

Alyssa Petty

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Colt 360- Artistic Curation

Piece 1: Mother Earth-Turtle Island

The first piece of art I chose for my Artistic Curation was a painting done by Jackie Traverse called “Mother Earth”. It depicts an Indian woman in front of a moon and painted in her dress is a turtle. The painting was made to represent the story of Turtle Island and Mother Earth.

I chose to focus on different pieces of art that represent Mother Earth/Mother Nature because I wanted to see the different ways she can be portrayed in different cultures and the different stories linked to the art. Similarly to how this piece is inspired by the Turtle Island story, there can be many influences for why people choose to create Mother Earth inspired art. In class we have been reading *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Kimmerer which uses the story of Skywoman to start out the novel. This story is very similar to Turtle Island and the idea that there are so many stories told by different people and in different works is very interesting. The idea of Mother Earth I feel also ties to our topics in class because we are learning about how the world is changing and aspects of climate change and appreciating our planet. Different stories of Mother Earth help us to see how others appreciate the planet and take care of it. Overall, I think it is very interesting to read these stories and admire the art. It can inspire people to see the world through new eyes and create a greater desire to take care of our Earth.

With this piece of art comes a brief explanation of the purpose behind the painting along with a quick description by the gallery which states, “This painting shows the determination and power of Mother Earth, and Indian woman protecting Turtle Island within her.” ([Mother-earth-it](#)) Turtle Island is described as the creation of North America which was created on a turtle's back

when the earth was first only water. This piece of art uses earth tones of green, blue, brown and white to create an image that to me represents Mother earth very well. It was easy to understand when first seeing it and the large turtle is easy to see and clear. The artist used texture to emphasize the turtles and show the difference between her covering and the turtles even though they are the same color. It was very eye-catching when I first saw it and I appreciated the thoughtful description of the story below the piece. That really helped me as an admirer understand the piece and tie it to the other works I chose for my artistic curation. It ties directly to the other works I chose because it is representing a feminine figure who is shown to be Mother Earth (or Mother Nature). It is also so different from the others because the story behind it is different. I wanted to focus on works that depicted the same type of figure but all had different stories behind the art. Obviously, as a painting there is lots of room for self interpretation, especially since not everyone seeing this will be able to read the story of Turtle Island and understand it's full purpose. I do, however, feel that the color, texture, size proportions, and femininity shown really help whoever's looking at it get a sense of motherly energy and the clear earth colors can give the idea that it could be Mother Earth.



Art by Jackie Traverse ([mother-earth-jt](http://mother-earth-jt.com))