REPRESENTING CULTURE

Artifact illustration serves to present the results of archaeological fieldwork, research, and analysis in a way that is meaningful and visually appealing. Illustration sheds light on the unique workmanship and relationship between the maker of an artifact and their surrounding landscape. Drawings demonstrate relationships, such as cross-cultural comparisons, more clearly than looking directly at a variety of artifacts at once. Illustrations should not only provide details about the manufacturing technique used, but with a proper context, also provide information about the people who made the artifacts. The relationship between material and non-materials aspects of the specific culture must be addressed, where perhaps the role of culture is supported by site function, as explained in terms of the artifacts present/identified. Through this detailed illustration, the past can be brought to life; enhancing technical reports, publications, presentations, and museum displays.

BENEFITS OF ILLUSTRATION

While technologies of digital photography, photo-editing software, and 3-D imaging advance, freehand illustration remains the standard for the visual portrayal of artifacts in publications. In part this is because black and white illustrations reproduce better than color images. More than just this, drawings reveal details about an artifact that would otherwise be obscured by photographic shadows and focus or distractions in the artifact material.

Artifact illustration is extremely accurate in that the artifact is meant to be illustrated with such precision that archaeologists can study a detailed illustration in place of the actual object. This gives the artifact a permanence that photography does not. As the field of Archaeology advances and new theories and studies are developed, artifact illustration will remain an accurate way to assess and compare typologies and lithic manufacture techniques without the availability and need for the artifacts themselves.

- Clear depictions of artifact form, workmanship and diagnostic and manufacture elements
- Can communicate more information and thus leave a more vivid impression in the mind of the reader
- No loss of interpretation due to material color or defects and other distraction
- Better reproduction than photographs
- An added variety, professional appearance, and clear depiction of vital artifact attributes important to researchers

TECHNIQUE

Prior to putting pen to paper, a Project Manager, or specialist must first decide which of the artifacts within the assemblage best represent the unique technology, manufacture, typology, or attributes of the collection. The number of artifacts illustrated must relate to what you want the report to say about the culture; too few or too many illustrations can reduce their effectiveness. There may be specific characteristics of the artifact itself that should be explained to the illustrator so as to be captured as best possible. Traits may include a flaking technique, a notching type, or in the case of groundstone, certain areas of pecking or grinding.

Certain guidelines are upheld by Artifact Illustrators to ensure that representation is consistent. For instance, the only way for the human eye to see 3-D on a 2-D surface, is to position the light source at the upper left of the artifact pointed at a 45-degree angle downward towards the lower right. As such, shadows fall in the same direction on all scientifically illustrated artifacts. Essentially, the terrain of each groove, peck, polished area, flake scar, and fracture, is mapped purely using where the light falls. Each illustrator has a unique signature for illustrating the gradient of light that falls across the intimate details of an artifact, whether it is through the density of tiny dots (stippling), or directional lines.

MEET THE ILLUSTRATOR

Attention to detail and fascination of lithic typology, methodology, and how these trends tie into a particular cultural landscape, are what make Ms. Moret-Ferguson's illustrations and interpretation unique.

Bring the Past to Life and Enhance

- Technical Reports
- Publications
- Presentations
- Museum Displays

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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ILLUSTRATED PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS:
Bard, James C. (editor)
2013 The Other Side of Sandpoint: Early History and Archaeology Beside the Tracks. The Sandpoint Archaeology Project 2006-2013. Volume 3: The Ethnography and Prehistory of Sandpoint. Prepared for Idaho Transportation Department, Boise, Idaho. SWCA Environmental Consultants, the University of Idaho, and the Environmental History Company.

Fenner, Lindsay A., Michele Parvey, and James C. Bard
2013 Testing and Site Reevaluation of Four Prehistoric Archaeological Site within the Ashton Reservoir Drawdown Zone, Fremont County, Idaho. Prepared for PacifiCorp. SWCA Environmental Consultants, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Moret-Ferguson, Celia, Michele E. Parvey, and Tony Hofkamp
2013 Testing and Evaluations of Sites 35LK4186 and 35LK1275 for the Poplars Ranch Solar Energy Facility Project, Lake County, Oregon. Prepared for Element Power. SWCA Environmental Consultants, Portland, Oregon.

Moret-Ferguson, Celia (featured artist)
2012 The Art of Science: Exhibit. A collaboration of the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators and the Salem Art Society. Camas Gallery, Bush Barn Art Center, Salem, Oregon.

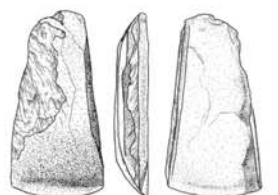
Dietler, John, Robert S. Ramirez, Clarus Backes, and Laura Hoffman
2010 Archaeological Evaluation of 10 Sites within the Acorn and Emerson Lake Training Areas, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, California. Prepared for U.S. Department of the Navy and United States Marine Corps. SWCA Environmental Consultants, South Pasadena, California.

Dietler, John, Robert S. Ramirez, Clarus Backes, and Laura Hoffman
2010 Johnsondale Archaeological Testing and Eligibility, Tulare County, California. Prepared for U.S. Department of the Navy and United States Marine Corps. SWCA Environmental Consultants, South Pasadena, California.

McManamon, Francis P. (editor)
2008 Archaeology in America: An Encyclopedia. Volume 3 Southwest and Great Basin/Plateau. Greenwood Press, Westport, CT.

Tveskov, Mark, and Amie Cohen
2006 The Archaeology of the Western Cascades of Southwest Oregon. Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology, Ashland.

Tveskov, Mark, Christian Soltsburg, Erik Thorsgard, and Amie Cohen
2005 The Midnight Dig Site. A Lithic Workshop Site in the Western Cascades of Southwest Oregon. Prepared for U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Southern Oregon University, Ashland, Oregon.



ANCIENT ARTIFACT

