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Web general article: *Ancient Ohio Art Series*

Author: Tom Law

The Ancient Ohio Art Series

Producer: Tom Law, Voyageur Media Group, Inc.

Archives / Curation: Martha Potter Otto, The Ohio Historical Society.

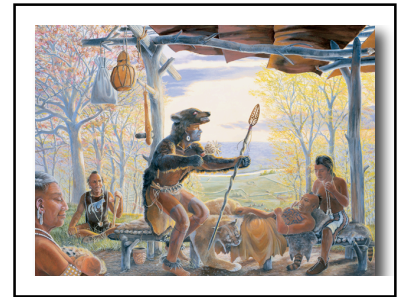
Artist: Susan A. Walton, SA Walton Studio, Florida.

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Release: 2004

Summary

The Ancient Ohio Art Series is a collection of six original artworks that depict American Indian lifeway scenes from each of the prehistoric periods in Ohio. The artwork was developed as part of the Ohio Archaeology project, an educational media initiative developed by Voyageur Media Group, Inc., in collaboration with scholars from most of the archaeological institutions in the state. Based on extensive archaeological research, the artworks presents scenes spanning over 12,000 years of ancient American Indian culture, from the first human occupation of Ohio during the Paleoindian Period to the last ancient cultures before European contact in the Late Prehistoric Period.



Background

The *Ancient Ohio Art Series* was developed as part of the Ohio Archaeology project, an educational media initiative developed by Voyageur Media Group, Inc., in collaboration with scholars from most of the archaeological institutions in the state. Voyageur and The Ohio Historical Society partnered to raise about \$37,000 from the Ohio Arts Council and the Wohlgemuth Herschede Foundation to develop the art series, and fill a void of quality artist's renderings about ancient American cultures in the Ohio Valley. Ms. Martha Potter Otto, Curator of Archaeology, Ohio Historical Society, led an advisory panel that outlined the purpose and goals for the art series, and selected the artist during a national search in 2003. Susan A. Walton, SA Walton Studios, Florida, won the commission based on her skill and extensive experience painting similar artworks for Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site and many other archaeological sites and museums.

The advisory panel selected one subject for each period in order to show the broad range of ancient cultural sites and activities in Ohio. Martha Otto worked with numerous archaeologists and site managers to gather an extensive body of research and images. Some works, such as the Paleoindian caribou camp, are based on scientific data from several sites. Others, like SunWatch Indian Village, are based on a single site. Otto and Walton also visited numerous sites and museums, working with specialists on the final settings, seasons and elements for each panel. "Flint tools and pottery fragments help archaeologists understand details of the lives of pre contact American Indians in Ohio," says Martha Potter Otto. "However, sometimes it is harder to visualize their overall lifestyles - the forest rather than the trees." The Ancient Ohio Art Series is designed to present cohesive views of the various cultures that portray their activities, communities, and their relationships to their natural surroundings.

Distribution

Susan Walton completed *The Ancient Ohio Art Series* in November of 2004. Her six, 4' x 3' acrylic panels were then formally curated and professional photographed by The Ohio Historical Society. The *Ancient Ohio Art Series* has become an "incredibly valuable resource for scholars, teachers and students," according to Tom Law, Project Director, Voyageur Media Group Inc. The art series was first published in 2005 within the popular book, *Ohio Archaeology: An Illustrated Chronicle of Ohio's Ancient American Indian Cultures*. Since then, the artworks have been published in dozens of museum exhibits, books, educational websites and magazine articles throughout the world.

About the Artist

Susan A. Walton has created several murals and artworks related to the ancient American Indian cultures of the Midwestern United States. Ms. Walton began her studio in 1987 near St. Louis, Missouri, where she studied and painted the local flora and fauna. She served as a volunteer at Cahokia Mounds State Park, which inspired her appreciation of archaeology and nature. Walton has created murals depicting American Indian life for Cahokia, Wickliffe Mounds Research Center in Kentucky, and the Chippewa Nature Center in Michigan. She has detailed knowledge of the indigenous plants and animals in North America, as well as the artifacts, regalia and tools of ancient American Indian cultures of the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys.



Artist Susan Walton (left), site manager Sandy Yee (center), and project director Martha Potter Otto (right), tour SunWatch Indian Village, a reconstructed Fort Ancient village during research for the "Ancient Ohio Art Series in 2003.

Archive and Use

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The *Ancient Ohio Art Series* was made possible with support from The Wohlgemuth Herschede Foundation, The Ohio Arts Council, The Ohio Historical Society and Voyageur Media Group, Inc.