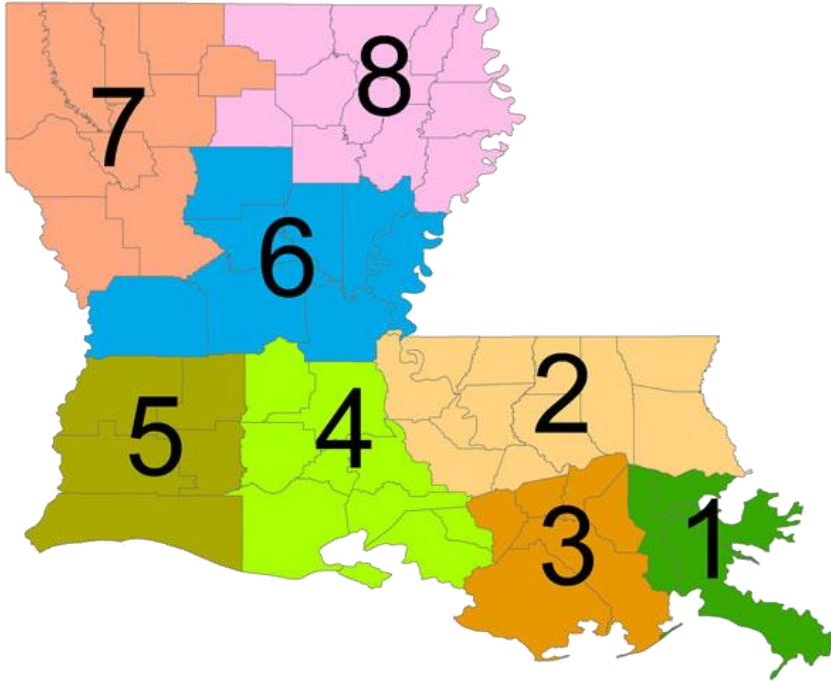


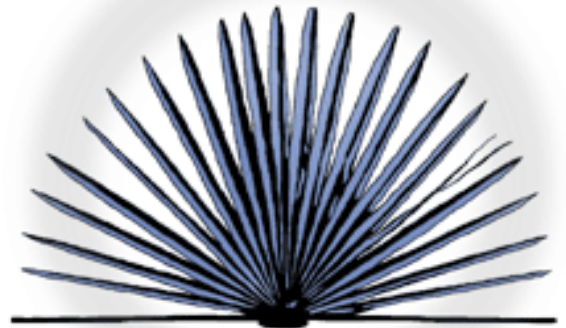
The Creole State

An Exhibition of Louisiana Folklife



Education Guide

Exhibit provided by Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne
and the Department of Culture, Recreation and
Tourism



The Creole State: An Exhibition of Louisiana Folklife

Exhibit provided by

Lieutenant Governor Jay Dardenne
and the
Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

2013



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Educational Guide provided by DCRT Education

The Creole State

An Exhibition of Louisiana Folklife

Welcome to *The Creole State: An Exhibition of Louisiana Folklife*. The exhibition presents the cultural creations of traditional life found in Louisiana when this exhibit was first mounted in the 1980s and 1990s.

The exhibition is organized into seven sections, which include

- Cultural Conservation
- Folk Toys
- Ritual, Festival & Religion
- Domestic Crafts
- Decorative Folk Arts
- Occupational Crafts
- Folk Instruments

Within each section, artifacts are identified according to the cultural group each represents as well as the parish and cultural region in which each was produced. The color-coded regional numbers correspond to the regions shown on the map on the following page.

We encourage viewers to explore our artifacts to discover Louisiana's rich and diverse cultural heritage.

Education Guide Contents

The education guide provides an overview of each of the seven exhibition sections and a list of the artifacts included in each section. The guide also contains exhibition-based interactive activities as well as URLs and QR codes that provide the viewer with additional information and extension activities. The activities are appropriate for students in grades three through 12, families and independent learners.

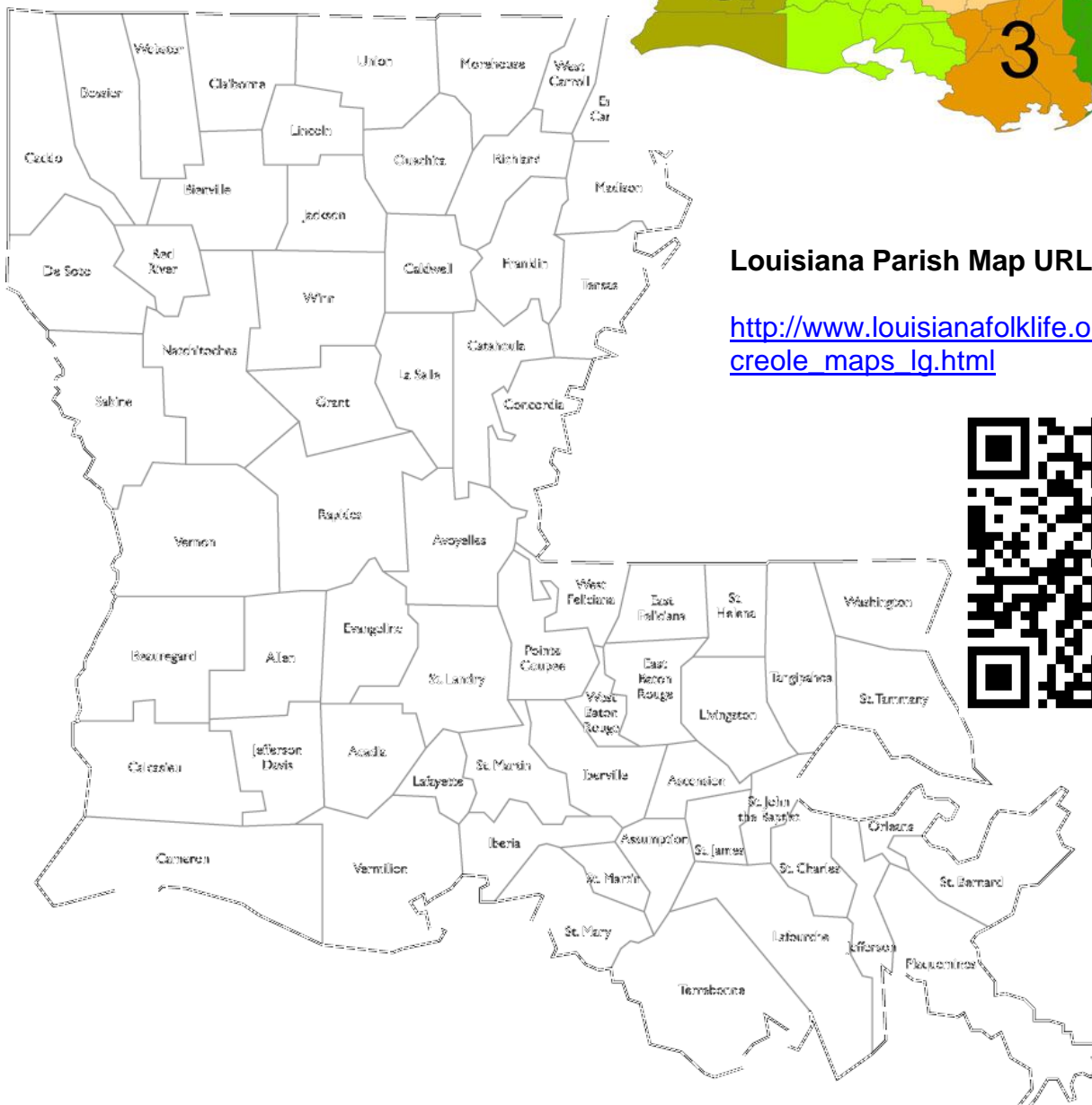
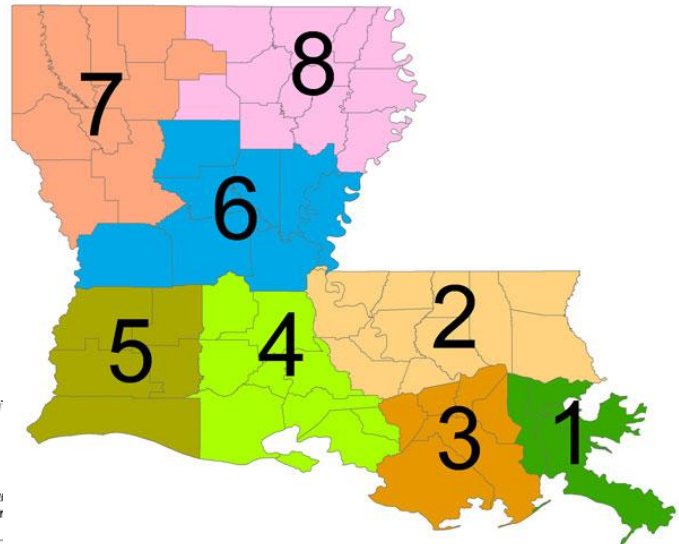
The Creole State: An Exhibition of Louisiana Folklife virtual exhibition can be accessed at
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/CSE/creole_home.html

Download a free QR code reader at
<http://reader.kaywa.com/getit>



Louisiana Parishes and Cultural Regions

Color-coded Regions



Louisiana Parish Map URL and QR

http://www.louisianafolklife.org/lt/maps/creole_maps_lg.html



Louisiana Cultures

Introduction

Louisiana is among the most culturally diverse states in the country. Each cultural group has added to the cultural environment of Louisiana and in varying ways influenced the traditions found here. *The Creole State: An Exhibition of Louisiana Folklife* presents the cultural creations of traditional life found in the state today. Nearly all of the items displayed were made or used by living individuals who carried on the tradition at the time the items were collected—traditional performances, arts, crafts beliefs or languages learned informally as part of ethnic, regional, occupational or familial life. The objects represent the persistence of folklife on the Louisiana landscape.

Predominantly Catholic southern Louisiana has been described as "South of the South" due to the Mediterranean-African roots and plantation past of the region that make it and New Orleans more akin to the societies of the French and Spanish West Indies than of the American South. Cajun culture, derived from the late eighteenth-century of Acadians from Nova Scotia dominates much of the rural areas. However, there is also a complex mix of Afro-French, Spanish, Native American, German, Italian, Irish, Anglo, Isleño, Slavonian, and now Asian among other groups in the entire region.

In contrast, Protestant northern Louisiana is culturally part of the upland and riverine American South. North Louisiana's mainly rural folk landscape was shaped by contact between Indians, Anglo- and Afro-Americans in pioneer, plantation, sharecropping and farmstead settings among the river bottom lands, piney woods and hills of the area. In this relatively isolated and more Anglo-influenced part of the state, the cultural groups are less overlapped than in South Louisiana.

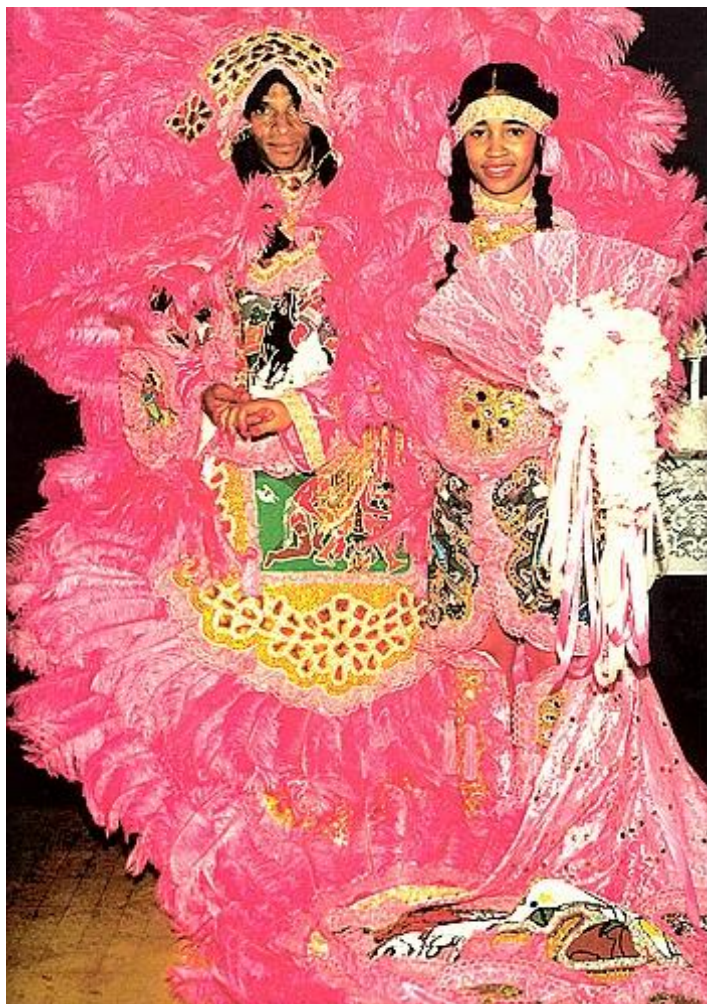
Photos, Top to Bottom

Autumn Fest Tet Trung Thu, 4; Azzie Roland, sedge grass basket maker; Cajun musician D.L. Menard; Chitimacha weaver Ada Thomas



To account for the subtlety and complexity of Louisiana's cultural mix and regional differences, it has sometimes been called "the Creole State." It is appropriate to Louisiana and this exhibit that the term "creole" (from the Portuguese *crioulo* "native to a region") has many hues of meaning. Initially, in Louisiana, the West Indies and Latin America, "Creole" referred to the colonial French/Spanish population. The word later came to refer to the *gens libres de couleur* (free people of color) in Louisiana who were of mixed Afro-European descent. It is further used to describe the Afro-French language called Creole and a variety of foodways, music styles, architecture, and attitudes that reflect the mingling of cultures in Louisiana. At the broadest level, creole or creolization refers to the process where foreign ingredients are combined in a native setting to make a new creole culture. Thus the many cultures that have come to all of Louisiana, north and south, make up a "creole society."

The process of creolization in Louisiana has already produced jazz, zydeco, Creole food, Cajun music, rockabilly music and durable crafts traditions. Although the term "creole" was not originally part of North Louisiana's regional culture, that area has always mingled politically, socially, and culturally with South Louisiana while maintaining a sense of its difference. This virtual exhibit invites you to experience both the unity and diversity of folklife from The Creole State.



**Creole Wild West Mardi Gras
Indians**

Chief Walter Cook, and wife
Angie of the Creole Wild West
Mardi Gras Indians, 1995.
New Orleans
African American
Photo: J. Nash Porter

Section 1: Cultural Conservation

While some traditions are highly endangered with only one or two people still practicing them, immigrants who are bringing their traditions with them and adding to Louisiana's cultural gumbo are introducing others.

The Louisiana Folklife Program is mandated to identify, document, present, and preserve Louisiana's folk artists, practitioners, communities, and landscapes. These activities are sometimes called "cultural conservation," since "preservation" is more readily applied to concrete materials such as historic houses or artifacts in museums. Conserving a living cultural tradition means encouraging and helping people and communities to carry on the best of their traditions, from Cajun music to blues and gospel, from deer-hide chair making to cypress basketweaving and wooden boatbuilding. This approach supports a cultural continuity that bridges Louisiana's past to its future.

Conserving our folklife enriches the cultural life of all Louisianians, encourages pride in our many heritages, and stimulates diverse cottage industries in crafts and markets for traditional music. Traditional cultures are also a key factor in attracting tourists to Louisiana.

The Creole State exhibit provides both preservation of the artifacts and cultural conservation in honoring and supporting the carriers of tradition. Field research is the heart of all Folklife Program activities, from advising a federal agency of the need to mitigate its impact on the culture of a fishing community to producing a folk festival or an exhibit such as this. Field research is conducted through the Louisiana Folklife Survey using interview forms, recordings, photograph, and video documentation.

If you know of fine practitioners of folk traditions in Louisiana who should be included in the survey and our programming, please contact the Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program within the Office of Cultural Development in the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism at folklife@crt.la.gov.



Slat Back Chair
Herman Davis
North Louisiana
Anglo American

White Oak, Cowhide
Photo: Thomas A. Wintz, Jr.

Section 1: Cultural Conservation Exhibition Artifacts

Section A

Tanned deer hide

George Allen

Jena, LaSalle Parish, Region 6

Jena Choctaw

George Allen tanned deer hides in the old way, using self-made tools like scrapers to remove the hair. He used a solution of deer brain as a softener and then paddled the hides for several hours to break down the leather and remove the moisture. A brain-tanned deer hide has the texture of velvet. The hides were typically used to make moccasins and leggings.

Sedge grass basket

Azzie Roland

Marion, Union Parish, Region 8

African American

Azzie Roland made baskets of sedge grass using the coil method of basketmaking. He was the only person in the state known to make this type of basket.

Split oak pitchfork

Dempsey Perkins

Reeves, Allen Parish, Region 5

Anglo-American

Dempsey Perkins used eighteenth- and nineteenth-century methods to create baskets, wooden bowls, wooden pitchforks, cutting boards, furniture, beds, hay rakes, and much more.

Back scratcher

Al Muller

Metairie, Jefferson Parish, Region 1

German

Patterned split oak basket

Azzie Roland

Marion, Union Parish, Region 8

African American

Azzie Roland provided this incomplete example to show how he shapes baskets. Only a handful of people still make baskets of split oak.

Pressed corn broom

Bill Tippit

Port Allen, West Baton Rouge Parish, Region 2

Anglo-American

Section B

Slat Back Chair

Herman Davis

Florien, Sabine Parish, Region 7

Anglo American

Herman Davis cures cowhides to be used as chair bottoms by drying and stretching them. *Photo credit: Nicholas R. Spitzer*

Bill Tippit of Port Allen grew his own broomcorn to make brooms. He used a broom press to flatten the plant so that he could stitch it. Broomcorn is not actually corn but instead a variety of sorghum. *Photo credit: Maida Owens*

Slat-back chair

Herman Davis

Florien, Sabine Parish

Anglo-American

Making chairs and chair bottoms are two crafts rarely practiced today in traditional communities. A few continue to make cowhide seats.

Section C

Cornshuck hat

Leola Simmons

Downsville, Union Parish, Region 8

African American

Weaving cornshucks is one of the most endangered traditions in the state. By the 1980s, only a few people, all African American, still carried on the craft using several methods. Leola Simmons of Downsville plaited the shucks and then coiled the plait to make both wide and narrow brim hats. She wore these hats for gardening, fishing, or going to church.

Cornshuck purse

Willie London

Ethel, East Feliciana Parish, Region 2

African American

Cornshuck weaving is one of the rarest craft traditions in the state. Willie London twisted cornshucks to make a thin rope that he then knotted into bags.

Split white cypress basket

Cyril Billiot

Dulac, Terrebonne Parish, Region 3

Houma Indian

Biloxi lugger half-model for building boats

Raymond Sedatol

Pierre Part, Assumption Parish, Region 3
Cajun

Raymond Sedatol was one of the few boat builders who still knew how to make a half-model. Half-model carvers are boat designers. Applying a process that can be called "eye and feel," half-model carvers create proportional models. These "three-dimensional blueprints" are used by boat builders to fashion full-sized vessels.

Egret

Al Muller
Metairie, Jefferson Parish, Region 1
German

Hungarian cross-stitched doily

Ruby Petho
Hammond, Tangipahoa Parish, Region 2
Hungarian

Chinese paper black swan

John Hu
Baton Rouge, East Baton Rouge Parish, Region 2
Chinese

Chinese paper white swan

John Hu
Baton Rouge, East Baton Rouge Parish, Region 2
Chinese

Chinese paper egg

Qin Lin
Ferriday, Concordia Parish, Region 6
Chinese

Chinese paper bird

Qin Lin
Ferriday, Concordia Parish, Region 6
Chinese

Chinese paper pineapple

Qin Lin
Ferriday, Concordia Parish, Region 6
Chinese

Paper folding, also known as *zhe zhi* in Chinese and *origami* in Japanese, is a two-thousand-year-old-craft. Initially, the Chinese developed a number of simple forms, some of which still survive. Today, master paper folders are found in many places around the world. New and improved folding techniques have produced many variations, including complex geometric shapes, animals, flowers, and even human figures.

Walking stick

David Allen
Homer, Claiborne Parish, Region 7
African American
David Allen of Homer in Claiborne Parish shows several of his walking sticks in different stages of completion. David began whittling toys as a boy and made his first walking stick when he was a teenager. Although his canes resemble those made by other African American carvers, his work is visionary. His ideas for his cane designs "just come to him" in his mind, sometimes in the form of dreams or thoughts. He uses the roots of young saplings to form the handles of his canes and looks at the root shape to "see" what animal or other shape is hidden there. Although he did not learn to carve walking sticks from another carver, he did grow up in a community where whittling was a common pastime and walking sticks were often carried to ward off dogs and other trouble. Many of the motifs used in his canes reflect common objects, animals, and traditional beliefs. *Photo credit: Nicholas R. Spitzer*



Section 2: Folk Toys

Folk Toys, like other folk crafts, are produced in households where people make the things they need for work and play. Many folk toys actually train children for work. Clearly, the ox-and-wagon model and toy pirogues suggest that many children once grew up to use the real thing, just as children play with everything from toy bulldozers to computers.

Other traditional toys such as tops, balancing devices, and weight/string machines teach basic physics while puzzles encourage development of perception and problem-solving abilities. Of course, much traditional play, such as ring-clap games, tag, or riddle and joke telling sessions, takes place without toys. Ultimately, play is its own reward, whether a game with special roles, a toy that imitates work, or the contemplative spin of a top. Folk toys range from children's playthings to adult collectibles. As with other types of folk artifacts, the viewer must know the maker's intent to be able to know how the object functions in the culture.

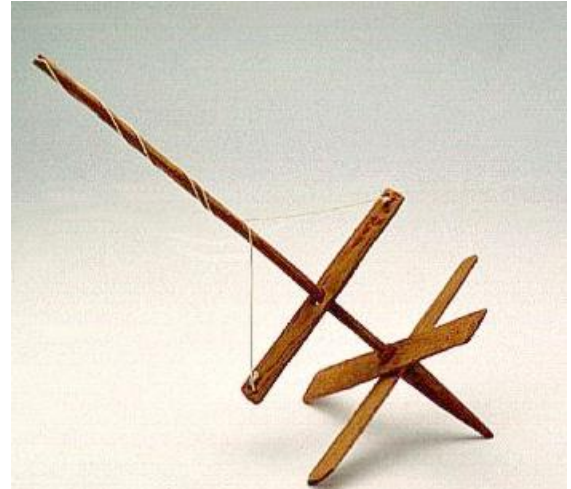
For example, some dolls such as Barbara Trevigne's doll or Marie Verret's moss doll are children's toys. But Barbara's large doll serves an educational function to teach people about African Americans in New Orleans during the eighteenth century by accurately representing the dress and headdress of that group. Most people would not give this doll to a child.

Mulatto Doll Barbara Trevigne

New Orleans Creole Barbara Trevigne made this doll to represent the dress of the mulatto women from 19th century New Orleans.

Cotton, Stuffing

Photo: Thomas A. Wintz, Jr.



Cypress Spinner Toy

E.L. Buckley

North Louisiana

Anglo American

Cypress

Photo: Thomas A. Wintz, Jr.



Section 2: Folk Toys Exhibition Artifacts

Section A

Cypress spinner toy

E. L. Buckley
Grayson, Caldwell Parish, Region 8
Anglo-Scots-Irish

Woodpecker windmill

Blake Owen
Alexandria, Rapides Parish, Region 6
Anglo-American

Model pirogues with oars

Raymond Sedatol
Pierre Part, Assumption Parish, Region 3
Cajun



Section B

Model pirogue with hunting gear

Claude Lirette
Chauvin, Terrebonne Parish, Region 3
Cajun
Using only a knife, Claude Lirette carves tupelo gum into finely carved model pirogues complete with miniature hunting gear, paddles, poles, ice chests, and decoys.

Oxen and cart

Ira Sandel
Florien, Sabine Parish, Region 7
Anglo-Scots-Irish

Wooden pliers

Kenneth Royston
Houma, Terrebonne Parish, Region 3
Anglo-American

Bull-roarer

H. F. "Pete" Gregory
Natchitoches, Natchitoches Parish, Region 7
Anglo-French

The bull-roarer is a sound-making device found in a number of traditional societies around the world. The user spins it to produce a vibrato sound.

Section C

Handkerchief dolls

Southwest Louisiana Developmental Center
Iota, Acadia Parish, Region 4
These dolls were made with handkerchiefs to amuse girls during church. Hence, the dolls are sometimes called "church dolls."

Houma moss doll with palmetto hat

Marie Dean
Dulac, Terrebonne Parish, Region 3
Houma Indian
Spanish moss and palmetto were used by Houma craftspeople to create basketry, utilitarian items like blankets and mattresses, and even toys.



Tunica-Biloxi Indian dolls

Anna Mae Juneau
Marksville, Avoyelles Parish, Region 6
Tunica-Biloxi Indian

Willow doll chair

Huey Dupont
Bueche, West Baton Rouge Parish, Region 2
Anglo-American

Section 3: Ritual, Festival & Religion

The association of ritual and festival occasions is found in cultures worldwide. Louisiana with its mingling of Catholicism, African religions, Protestant traditions, and Native American sacred practices is known for numerous ritual and celebratory activities.

In predominately Catholic southern Louisiana, traditional celebratory occasions are linked to special dates on the liturgical calendar, such as All Saints Day (November 1) and Mardi Gras (variable, always forty days before Easter). Folk Mardi Gras is celebrated in a vast array of ways from the Cajun style involving clowns on horseback begging for chicken for use in communal gumbo, to New Orleans black neighborhood groups parading over their turf in elaborate Indian costumes. There are also days for St. Joseph (March 19) and St. Rosalie (September 4) celebrated by Sicilian Italians, as well as a variety of local blessings of the shrimp fleets and sugarcane fields. Folk Catholicism is equally evident in the construction of home altars, the placement of statues of the Virgin Mary in yards, and the erection of shrines throughout French Louisiana.

The joining of African, European Catholic and Protestant, and Indian sensibilities in the West Indians and Louisiana accounts for the presence of Mardi Gras Indian tribes and spiritual churches in New Orleans. Voodoo also survives from Afro-Catholic sources while jazz funerals appear to stem from West African traditions of heralding the departure of acclaimed individuals.

North Louisiana Anglo and Afro-American Protestantism is focused more on the "word" of God through the rhetoric of preachers and the Bible. It has less of the Latin icon orientation of the Catholic south. However, many family and community ritual and festival occasions survive in North Louisiana such as graveyard memorials, community sings, and river baptisms.



Doll Wearing First Communion or May Crowning Dress
Barbara Trevigne



Choctaw Apache Bird Carvings
Jim Toby, Zwolle

Section 3: Ritual, Festival and Religion Exhibition Artifacts

Section A

Star piñata

Maria Lopez with Juanita Lopez and Teresa Turrubiarres
Bernice, Union Parish, Region 8
Mexican

Maria Lopez made this traditional piñata with her daughter Juanita Lopez and her friend Teresa Turrubiarres, all of Bernice. The star is the traditional shape for piñatas, but today many other forms can be found.

Photo credit:
Susan Roach



Commemorative Rex Carnival float

Rene Pierre
New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Region 1
African American

Section B

Charles Taylor, Chief of the White Cloud Hunters Mardi Gras Indian tribe, wore this suit in 1985. Mardi Gras Indian suits—with their ornate beadwork, rhinestones, and brilliantly colored plumes—are among the most dazzling examples of African American folk art. The suits reflect Native American inspirations but also strong African and Caribbean influences.

Region 1

Photo credit: Nicholas R. Spitzer

Mardi Gras Indian moccasins

Charles Taylor
New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Region 1
African American
Mardi Gras Indian suits are meticulously detailed,

incorporating twenty or more beaded and jeweled patches. Although some patches are hidden once the suit is completed, they are still made with painstaking care.



Even the moccasins are part of the suit's total design. These moccasins, made by Charles Taylor of the White Cloud Hunters in the 1980s, are studded with rhinestones, ribbons, beads, and feathers. Their geometric, abstract design is typical of suits made and worn by "Downtown" Indians—those living on the downriver side of Canal Street.

Mardi Gras ball gown for a Barbie doll

Doris Fournet
New Iberia, Iberia Parish, Region 4
Cajun

Needlepoint Cajun Mardi Gras mask

Suson Launey
Iota, Acadia Parish, Region 4
Cajun

Needlepoint Mardi Gras masks are popular in the Tee Mamou women's run, which takes place in rural Acadia Parish on the weekend before Lent. These masks are the invention of Suson Launey, a dedicated member of the run and one of southwest Louisiana's most prolific mask makers. Each year, she makes two new masks for herself—one for daytime and a fancier one for the nighttime dance. Fellow masqueraders like her masks because they are both striking and comfortable.



Section C

Lake or river baptism is still practiced in some African American communities. This baptism took place at Lake Providence. Region 8
Photo credit: Susan Roach

Vietnamese children in Baton Rouge make lanterns for Tet Trung Thu, an autumn festival. Region 2

Photo credit: Maida Owens

Choctaw gourd dipper

Claude Medford

Elton, Jefferson Davis Parish, Region 5

Choctaw Indian

Gourd dippers like this one were used by Native Americans to prepare and take herbal medicines.



Koasati pine straw alligator effigy

Ruth Poncho

Elton, Jefferson Davis Parish, Region 8

Koasati (Coushatta) Indian

This alligator effigy is made of coiled pine straw with the scales or bracts of the pine cone sewn onto the basket. Koasati basketmakers are the only Louisiana tribe to produce effigy baskets in the shapes of local fauna.



Choctaw-Apache bird carvings

Jim Toby

Zwolle, Sabine Parish, Region 7

Choctaw-Apache Indian

Job's tears rosary

Claude Oubre

Eunice, St. Landry Parish, Region 4

Cajun

Job's tears (*Coix lacryma-jobi*), a grass native to Asia, is highly regarded in prairie Cajun culture. According to local legend, the plant—better known as the



rosary bead plant—made its way to Louisiana from the Holy Land. For many years, prairie Cajuns harvested the seeds to make rosaries. After harvesting the seeds, a stiff wire or crochet needle was used to remove the internal shuck (the “germ of life”). Then the seeds were strung onto a piece of 21-gauge nickel silver wire, using needle-nose pliers and cutters to make the loops on each bead, connecting one bead to another until a complete decade was formed. Chain was then used to connect the decades and link the entire rosary to the centerpiece and crucifix.

Choctaw feather box

Claude Medford

Elton, Jefferson Davis Parish, Region 5

Choctaw Indian

Feathers from the eagle, red-tailed hawk, woodpecker, and other birds hold ritual value in the healing traditions of many Native American societies. Feathers are considered to be sacred and powerful. They are often stored in boxes made or lined with cedar to keep them safe from moisture and insects.



Section 4: Domestic Crafts

Domestic crafts are also sometimes called "household crafts." The items presented here are made primarily by women--though men are also involved--from a wide variety of ethnic and regional groups. Many rural Louisiana people remain tied to a traditional household-based subsistence economy, but as living off the land and water becomes rarer, so too, do such homemade crafts items.

The most basic requirement of these objects and processes is utility. However, such items as baskets, quilts, table coverings, hats, and bonnets also clearly have an aesthetic dimension. The balance between necessity and style is also apparent in the items and procedures represented in the preparation, consumption, and conservation of traditional foodways.



Around the World Quilt

Rosie Allen, Homer
North Louisiana
African American

Cotton

Photo: Thomas A. Wintz, Jr.



Palmetto Hat

Elvina Kidder
Arnaudville
Acadian weaver Elvina Kidder braided this palmetto hat using the coil method of weaving.
South Louisiana
Cajun

Palmetto

Photo: Thomas A. Wintz, Jr.

Section 4: Domestic Crafts Exhibition Artifacts

Section A

Trip Around the World quilt

Rosie Allen
Homer, Claiborne Parish, Region 7
African American

Palmetto hat

Elvina Kidder
Arnaudville, St. Landry Parish, Region 4
Acadian
Elvina Kidder braided this palmetto hat using the coil method of weaving.

Tupelo gum dough bowl

Bobby Brown
Jena, LaSalle Parish, Region 5
Anglo-American



Dough bowl

Fred Scott
Pollock, Grant Parish, Region 8
Anglo-American

Section B

Sedge grass broom

Jack Phillips
Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Region 3
Anglo-American

Palmetto broom

Antoine Billiot
Dulac, Terrebonne Parish, Region 3
Houma Indian



Half-barrel spilt oak basket

Edward Harris
Washington, St. Landry Parish, Region 4
African American

Split oak basket with handle

Azzie Roland
Marion, Union Parish, Region 8
African American

Stool with cattail seat

Geraldine Robertson
Lafayette, Lafayette Parish, Region 4
African American



Section C

Flower garden quilt sample

Opal Madden
Ruston, Lincoln Parish, Region 6
Anglo-American

Ladder-back chair

Herman Davis
Florien, Sabine Parish, Region 7
Anglo-American

Dugout pirogue

This dugout is one of two carved from a single cypress log during the 1984 Louisiana World Exposition in New Orleans. Tan Brunet and Willie Badeaux led the team of boatbuilders.

Willie Badeaux
Des Allemands, St. Charles Parish, Region 3
Cajun

Tan Brunet
Galliano, Lafourche Parish, Region 3
Cajun



Section 5: Decorative Folk Arts

Decorative folk arts are those traditional items that emphasize the aesthetic dimension. However, many of the items elsewhere in this exhibit, such as the Mardi Gras costumes, Holy Cards, etched accordion, quilts, and baskets also clearly have an artistic dimension. Likewise, a number of the decorative items here have functions in addition to their pleasing or unusual style and appearance.

For example, the Indian animal effigies at one time may have been used totemically. The walking sticks are still used for support as well as swagger. In fact, the Anglo canes seem primarily utilitarian or at least representative of sparseness as an art style in carving.

The decorative duck decoys show how working decoys such as those in the Occupational Crafts area have evolved from a subsistence or sport activity to a highly technical art form that goes beyond folk tradition. As carver Charles Hutchison says, "In the old days we carved ducks to catch birds, now we carve them to catch men."

Finally, the individualistic untrained painter from a folk community such as Clementine Hunter documents his or her version of traditional life.



Koasati Pine Straw Vase
Elizabeth Marie Thompson
Elton



Crawfish effigy
Cyril Billiot
Dulac, Terrebonne Parish
Houma Indian

Section 5: Decorative Folk Arts Exhibition Artifacts

Section A

Double wedding ring quilt sample

Nova Mercer
Jonesboro, Jackson Parish, Region 8
Anglo-American



Heart basket in the Bayou Lacombe Choctaw tradition

Thomas Colvin
Mandeville, St. Tammany Parish, Region 1
Anglo-American

This basket is made from split river cane. Heart-shaped and elbow-shaped baskets are

traditional southeastern forms that are produced by the Choctaw, Chitimacha, and Koasati. They were used to store dried herbs and other items and to process salt. Briny water was poured through the basket. As the liquid dried, salt crystals collected at the point at the bottom of the basket.



Thomas Colvin began to learn basketry at age seventeen from Mathilde Johnson, the last

Choctaw to make baskets in the Lacombe community. Before she would take him as a student, Colvin had to convince Johnson of his sincerity and willingness to learn. Later, Colvin assumed the obligation of sharing his knowledge with younger generations of Louisiana Choctaw.

Hungarian embroidered tablecloth

Ruby Petho
Hammond, Tangipahoa Parish, Region 2
Hungarian



Koasati turkey basket

Lorena Langley
Elton, Jefferson Davis Parish, Region 5
Koasati (Coushatta) Indian
Using pine straw, pine cones, and raffia, Koasati basketmakers make fine animal effigy baskets. Lorena Langley was known for her large turkey and alligator effigy baskets.



Section B

Embroidered dresser scarf

Mearl Byles

Natchitoches, Natchitoches Parish, Region 7
Anglo-American

Crab effigy

Cyril Billiot

Dulac, Terrebonne Parish, Region 3
Houma Indian

Crawfish effigy

Cyril Billiot

Dulac, Terrebonne Parish, Region 3
Houma Indian

Carved tiger

Bill Caskey

Castor, Bienville Parish, Region 7
Anglo-Scots-Irish

Carved wood redfish

Ivy Billiot

Dulac, Terrebonne Parish, Region 3
Houma Indian

Ivy Billiot is a woodcarver whose work is exceptional in its beauty and close attention to detail. His work is marked by lifelike realism. He carves a wide variety of birds, animals, and objects, including ducks, geese, alligators, chickens, pirogues, fishing boats, and blowguns.



Section C

Chitimacha bead necklace

Faye Stouff

Charenton, St. Mary Parish, Region 4
Chitimacha Indian

Wild turkey tail fan

Curtis Lees

Jena, LaSalle Parish, Region 6
Curtis Lees, a Cherokee descendant, was both a naturalist and a craftsman. His knowledge of the flora and fauna of the Catahoula basin

was renowned. He produced beautiful and functional bows from native locust wood and arrows and blowguns from native cane. The darts for his blowguns were made from pine splinters or cane, with cotton or thistle used for the fletching. Mr. Lees also made ceremonial turkey feather fans and headdresses.

Koasati multicolored pine straw vase

Elizabeth Marie Thompson

Elton, Jefferson Davis Parish, Region 4

Koasati (Coushatta) Indian

This vase illustrates the wheat stitch, one of the styles produced by Koasati Indian basketmakers in Elton.

Koasati beaded belt buckle

Walter Celestine

Livingston, Livingston Parish, Region 2

Koasati (Coushatta) Indian

When colonial European traders initiated commercial relations with American Indians, colorful glass beads were among the most sought-after trade items. Indian artisans immediately began to add fine beadwork to items like blankets and clothing and to produce jewelry. Later they incorporated beadwork into designs on drumstick handles, leggings, bags, and saddles. Beadwork remains important in American tribal arts. Contemporary southeastern beadwork can be found on items like headbands, hair clips, belt buckles, and cigarette lighters.



Crocheted tortilla warmer

Maria Lopez

Bernice, Union Parish, Region 8
Mexican

Section 6: Occupational Crafts

Occupational crafts are those that relate to work outside the house in fishing, foraging, hunting, and farming. They are also the tools and products of trades such as blacksmithing, boatbuilding, stone masonry, and carpentry. Thus occupational crafts may be part of subsistence or cash economies. Generally these crafts are learned within families and communities or in a master/apprentice relationship.

It is difficult in this exhibit to represent large-scale traditional skills or tools such as those involved in blacksmithing, wooden boatbuilding or folk house construction. However, the dugout pirogue offers an example of one such craft tradition, boatbuilding.

While fishing and hunting and agriculture are pursued increasingly as pleasure rather than work, many traditional work-related objects retain their value whether the goal is subsistence, cash income, or sport. On the other hand some items, especially tools, are being replaced by mass produced goods. Thus, traditional work related items are sometimes viewed out of context as antiques or art objects. All of the tool and craft types in this section are in use in original or modified forms in Louisiana today.



Duck Decoys

The Do-Gris Decoy (left) by Ralph Shultz, Metairie.

The Ring-Neck Drake Decoy (right) is by J.O. Bishop, New Orleans.

Tools

The froe (top) by Ed Webb of Hornbeck in Vernon Parish is used to cleave wood staves or shingles from a block of wood.

Below is an axe or hammer handle.

Section 6: Occupational Crafts Exhibition Artifacts

Section A

Trammel net

Paul Pelas
Port Sulphur, Plaquemines Parish, Region 1
Croatian



Mallard drive decoy in the 1930s style

Irvan Perez
St. Bernard, St. Bernard Parish, Region 1
Isleño

Ring-necked drake decoy

J. O. Bishop
New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Region 1
German

Section B

Dos-gris decoy with weight

Ralph Shultz
Metairie, Jefferson Parish, Region 1
Anglo-American

Duck call

Irvan Perez
St. Bernard, St. Bernard Parish, Region 1
Isleño

Mallard drake decoy (knife cut)

Anthony Spongia
Chalmette, St. Bernard Parish, Region 1
Italian

Section C

Wide-bladed paddle

Raymond Sedatol
Pierre Part, Assumption Parish, Region 3
Cajun

Raymond Sedatol calls his cypress paddles "*pagailles indiens*," Cajun French for "Indian paddles." He learned to make them in this style when he was a young man working in Atchafalaya Basin logging camps. Wide-bladed paddles of this type are common along the eastern fringe of the Atchafalaya and among the Isleños south of New Orleans. Sedatol claims his wide-bladed paddles are made for speed—they propel a pirogue much faster than the long, narrow-bladed *pagailles* used by Cajuns of the western Atchafalaya and southwest Louisiana.



Froe

Ed Webb
Hornbeck, Vernon Parish, Region 6
Anglo-American
This tool is used to cleave wood staves or shingles.

Axe or hammer handle

Ed Webb
Hornbeck, Vernon Parish, Region 6
Anglo-American

Boot scraper

Karl Nettles
Gonzales, Ascension Parish, Region 6
Anglo-Scots-Irish



Section 7: Folk Instruments

Louisiana has produced a wide variety of traditional music styles reflective of its cultural diversity. Original to the state are Cajun music, black Creole zydeco, and of course, traditional jazz. In addition, Louisiana is recognized for its gospel, blues, old-time country, and rockabilly music. Louisiana folk instruments show a range as broad as the styles played. They go from the most basic mouth box, cigar box fiddle, and vest washboard to fiddle, mandolin, and diatonic accordion. The latter was developed by Cajun craftsmen during World War II when German models were no longer available. The vest *frottoir*, used for zydeco, shows how modern sheet metal technology can serve to carry on the Afro-Caribbean rhythm of Creole French music. These instruments, from basic to elaborate, are the "tools" of traditional music in Louisiana. In the hands of Louisiana folk musicians these and other instruments as well as peoples' voices provide the waltzes and two-steps of a Saturday night Cajun fais-do-do, the breakdowns and reels of North Louisiana fiddle contests, and the second-line beat of the New Orleans street parade



Tit Fer (Triangle by Don Montoucet

South Louisiana

Cajun

Metal

Photo: Thomas A. Wintz, Jr.



Frottoir

Metal

Patrick Champagne

Lafayette

Cajun

Section 7: Folk Instruments Exhibition Artifacts

Section A-B

Fiddle and bow (dark wood)

Adner Ortego
Washington, St. Landry Parish, Region 4
Cajun



'Tit fer (triangle)

Larry Miller
Iota, Acadia Parish, Region 4
German-Cajun

'Tit fer (triangle)

Larry Miller
Iota, Acadia Parish, Region 4
German-Cajun

Cajun spoons

Larry Miller
Iota, Acadia Parish, Region 4
German-Cajun

Years ago, inexpensive, homemade instruments often provided the only percussion for traditional music. At Cajun house dances or *bals de maison*, a player might borrow a pair of metal spoons from the homeowner and hit them against his leg, marking rhythm for the dancers. Larry Miller—who was already making accordions and triangles—decided to reintroduce spoons and spoon playing. He says that he couldn't find any of the "old originals" because they were always improvised for the evening. Instead, he interviewed older people about their memories of musical spoons, and then set about replicating them. He used cypress lumber to make the handle, because, as he explains, cypress "is an identifiable Louisiana wood." Silicone holds the spoons in place, allowing the "bounce" they need to sound good while giving the player a good, firm grip.

Mandolin

Luke Thompson
Baker, East Baton Rouge Parish, Region 2
Anglo-Scots-Irish

Section C

Fiddle and bow (blonde wood)

Marcel "Tex" Grimsley
Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Region 7
Anglo-Scots-Irish



The Creole State Exhibition

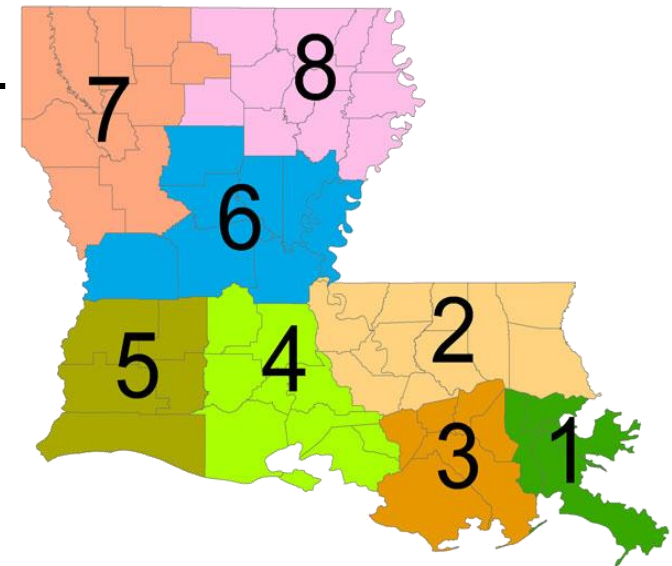
1. In which Louisiana cultural region do you live?

(Find your parish on the map. In which colored region is your parish located? What is the number of your region?)

Region number _____

Region color _____

2. Explore the Creole State Exhibition to find three interesting artifacts that were or are used or made in your region (Look for the region number by the artifact). Use the exhibit information to complete the artifact cards below.



Louisiana's Cultural Regions

Exhibit provided by
Lieutenant Governor Jay
Dardenne
and the
Department of Culture,
Recreation and Tourism
www.crt.state.la.us

LOUISIANA
Pick your Passion

What am I? Answers

1. Choctaw heart basket;
2. bull roarer
3. froe
4. boot scraper
5. cornshuck purse
6. Cypress spinner toy
7. tit fer
8. Koasati pine straw
9. Houma moss doll with
10. Choctaw Apache

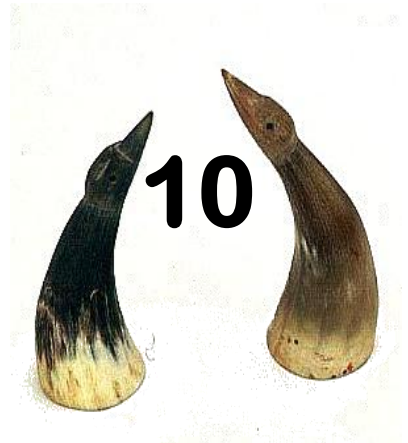
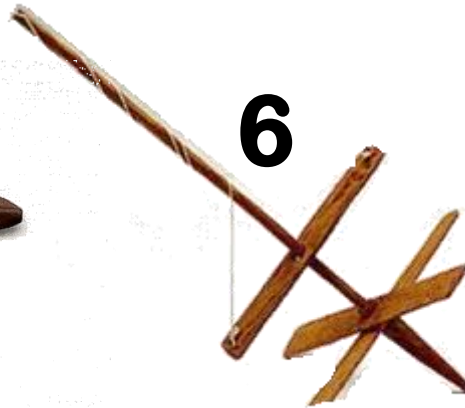
Artifact 1	Artifact 2	Artifact 3
What is the name of the item?	What is the name of the item?	What is the name of the item?
What cultural group used/uses it?	What cultural group used/uses it?	What cultural group used/uses it?
How was/is the item used it?	How was/is the item used it?	How was/is the item used it?



What am I?

Directions

Explore the exhibition to find the name and use of each item.



Write the name of each item by the correct number.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

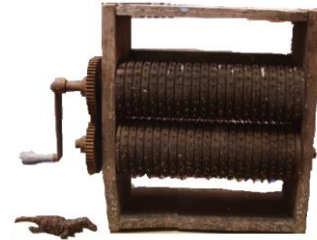
For Further Exploration

Visit the **third floor of the Capitol Park Museum**, which is located within walking distance of the State Capitol at the corner of Spanish Town Rd. and Fourth St., to find these Louisiana cultural artifacts.

All Saints' Day Immortelle and Iron Cross



Hand-cranked Moss Gin



Catfish Trap Model



Horsehair Rope



Cajun Accordion



Frottoir



Hand Cranked Coffee Mill



Model Oyster Boat, Camp House and Pier



Ceremonial Koasati Pinestraw Mask



St. Joseph Altar

