

Iconography

The study of images and symbols; their identification, description, classification, and interpretation.

- I. Explore **The Library Catalog** for books on your topic. Subject headings include:

animal imagery--symbolism
art and mythology
bible--pictures, illustrations
buddhist art and symbolism
catholic church and art
christian art and symbolism
emblems
hindu symbolism
holy spirit-symbolism
idols and images

islamic art and symbolism
jesus christ--art
jewish art and symbolism
mythology
saints--art
signs and symbols
symbolism in the bible
symbolism of numbers
symbolism in architecture
symbolism in art

- II. Explore **The Library Web Site** to locate journal articles with a specific iconographic theme.

A. Databases & Indexes to Articles (<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/indexes>)

[*Art Abstracts/Art Index Retrospective*](#). Indexes and abstracts hundreds of international arts journals; also indexes reproductions of works of art that appear in periodicals. Updated monthly; covers 1929 to the present with abstracts available from 1994.

[*BHA: Bibliography of the History of Art*](#). Coverage includes Western subjects from the late antiquity to the present and contemporary art worldwide. Available electronically from 1973 to the present.

[*International Medieval Bibliography*](#). Updated quarterly. Provides a current bibliography of Medieval Studies for over 4,500 journals, conference proceedings, essay collections, Festschriften, and exhibition catalogs.

[*Iter*](#). Provides bibliographic access to published materials pertaining to the Middle Ages and Renaissance (400-1700).

B. Online Journals (<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/journals>)

[*JSTOR*](#). An extensive library of humanities journals available online.

[*Project Muse*](#). Complements JSTOR's holdings.

III. Consult **Reference Sources** for indepth iconographical research.

A. **General Resources**

[Grove Art Online](#). N 31 D5 1996 FAL Ref

The most comprehensive art-historical reference work available. An exhaustive encyclopedia of art worldwide. Excellent coverage by country, culture, and religion. Bibliographies included.

Dictionary of Symbols in Western Art. N 7740 C29 1995 FAL Ref

Concise interpretation of symbols, saints and other religious figures found in Western art.

Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art. N 7560 H34 1979 FAL Ref

Comprehensive dictionary focusing on biblical and classical themes in Western art.

Encyclopedia of Comparative Iconography: Themes Depicted in Works of Art. N 7560 E53 1998 FAL Ref

A comprehensive guide to biblical, mythological, and literary themes depicted in works of art.

Encyclopedia of Themes and Subjects in Painting; Mythological, Biblical, Historical, Literary, Allegorical and Topical. ND 1288 D3 1971 FAL Ref
Covers early Renaissance to the nineteenth century.

Hidden Symbols in Art. N 7740 C293 2001 FAL Ref

Each chapter organized thematically, explains the significance and meaning of key symbols and figures in Western art.

Illustrated Dictionary of Symbols in Eastern and Western Art.

N 7740 H34 1994 FAL Ref

Definitions of signs and symbols divided into the following categories: abstract signs, animals, artifacts, earth and sky, human body and dress, and plants.

Secret Language of Symbols: a visual key to symbols and their meanings.

BF 458 F56 1994 FAL Ref

Book of symbols thematically organized, includes sections on shapes and colors, animals, the natural world, objects, human and spiritual symbols.

B. **Classical Mythology and Folklore**

Ancient Pagan Symbols. BL 600 G6 1973 FAL Ref
Dictionary of ancient symbols arranged alphabetically under broad chapter headings.

Handbook of Legendary and Mythological Art. N 7760 W3 1969 FAL Ref
Arranged in the following categories: symbolism in art, legends of saints, legends of places and ancient myths.

Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology. BL 310 G853 FAL Ref
Arranged geographically; includes a bibliography for further reading and an index of names.

Gods and Heroes in Art. N 7760 I4713 2003 FAL Ref
Arranged in four sections including gods, heroes, and divine beings from the Greek and Roman pantheon; characters from legends of the Trojan War and Homer's *Odyssey*, historical figures from Greece; and lastly historical figures from Rome.

Oxford Guide to Classical Mythology in the Arts, 1300-1990s.
NX 650 M9 R45 1993 v.1-v.2 FAL Ref
An encyclopedic catalog of art works from the early Renaissance to the present illustrating Greek and Roman mythology.

C. Christian Iconography

Dent Dictionary of Symbols in Christian Art. N 7825 S68 1994 FAL Ref
Alphabetical listing of saints and symbols, includes descriptive illustrations.

Iconographie de l'art chrétien. N 7830 R37 v.1-v.3 FAL Ref
Includes an introduction to Christian iconography, an iconographical analysis of the Bible, and an index to the iconography of saints.

Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie. BV 150 L4 v.1-v.8 FAL Ref
Entries include symbols and attributes, a list of representations in art, documentation of sources, and a bibliography.

Lives of the Saints. BX 4654 B8 1962 v.1-4 FAL Ref
Arranged by feast day.

Medieval Iconography: a research guide. NX 449 F75 1998 FAL Ref

A comprehensive annotated bibliography organized by topic. Includes both sacred and secular topics in medieval art and literature.

Oxford Companion to Christian Art and Architecture.

N 7830 M87 1996 FAL Ref

Comprehensive alphabetical guide to Christian art and architecture.

Saints and their Emblems. N 8080 D7 1971 FAL Ref

Divided into biographical dictionary of saints and dictionary of emblems listing saints associated with them.

Saints in Art. ND 1430 G5513 2003 FAL Ref

Arranged alphabetically includes saints from the bible and the gospels.

D. Non-Western iconography and mythology

Asiatic Mythology, a detailed description and explanation of the mythologies of all the great nations of Asia. BL 1031 M83 1963B FAL Ref

Organized geographically by Asiatic tradition; includes ancient through modern perspectives.

Dictionary of Buddhist and Hindu Iconography. N 7565 B86 1997 FAL Ref

An illustrated dictionary of Buddhist and Hindu iconographic terms including pronunciation, definitions, and recommended sources for further reading.

Dictionary of Buddhist Iconography. N 8193 A4 L644 1999 v.1-v.6 FAL Ref

Arranged alphabetically, includes indepth definitions of Buddhist iconographic terms and ideas. Heavily illustrated.

Elements of Hindu Iconography. N 8195 A4 G6 v.1 & v.2 FAL Ref

Organized by broad subject headings; text in English and Sanskrit.

An Encyclopaedia of Hindu deities, demi-gods, godlings, demons, and heroes: with special focus on iconographic attributes. BL 1216 B86 2000 v.1-v.3 FAL Ref

A heavily illustrated, alphabetical examination of Hindu gods.

The Encyclopedia of Tibetan Symbols and Motifs. N 7346 T5 B43 1999 FAL Ref

A compilation of Tibetan symbols and motifs organized by genre, excellent illustrations.

Iconography of Jaina Deities. NB 1912 J34 N34 1999 v.1 & v.2 FAL Ref

A detailed review of the Jaina faith and the depiction of the faith's ideas.

Iconography of the Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains. N 8190 G86 FAL Ref
Illustrated, comprehensive survey of iconographies of the three major religions of India.

Outlines of Chinese Symbolism and Art Motives: An Alphabetical Compendium of Antique Legends and Beliefs, as Reflected in the Manners and Customs of the Chinese. GR 335 W53 1974B FAL Ref

A practical handbook of the science of Chinese symbolism as based on the early folklore, includes illustrations and literary references.

Symbols of Japan: thematic motifs in art and design.

N 7350 B233 2001 FAL Ref

Each chapter is a broad category then arranged alphabetically by terms. Beautifully illustrated.

Understanding Northwest Coast Art: a guide to crests, beings, and symbols.

E 78 N78 S446 2000 FAL Ref

Alphabetical guide to the symbols, beings, and crests of Northwest Coast art. Brief descriptions of design conventions and elements, reviews interconnections between art, myth and ceremony.

E. Other Iconographic Resources

Dictionary of American Portraits. 4045 pictures of Important Americans from Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century. N 7593 C53 FAL Ref
Pictorial archive of American portraits from the earliest period to 1905.

Illustrated Dictionary of Narrative Painting. ND 1288 T45 1994 FAL Ref
Includes explanations of narrative paintings from religious and mythological texts.

Mythical Beasts. GR 825 M88 1995 FAL Ref

A scholarly examination of mythical beasts including dragons, unicorns, griffins, sphinxes, and half-human creatures and their depictions in works of art.

Proverb Iconography: an international bibliography. N 7780 M54 1999 FAL

Ref

International and annotated bibliography containing 378 entries on the interrelationship between iconography and paremiology (proverb scholarship) and the discourse of artists' visually interpreting proverbs.

Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects.

CB 475 W45 1988 FAL Ref

Topical chapters cover symbols relating to women from earliest times.

F. Iconographic Indexes

Index Iconologicus. MCFICHE 5839 FAL

Alphabetical entries containing reproductions of art works, literary, bibliographic, and historical information. Covers primarily the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

[*Index to Christian Art.*](#)

Covers from early apostolic times up to A.D. 1400. The largest database of medieval art in existence with records for over 13,000 works of art.

Provides an iconographic database that indexes images as well as textual information and bibliographies about the images.

Iconclass: An Iconographic Classification System. Z 697 S8 W3 1973 FAL Ref

A classification of subjects, themes, and motifs in Western art. General subdivisions include supernatural, nature, man, society, abstract concepts, history, the Bible, sagas, legends and tales, and classical mythology and antiquity.

King David in the Index of Christian Art. N 8110 K5 2002 FAL Ref

Indexes 245 scenes of the life of King David and provides examples in several media.

Post-Biblical Saints Art Index. N 8079.5 R63 1994 FAL Ref

An index to saints who lived after the time period covered by the bible depicted in works of art.

Virtue & Vice: the personifications in the Index of Christian Art.

N 8012 V57 V57 2000 FAL Ref

Outlines 227 personifications of virtue and vice, then documents their occurrence in nearly 1,000 artworks produced between the fifth and the fifteenth centuries.

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