

**WHAT IS ART?**

# What is Art?

There are any number of ideas as to what art is.



Pablo Picasso

1903

Some definitions are -----



Vincent Van Gogh

?

“Art is the creative expression of thoughts, ideas or emotions, which stimulates the senses or the imagination of the beholder.”

“Art evokes a response that takes me away from the humdrum of what I am doing at the time, and lets me see from a new perspective.”



Claus Oldenberg

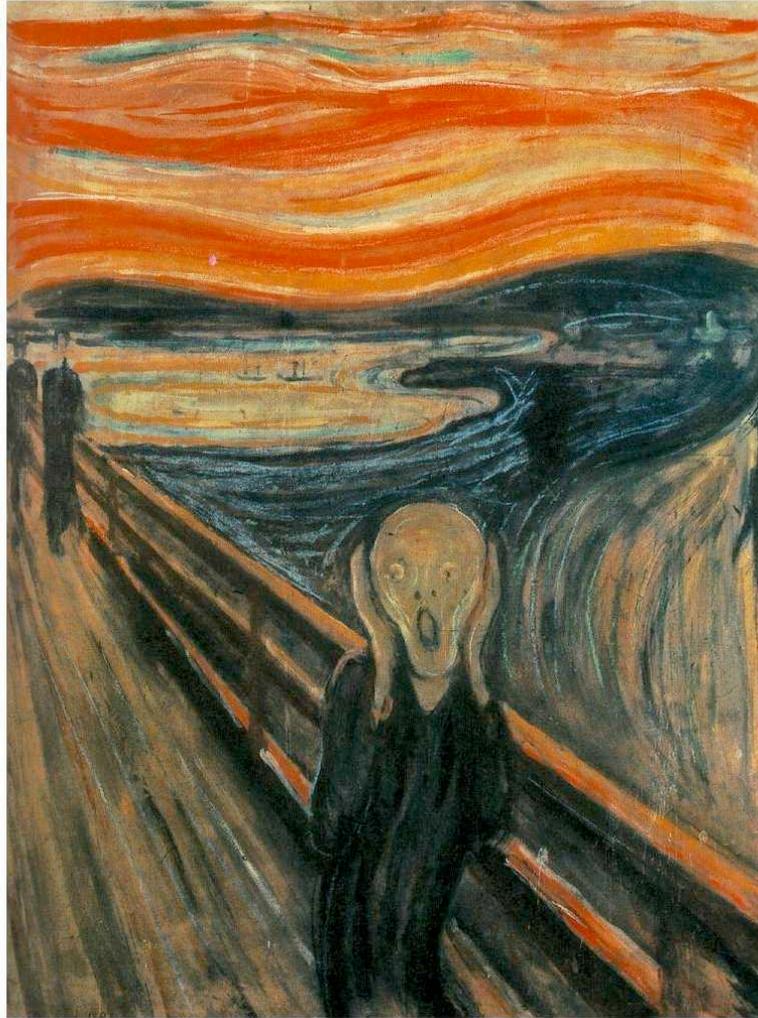
?



“A refined craft  
elevated by vision  
or inspiration.”

Edgar Degas

1874



Edvard Munch

1873

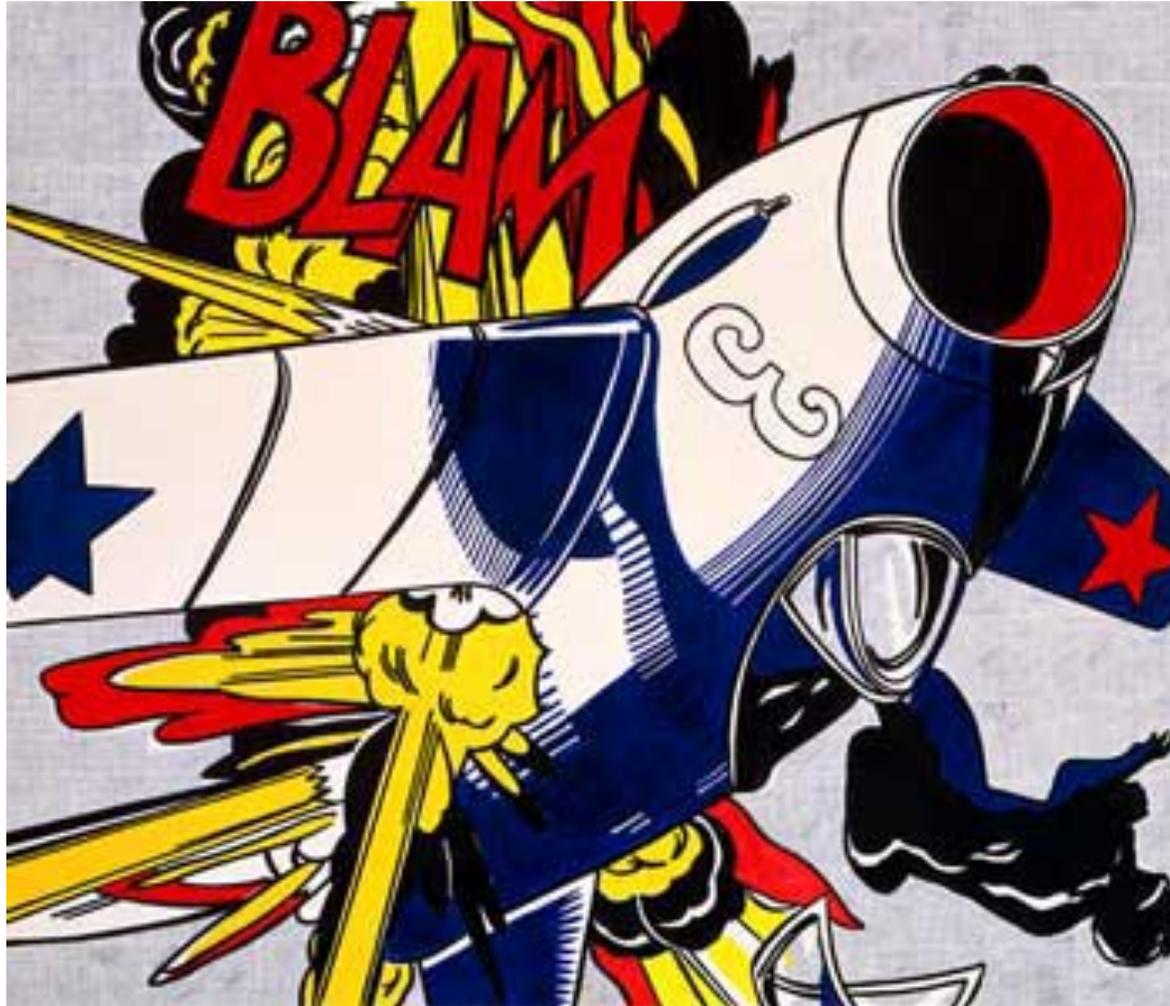
“A creative expression of oneself done in one's choice of medium.”

“Art is a product of imaginative minds.”



Pierre Bonnard

1913



Roy Lichtenstein

1962

“...impossible to say.”

Art can be studied a number of different ways: as an **artist**, an art critic and as an art historian.

As an **artist**, you study how to produce Art, or more rightly, how to better make Art.

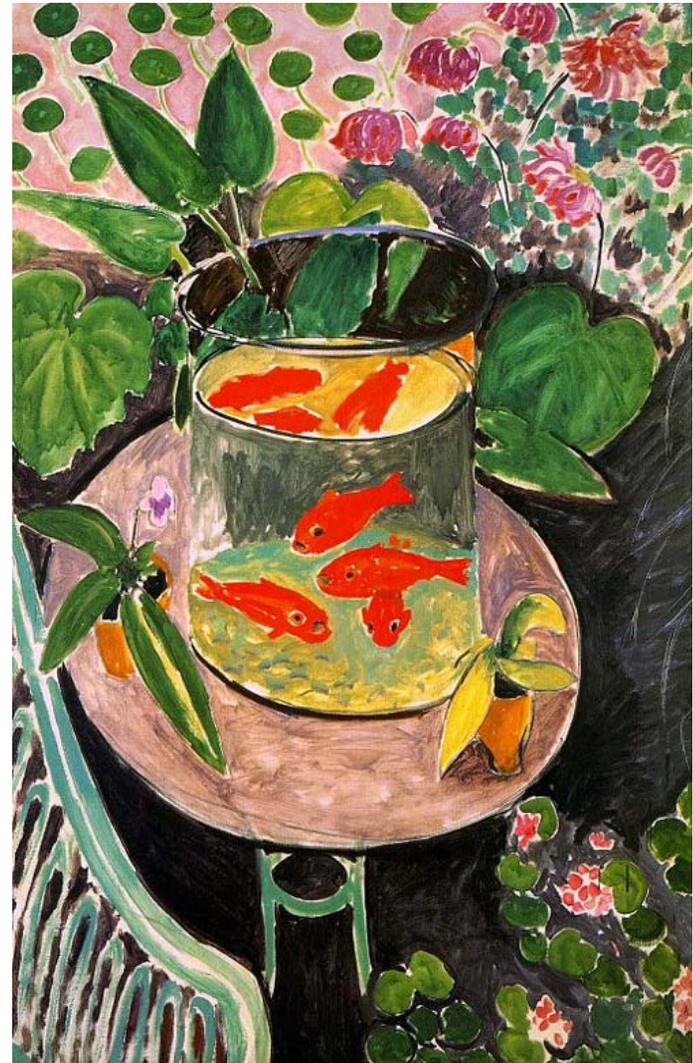
This involves learning ways to manipulate the media (the physical 'stuff' of art, paint, charcoal, ink etc.) For example, learning to draw.



Edgar Degas

1870's

It also involves understanding how best to combine the most basic visual elements of art (form, shape, colour, texture, and value (light and dark) using the principals of art (balance, movement, rhythm, emphasis, unity, pattern and contrast).



Henri Matisse

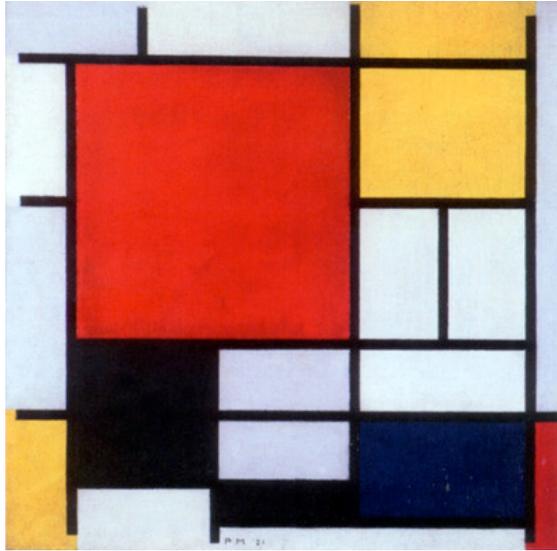
1912



Francisco Goya

1815

But, art is not just about images of things, it is also a language, a way to transmit ideas or feelings (expression). So.....



Piet Mondrian

1921



Sue Coe

2006

You can say that you can look at a work of art in two basic ways:

As **form** (formal) which means what are the visual 'things' that go together to make up an artwork i.e. colour, line, shapes etc.

And, as a **concept** (conceptual), what are the ideas that may be communicated by an artwork.

# What is this image about?



Marc Chagall

1950



Or this?

Jacques-Louis David

1801

Or this?



Wayne Thiebaud

1970's

Art doesn't have to have heavy important meaning to be good.

but it might.....

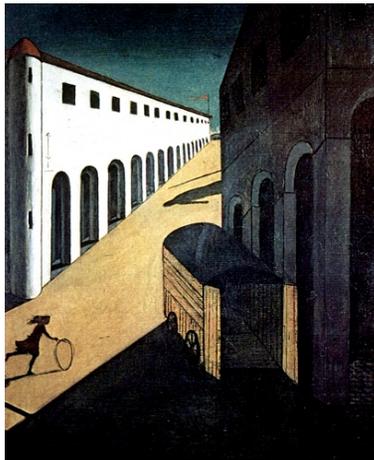
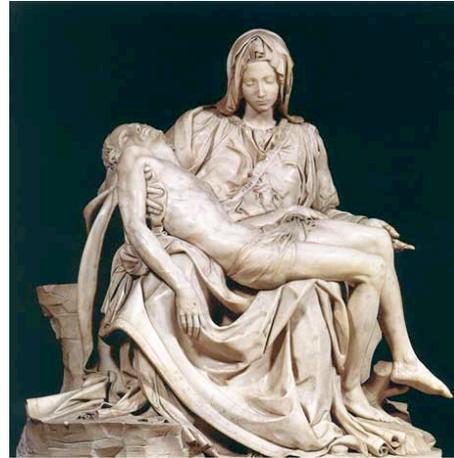


Pablo Picasso

1837

Pablo Picasso painted the "Guernica" in 1937 as an emotional response to the unwarranted Nazi fire-bombing of the town of Guernica in his home country of Spain.

Art is studied in different ways by different people for different reasons.





Cave  
painting from  
Lascaux  
France

Approx.  
15,000 B.C.

People have been making art for at least 17,000 years. Since that time, every culture has produced some form of art. The study of art and artists from different times and different cultures is called Art History.

# Art History

Art historians try to answer such questions as:

Who made a particular work of art?

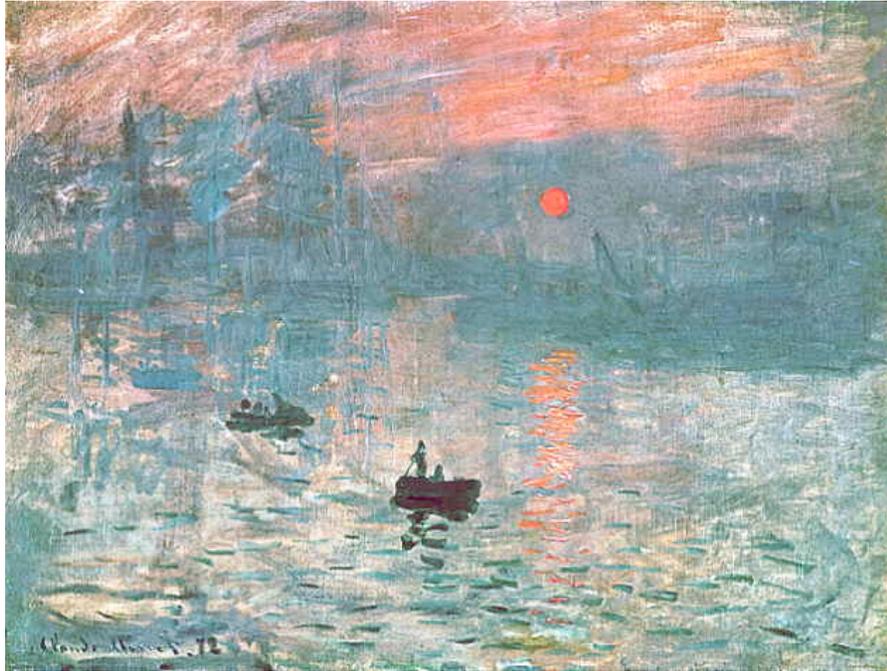
How did the artist make the work?

Who were their teachers?

How did the time in which they live affect the way in which artist (or artists) made their work?

How did the work artists make effect the course of artistic, political and social events?

Art historians divide art of a particular style done at a similar time into Art Movements. These will be artists who share a similar technique, philosophy or goal.



Claude Monet

1914



August Renoir

1878

These are paintings done by a couple of the French Impressionists during the 1860's – 90's., a very important Art Movement.

In addition to the study of Art History, another way in which art is studied is by art critics.

Art Criticism is a process which involves examining, describing, analyzing, interpreting and judging artwork based upon craftsmanship, the elements and principals of design, aesthetics (the philosophy of beauty) and the intention behind its creation.



Honoré Daumier

1850's

# A Few Art Terms

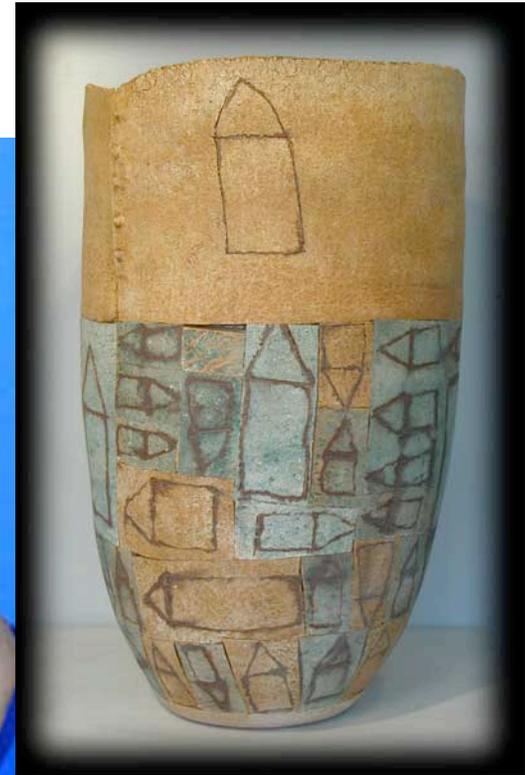
## Avant-Garde

A group active in the invention and application of new ideas and techniques in an original or experimental way. Some avant-garde works are intended to shock those who are accustomed to traditional, established styles.



Damian Hirst

2007



## Ceramics

The art making of objects of clay and firing them in a kiln.

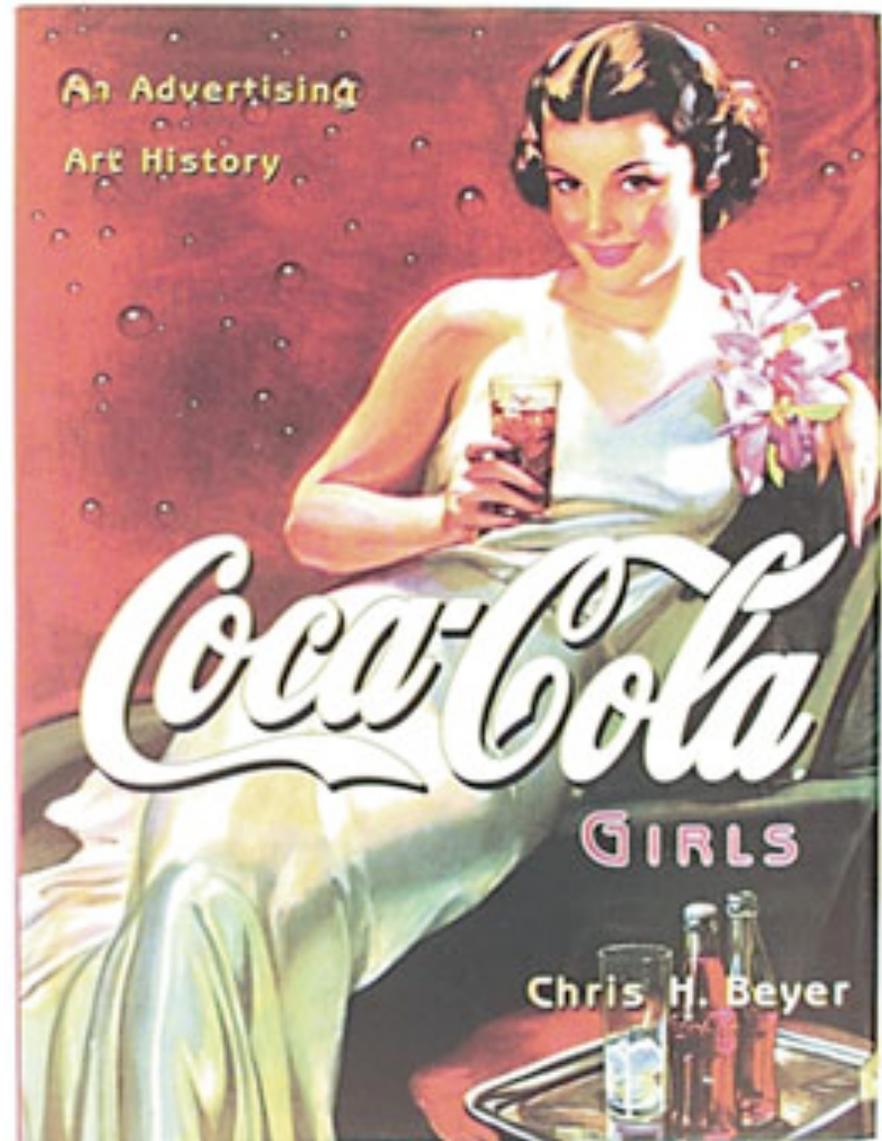
# Collage

Collage is from the French meaning "paste up". The combination of pieces of cloth, magazines and other found objects to create artwork.



Randy Plowman

**commercial art** - Works which involve creating images and objects for commercial purposes, rather than for fine art ones.



**content** - What a work of art is about; its subject matter.



Andy Warhol 1962

Sometimes this is easy to figure out.....



Marcel Duchamp 1917

Sometimes it's not.



Frank Stella

1969

**Composition**

The arrangement of lines, colors and form.

## **Contrast**

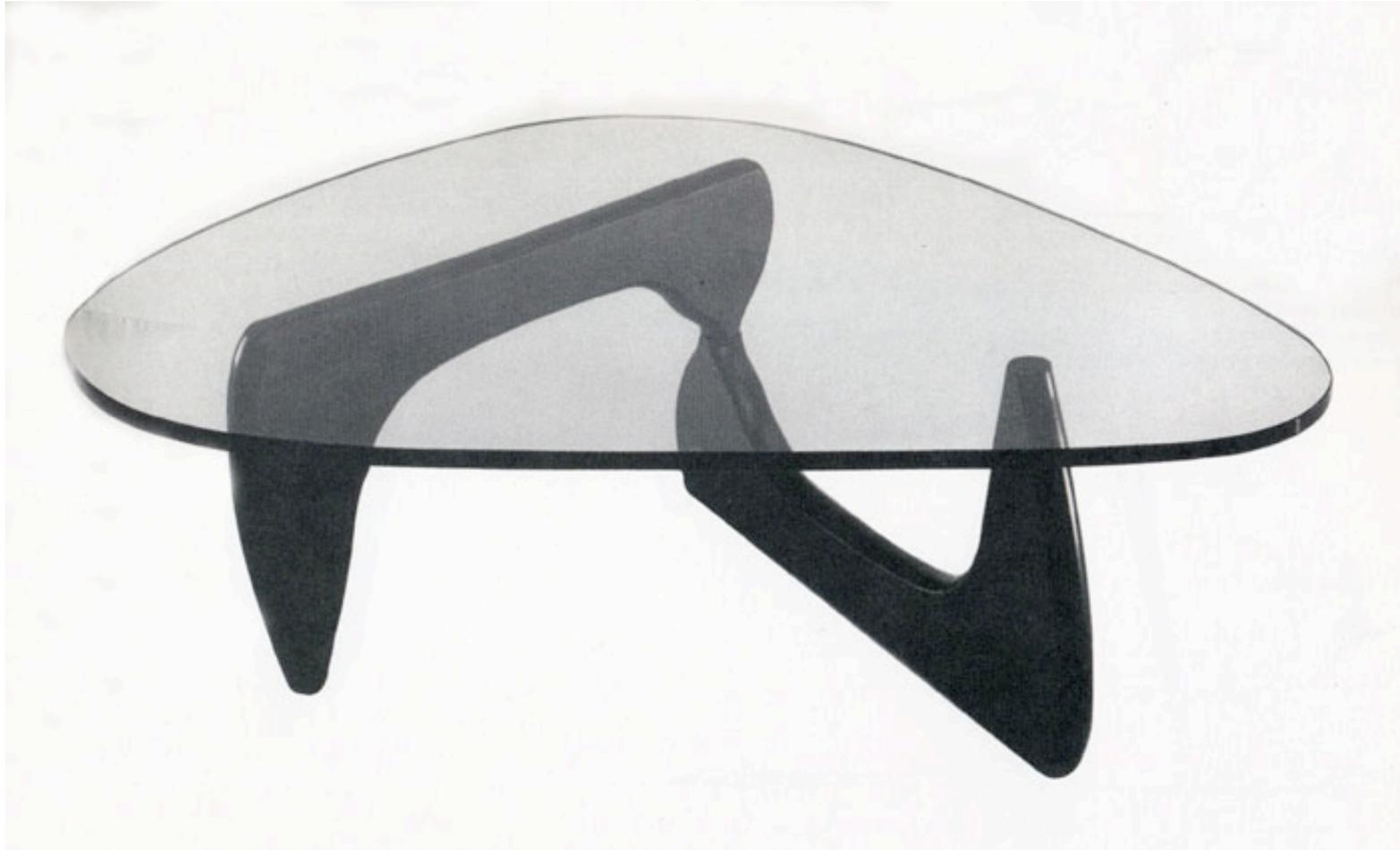
Contrast is created by using opposites near or beside one another, such as a light object next to a dark object or a rough texture next to a smooth texture.



Rembrandt van Rijn

1669

**Design** – The organization or composition of an artwork, the skilled arrangement of the parts.



Isamu Noguchi

## Elements of Art

Elements of art are the basic visual symbols found in the work such as lines, shape, form, space, point, light, motion, texture and color.



Katie Kretz

2007



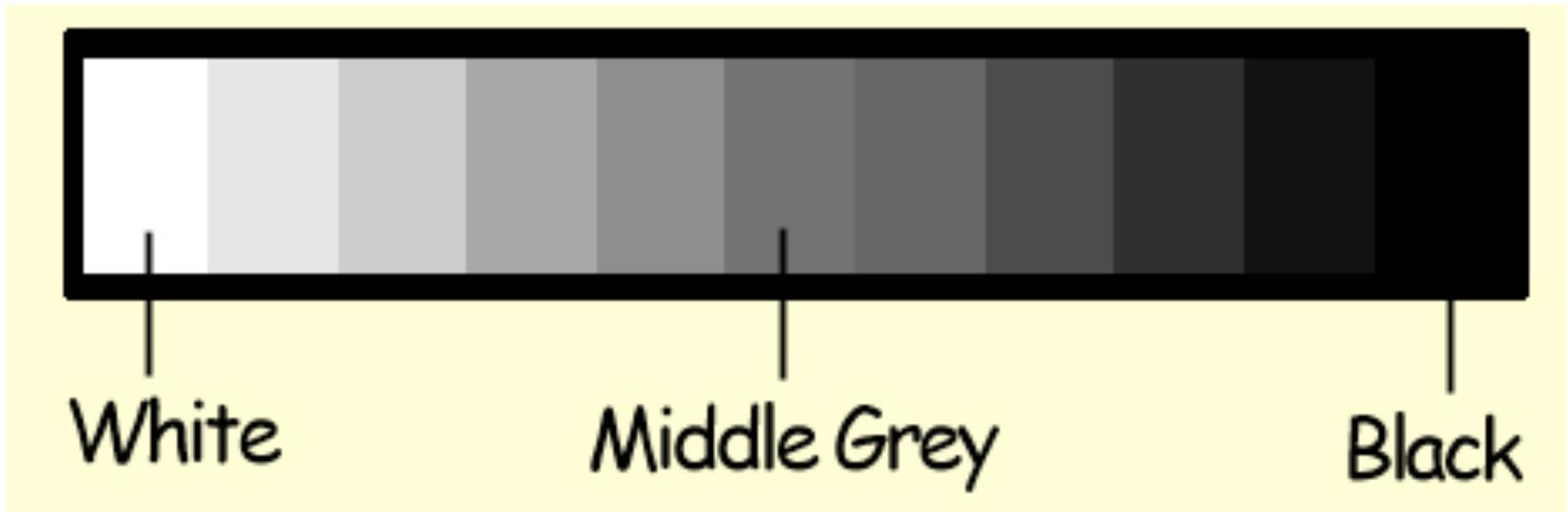
Juan Gris

1921

**Fine Art** - Art created purely for expression, communication, or contemplation, not for any commercial purpose. Painting and sculpture are the best known of the fine arts.



**Art Medium or Media** - The art material that is used in a work of art such as clay, paint or pencil. Describing more than one art medium is referred to as media. Any substance added to color to facilitate application or to achieve a desired effect.



**value** - The lightness or darkness of a line, shape or area in terms of black to white.

**expressionistic** - A characteristic of some art, generally since the mid-19th century, leaning toward the expression of emotion over objective description.



Otto Dix

1920's



August Rodin

1878

**figurative** - A term used to describe art which is based on the figure.

**organic** - A description of images which are partly or wholly derived from natural forms, such as curvilinear, irregular, indicative of growth, biologically-based, etc.



Georgia O'Keeffe

1950's