

A World of Art

Henry M. Sayre

**Eighth
Edition**

New in this edition:
Seven new chapters focusing on major themes in art, each of which approaches its theme from both an historical and global perspective:

Spiritual Belief / The Life Cycle / Love and Sex / The Body, Gender, and Identity / The Individual and Cultural Identity / Power / Science, Technology, and the Environment.

Some 40 videos from the PBS Art21 series in which the artworks reproduced in the text are discussed by the artists themselves, available in REVEL.

Over 100 new and updated contemporary art images showcase the latest developments in the contemporary art world.

A World of Art

This page intentionally left blank

A World of Art

Eighth Edition

Henry M. Sayre

Oregon State University—Cascades Campus

PEARSON

Boston Columbus Indianapolis New York San Francisco
Amsterdam Cape Town Dubai London Madrid Milan Munich Paris Montreal Toronto
Delhi Mexico City São Paulo Sydney Hong Kong Seoul Singapore Taipei Tokyo

Editor in Chief: Sarah Touborg
Senior Editor: Helen Ronan
Editorial Assistants: Victoria Engros and Claire Ptaschinski
Executive Marketing Manager: Wendy Albert
Senior Product Marketer: Jeremy Intal
Marketing Assistants: Frank Alcaron and Paige Patunas
Managing Editor: Melissa Feimer
Senior Program Manager: Barbara Marttine Cappuccio
Project Manager: Joe Scordato

Operations Specialist: Diane Peirano
Senior Digital Project Manager: Rich Barnes
Pearson Imaging Center: Corin Skidds
Full-Service Project Management: Lumina Datamatics
Composition: Lumina Datamatics
Printer/Binder: Courier/Kendallville
Cover Printer: Lehigh Phoenix
Cover Design: Pentagram
Cover Art Director: Kathryn Foot

Copyright © 2016, 2013, 2010 by Pearson Education, Inc. or its affiliates. All Rights Reserved.

Printed in the United States of America. This publication is protected by copyright, and permission should be obtained from the publisher prior to any prohibited reproduction, storage in a retrieval system, or transmission in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise. For information regarding permissions, request forms and the appropriate contacts within the Pearson Rights & Permissions Department, please visit www.pearsoned.com/permissions/.

Acknowledgments of third party content appear on page 669, which constitutes an extension of this copyright page.

PEARSON and ALWAYS LEARNING are exclusive trademarks owned by Pearson Education, Inc. or its affiliates in the United States and/or other countries.

Unless otherwise indicated herein, any third-party trademarks that may appear in this work are the property of their respective owners and any references to third-party trademarks, logos or other trade dress are for demonstrative or descriptive purposes only. Such references are not intended to imply any sponsorship, endorsement, authorization, or promotion of Pearson's products by the owners of such marks, or any relationship between the owner and Pearson.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Sayre, Henry M.,
A world of art / Henry M. Sayre, Oregon State University-Cascades Campus. — EIGHTH Edition.
pages cm
ISBN 978-0-13-408180-9
1. Art. I. Title.
N7425.S29 2015
700—dc23

2015024482

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Student Edition
ISBN 10: 0-13-408180-3
ISBN 13: 978-0-13-408180-9

Instructor's Review Copy
ISBN 10: 0-13-416989-1
ISBN 13: 978-0-13-416989-7

Books à la carte
ISBN 10: 0-13-408226-5
ISBN 13: 978-0-13-408226-4

PEARSON

As always, for my boys, Rob and John, and for Sandy

Brief Contents

Dear Student x

Additional Resources & Choices xiv

Student Toolkit xvi

Part 1 The Visual World: Understanding the Art You See 2

1 Discovering a World of Art 4

2 Developing Visual Literacy 28

Part 2 The Formal Elements and Their Design: Describing the Art You See 46

3 Line 48

4 Shape and Space 66

5 Light and Color 88

6 Texture, Time, and Motion 116

7 The Principles of Design 132

Part 3 The Fine Arts Media: Learning How Art is Made 158

8 Drawing 160

9 Painting 182

10 Printmaking 212

11 Photography and Time-Based Media 238

12 Sculpture 274

13 The Craft Media 300

14 Architecture 328

15 The Design Profession 362

Part 4 The Visual Record: Placing the Arts in Historical Context 390

16 The Ancient World 392

17 The Age of Faith 418

18 The Renaissance through the Baroque 444

19 The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries 472

20 From 1900 to the Present 494

Part 5 The Themes of Art: Seeing Continuity and Change over Time 528

21 Spiritual Belief 530

22 The Cycle of Life 546

23 Love and Sex 564

24 The Body, Gender, and Identity 582

25 The Individual and Cultural Identity 600

26 Power 618

27 Science, Technology, and the Environment 638

The Critical Process 658

Glossary 661

Credits 669

Index 674

Contents

Dear Student	x	Representing Three-Dimensional Space in Two Dimensions	74
Additional Resources & Choices	xiv	Modern Experiments and New Dimensions	82
Student Toolkit	xvi	The Critical Process: Thinking about Space	86
Part 1			
The Visual World: Understanding the Art You See			
<hr/>			
1 Discovering a World of Art			
The World as We Perceive It			
The World as Artists See It			
The Creative Process: From Sketch to Final Vision: Pablo Picasso’s <i>Les Femmes d’Alger</i>			
Seeing the Value in Art			
The Critical Process: Thinking about Making and Seeing Works of Art			
2 Developing Visual Literacy			
Words and Images			
Representation and Abstraction			
The Creative Process: Abstract Illusionism: George Green’s ... <i>marooned in dreaming: a path of song and mind</i>			
Form and Meaning			
Convention, Symbols, and Interpretation			
The Critical Process: Thinking about Visual Conventions			
Part 2			
The Formal Elements and Their Design: Describing the Art You See			
<hr/>			
3 Line			
Varieties of Line			
Qualities of Line			
The Creative Process: From Painting to Drawing: Vincent van Gogh’s <i>The Sower</i>			
The Creative Process: The Drip as Line: Hung Liu’s <i>Three Fujins</i>			
The Critical Process: Thinking about Line			
4 Shape and Space			
Shape and Mass			
The Creative Process: From Two to Three Dimensions: Umberto Boccioni’s <i>Development of a Bottle in Space</i>			
5 Light and Color			
Light			
2 The Creative Process: The Play of Light and Dark: Mary Cassatt’s <i>In the Loge</i>			
Color			
6 The Creative Process: The New Pointillism: Chuck Close’s <i>Stanley</i>			
Representational and Symbolic Uses of Color			
The Critical Process: Thinking about Light and Color			
6 Texture, Time, and Motion			
Texture			
Time and Motion			
The Creative Process: Painting as Action: Jackson Pollock’s <i>No. 32, 1950</i>			
The Critical Process: Thinking about the Formal Elements			
7 The Principles of Design			
Balance			
Emphasis and Focal Point			
The Creative Process: A Multiplication of Focal Points: Diego Velázquez’s <i>Las Meninas</i>			
Scale and Proportion			
Pattern, Repetition, and Rhythm			
Unity and Variety			
The Critical Process: Thinking about the Principles of Design			
Part 3			
The Fine Arts Media: Learning How Art is Made			
<hr/>			
8 Drawing			
From Preparatory Sketch to Finished Work of Art			
Drawing Materials			
The Creative Process: Movement and Gesture: Raphael’s <i>Alba Madonna</i>			
Innovative Drawing Media			
The Critical Process: Thinking about Drawing			

9 Painting		
Early Painting Media		
The Creative Process: Preparing to Paint the Sistine Chapel: Michelangelo's <i>Libyan Sibyl</i>		
Oil Painting		
Watercolor and Gouache		
Synthetic Media		
Mixed Media		
The Creative Process: Political Collage: Hannah Höch's <i>Cut with the Kitchen Knife</i>		
The Critical Process: Thinking about Painting		
10 Printmaking		
The Print and its Earliest Uses		
Relief Processes		
The Creative Process: Making an Ukiyo-e Print: Kitigawa Utamaro's <i>Studio</i>		
Intaglio Processes		
The Creative Process: Four-Color Intaglio: Yuji Hiratsuka's <i>Miracle Grow Hypnotist</i>		
Lithography		
Silkscreen Printing		
Monotypes		
The Critical Process: Thinking about Printmaking		
11 Photography and Time-Based Media	238	
The Early History and Formal Foundations of Photography		
Color and Digital Photography		
The Creative Process: The Darkroom as Laboratory: Jerry Uelsmann's <i>Untitled</i>		
Film		
Video Art		
The Computer and New Media		
The Creative Process: Revisioning a Painting as Video: Bill Viola's <i>The Greeting</i>		
The Critical Process: Thinking about Photography and Time-Based Media		
12 Sculpture		
The Three Forms of Sculptural Space		
Carving		
Modeling		
Casting		
Assemblage		
Installations and Earthworks		
Performance Art as Living Sculpture		
The Critical Process: Thinking about Sculpture		
182 13 The Craft Media	300	
183 The Crafts as Fine Art	302	
Ceramics	303	
190 The Creative Process: Ceramics as Politics: Julie Green's <i>The Last Supper</i>	308	
198 Glass	310	
202 Fiber	313	
204 The Creative Process: A New Narrative: Fred Wilson's <i>Mining the Museum</i>	314	
206 Metal	321	
210 Wood	324	
The Critical Process: Thinking about the Crafts as Fine Art	326	
212 14 Architecture	328	
214 Environment	328	
216 Early Architectural Technologies	333	
218 Modern and Contemporary Architectural Technologies	342	
224 The Creative Process: Thinking through Architecture: Frank Lloyd Wright's <i>Fallingwater</i>	348	
228 The Creative Process: Discovering Where to Go: Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum Bilbao	354	
232 Community Life	356	
233 The Critical Process: Thinking about Architecture	360	
234 15 The Design Profession	362	
236 The Rise of Design in the Nineteenth Century	364	
241 Design in the Modernist Era	371	
245 Streamlining and Organic Design, 1930–60	376	
252 Design Since 1980	381	
257 The Creative Process: April Greiman and Design Technology	384	
261 The Critical Process: Thinking about Design	388	
267 Part 4		
268 The Visual Record: Placing the Arts in Historical Context	390	
271 16 The Ancient World	392	
274 The Earliest Art	394	
276 Mesopotamian Cultures	396	
280 Egyptian Civilization	397	
282 River Valley Societies in India and China	400	
283 Complex Societies in the Americas	402	
286 Aegean and Greek Civilizations	404	
289 The Roman World	410	
295 Developments in Asia	414	
298		

17 The Age of Faith		
Early Christian and Byzantine Art		
The Rise of Islam		
Christian Art in Europe		
Developments in Asia		
The Cultures of Africa		
18 The Renaissance through the Baroque		
The Renaissance		
The Era of Encounter		
The Mannerist Style in Europe		
The Baroque		
19 The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries		
The Early Eighteenth Century		
Cross-Cultural Contact: China and Europe		
Neoclassicism		
Romanticism		
Realism		
Impressionism		
Post-Impressionism		
20 From 1900 to the Present		
The New “Isms”		
Dada and Surrealism		
Politics and Painting		
American Modernism and Abstract Expressionism		
Pop Art and Minimalism		
Cross-Fertilization in Contemporary Art		
<i>The Critical Process: Thinking about Art Today</i>		
Part 5		
The Themes of Art: Seeing Continuity and Change over Time		
21 Spiritual Belief		
Connecting with Spirits and the Divine		
Giving Gods Human Form		
Sacred Space		
Spirituality and Abstraction		
<i>The Critical Process: Thinking about Art and Spiritual Belief</i>		
418 22 The Cycle of Life		546
420 Birth		548
424 Youth and Age		550
427 Contemplating Mortality		554
433 Burial and the Afterlife		558
441 <i>The Critical Process: Thinking about the Cycle of Life</i>		562
23 Love and Sex		564
444 Physical and Spiritual Love		564
444 Imaging Desire		572
455 Kisses		577
461 <i>The Critical Process: Thinking about Love and Sex</i>		580
464		
24 The Body, Gender, and Identity		582
The Body Beautiful		582
472 Performance: The Body as Work of Art		586
474 Gender and Identity		589
476 <i>The Critical Process: Thinking about the Body, Gender, and Identity</i>		598
477		
479		
483 25 The Individual and Cultural Identity		600
488 Nationalism and Identity		602
490 Class and Identity		607
Racial Identity and African-American Experience		611
494 <i>The Critical Process: Thinking about the Individual and Cultural Identity</i>		616
496		
500		
504 26 Power		618
506 Representing Rulers		619
508 Women and Power		623
510 Power, Race, and the Colonial Enterprise		627
526 The Power of the Museum		633
<i>The Critical Process: Thinking about Power</i>		636
27 Science, Technology, and the Environment		638
528 Technology and the Arts		639
530 Art and Environmental Understanding		642
532 Art, the Environment, and the Longer View		653
535 <i>The Critical Process: Thinking about Science, Technology, and the Environment</i>		656
537		
542 The Critical Process		658
Glossary		661
544 Credits		669
Index		674

Dear Student

You might be asking yourself, “Why are they making me take this course? What does art have to do with my engineering, or forestry, or business degree?” In fact, many students come to an art appreciation course thinking of it as something akin to a maraschino cherry sitting atop their education sundae—pretty to look at, but of questionable food value, and of little real use.

But as you come to understand art, I hope you will realize that in studying it, you have learned to *think* better. You might be surprised to learn, for instance, that in 2005 the New York City Police Department began taking newly promoted officers, including sergeants, captains, and uniformed executives, to the Frick Collection, an art museum on New York’s Upper East Side, in order to improve their observational skills by having them analyze works of art. Similar classes are offered to New York medical students to help them improve their diagnostic abilities when observing patients, teaching them to be sensitive to people’s facial expressions and body language. Art appreciation is not forensic science, but it teaches many of the same skills.

Perhaps more than anything else, an art appreciation course can teach you the art of critical thinking—how to ask the right questions about the visual world that surrounds us, and then respond meaningfully to the complexity of that world. This book is, in fact, unique in its emphasis on the critical thinking process—a process of questioning, exploration, trial and error, and discovery that you can generalize to your own experience and your own chosen field of endeavor. Critical thinking is really a matter of putting yourself in a questioning frame of mind.

We’ve added seven new chapters to this edition as well. They focus on seven different themes, all of which represent universal concerns that all creative people, in all cultures and at all times, have sought to explore and understand. If different cultures and different eras have inevitably addressed them differently, the quest to understand the world and our place in it is common to us all.

Today, culture is increasingly dominated by images—and I’ve included a lot of new, very contemporary ones in this eighth edition. The new REVEL digital learning environment available in this edition makes many of these images literally come to life by including some 40 videos of the artists themselves addressing the works at hand. And that’s not all that REVEL does. On top of that, nearly every image is pan-zoomable, making it possible for you to study images in detail. Panoramic views of many major monuments allow you explore them both inside and out. All students today must learn to see and interpret the images that surround them. REVEL engages you by asking you questions, creating writing environments, and providing for self-testing. You can no longer just passively “receive” these images, like watching television, or you will never come to understand them. I hope that you’ll find this book to be not just a useful, but an indispensable foundation in learning to negotiate your world.



About the Author

Henry M. Sayre is Distinguished Professor of Art History at Oregon State University–Cascades Campus in Bend, Oregon. He is producer and creator of the 10-part television series *A World of Art: Works in Progress*, which aired on PBS in the fall of 1997; and author of seven books: *The Humanities*; *Writing About Art*; *The Visual Text of William Carlos Williams*; *The Object of Performance: The American Avant-Garde since 1970*; and an art history book for children, *Cave Paintings to Picasso*.

What's New to this Edition?

Henry Sayre's *A World of Art* introduces students to art with an emphasis on critical thinking and visual literacy. This new eighth edition further strengthens these key aspects by examining major themes of art and by adding the new **REVEL** digital learning environment, which is designed for the way today's students read, think, and learn (see below).

Seven new chapters focus on major themes in art, each approaching its theme from both an historical and global perspective:

- Spiritual Belief
- The Cycle of Life
- Love and Sex
- The Body, Gender, and Identity
- The Individual and Cultural Identity
- Power
- Science, Technology, and the Environment

These new thematic chapters encourage students to see how artists across time and culture engage with the major questions that connect us as humans today.

Some 40 videos from the award winning PBS-broadcast series art21 in which the artworks reproduced in the text are discussed by the artists themselves, available in REVEL. Over the past decade, art21 has established itself as the preeminent chronicler of contemporary art and artists. These videos from the *Exclusive* series, which showcase art21 and *New York Close Up* artists in previously unreleased archival footage, range in length from 3–8 minutes and focus on aspects of an artist's process, provocative ideas, and biographical anecdotes.

Over 100 new and updated contemporary art images showcase the latest developments in the contemporary art world. *A World of Art* continues its commitment to introducing students to the art of today, while offering them the tools to approach these works with appreciation and understanding.

There are new and updated global art images throughout, including coverage of art in Africa, India, China, and Japan, supporting the text's core goal of introducing students to the world of art. In addition, the new chapters in Part 5 deepen the coverage of world art by showcasing a global range of approaches to universal themes.



Fig. 7-20 Kara Walker, *A Subtlety: The Marvellous Sugar Baby, an Homage to the unpaid and overworked Artisans who have refined our Sweet tastes from the cane fields to the Kitchens of the New World on the Occasion of the demolition of the Domino Sugar Refining Plant*, 2014. Installation view, Domino Sugar Factory, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York. Carved polystyrene coated with 160,000 lb of sugar. 10 × 7 × 75 ft. Courtesy the artist and Creative Projects, New York.



Fig. 7-21 Hokusai, *The Great Wave off Kanagawa*, from the series *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji*, 1823–29. Color woodcut, 10 × 15 in. © Historical Picture Archives/CONRHO.



Fig. 13-1 Ann Hamilton, *the event of a thread*, 2012. Large-scale installation, Park Avenue Armory, New York, December 5, 2012–January 6, 2013. Courtesy of Ann Hamilton Studio.

REVEL™

Educational technology designed for the way today's students read, think, and learn

Over the course of the last decade, as technology has increasingly encroached on the book as we know it—with the explosion, that is, of the Internet, digital media, and new forms of publishing, like the iPad and Kindle—I worried that books like A World of Art might one day lose their relevance. I envisioned them being supplanted by some as-yet-unforeseen technological wizardry, like a machine in a science fiction novel, that would transport my reader into a three- or four-dimensional learning space “beyond the book.” Well, little did I know that Pearson Education was developing just such a space, one firmly embedded in the book, not beyond it. From my point of view, REVEL represents one of the most important developments in art publishing and education in decades. I am extremely grateful to the team that has put it together and is continually working to improve it.

— Henry Sayre

When students are engaged deeply, they learn more effectively and perform better in their courses. This simple fact inspired the creation of REVEL: an immersive learning experience designed for the way today's students read, think, and learn. Built in collaboration with educators and students nationwide, REVEL is the newest, fully digital way to deliver respected Pearson content.

REVEL enlivens course content with media interactives and assessments—integrated directly within the author's narrative—that provide opportunities for students to read about and practice course material in tandem. This immersive educational technology boosts student engagement, which leads to better understanding of concepts and improved performance throughout the course.

In REVEL for *A World of Art*, rich media is embedded in the learning path so that students may truly experience and interact with works of art:

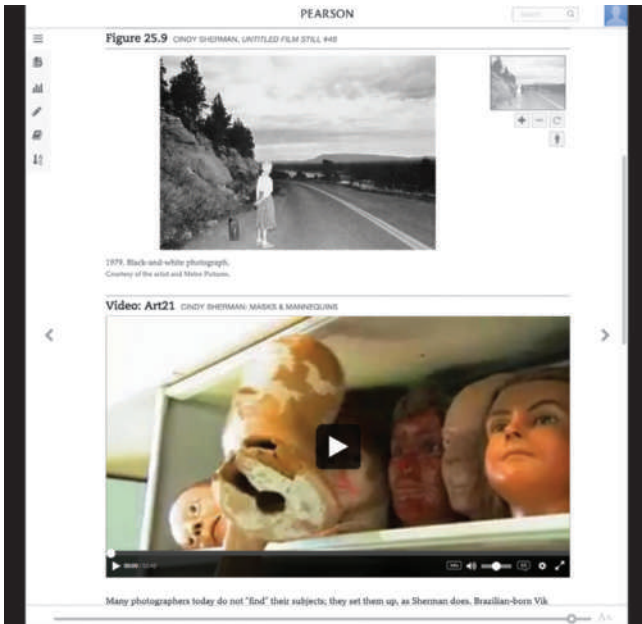
- Nearly every image is pan-zoomable, encouraging close looking. Scalemarkers indicate the size of the artwork relative to the human body or human hand.



- 360-degree panoramic views of major monuments as well as video simulations of architectural techniques help students understand buildings—inside and out.

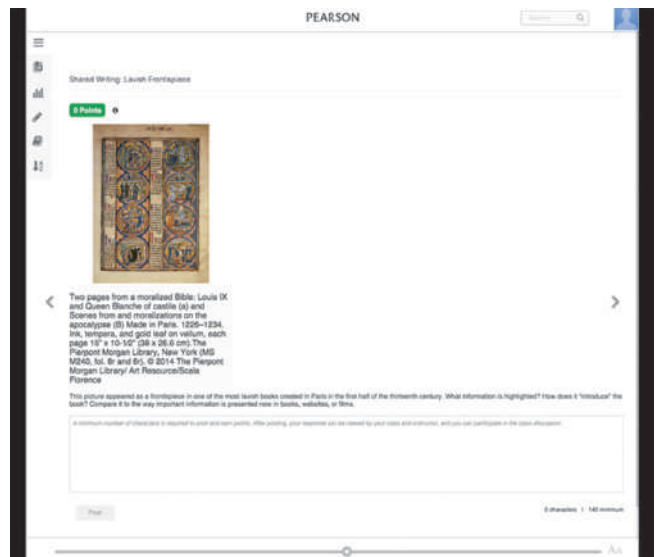


- Art21 videos present up-close looks at contemporary artists at work, and Studio Technique videos demonstrate the steps involved in processes such as silkscreening, bronze casting, carving, and oil painting.



- Writing prompts, developed by the author, help foster critical thinking. In every chapter, "Journaling" questions for students to answer are geared toward developing visual analysis skills, while "Shared Writing" prompts that students answer in a discussion space encourage them to articulate opinions and engage in debates about contemporary issues in the arts. A third type of writing assignment, the short essay, is available at the discretion of the instructor in Writing Space, which also includes resources to help students with drafting and editing and to help teachers with grading and responding.

- Audio of the text, read by the author, is an option that frees students' eyes to look at the art while they learn about it.



Learn more about REVEL

<http://www.pearsonhighered.com/revel/>

Additional Resources & Choices

Pearson arts titles are available in the following formats to give you and your students more choices—and more ways to save.

The **Books à la Carte edition** offers a convenient, three-hole-punched, loose-leaf version of the traditional text at a discounted price—allowing students to take only what they need to class. Books à la Carte editions are available both with and without access to REVEL.

Build your own Pearson Custom course material: for enrollments of at least 25, the Pearson Custom Library allows you to create your own textbook by

- combining chapters from best-selling Pearson textbooks in the sequence you want.
- adding your own content, such as a guide to a local worship place, your syllabus, or a study guide you've created.

A Pearson Custom Library book is priced according to the number of chapters and may even save your students money. To begin building your custom text, visit www.pearsoncustomlibrary.com or contact your Pearson representative.

Instructor Resources

LEARNING CATALYTICS

A “bring your own device” student engagement, assessment, and classroom intelligence system. Question libraries for Art Appreciation help generate classroom discussion, guide your lecture, and promote peer-to-peer learning with real-time analytics. Learn more at www.learningcatalytics.com.

INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL AND TEST ITEM FILE

This is an invaluable professional resource and reference for new and experienced faculty. Each chapter contains the following sections: Chapter Overview, Chapter Objectives, Key Terms, Lecture and Discussion Topics, Resources, and Writing Assignments and Projects. The test bank includes multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer, and essay questions. Available for download from the instructor support section at www.pearsonhighered.com.

MyTest

This flexible online test-generating software includes all questions found in the printed Test Item File. Instructors can quickly and easily create customized tests with MyTest.

Development

Every edition of *A World of Art* has grown over the years, in large part due to the instructors and students who share their feedback, ideas, and experiences with the text. This edition is no different and we are grateful to all who participated in shaping its structure and content. Manuscript reviewers for this eighth edition include:

Rachel Bomze, Passaic County Community College
Sara Clark, Saginaw Valley State University
Chris Coltrin, Shepherd University
Gary Conners, Lone Star College—North Harris
Elizabeth Consavari, San Jose State University
Steve Darnell, Midlands Technical College
Robin Dearing, Colorado Mesa University
Nathan Dolde, Lenoir Community College
Patricia Drew, Irvine Valley College
Tracy Eckersley, University of Louisville
Suzanne Fricke, Central New Mexico Community College
Soo Kang, Chicago State University
Katrina Kuntz, Middle Tennessee State University
Ann Marie Leimer, Missouri Western State University
Jessica Locheed, University of Houston
Fadhili Mshana, Georgia College & State University
Moana Nikou, University of Hawaii, Honolulu Community College
Kate Peaslee, Texas Tech University
Kimberly Riner, Georgia Southern University
Jennifer Robinson, Tallahassee Community College
Sean Russell, College of Southern Nevada
Tom Sale, Hill College
Nicholas Silberg, Savannah State University
Eric Sims, Lone Star College—North Harris
Nancy Stombaugh, Lone Star College—CyFair
Tiffanie Townshend, Georgia Southern University
Paige Wideman, Northern Kentucky University
Kimberly Winkle, Tennessee Technological University

Acknowledgments

Over the years, a great many people have helped make this book what it is today. The contributions of all the people at Oregon State University who originally supported me in getting this project off the ground—Jeff Hale; three chairs of the Art Department, David Hardesty, Jim Folts, and John Maul; three deans of the College of Liberal Arts,

Bill Wilkins, Kay Schaffer, and Larry Rodgers; and three university presidents, John Byrne, Paul Risser, and Ed Ray—cannot be forgotten. To this day, and down through this new edition, I owe them all a special debt of gratitude. Finally, in the first edition of this book, I thanked Berk Chappell for his example as a teacher. He knew more about teaching art appreciation than I ever will, and I miss him dearly.

At Pearson, I am especially grateful to the production team who saw this edition through to completion, especially the fine people at Laurence King Publishing in London: including Laurence himself; Editorial Manager Kara Hattersley-Smith; Clare Double, Senior Editor; and the extremely gifted and persistent picture editors Evi Peroulaki and Katharina Gruber. They all made working on the book something of a pleasure. Robert Shore, also in London, was as good a copyeditor as one could ever imagine—and a man of some humor at that. On this shore, Cynthia Ward's help on the new Themes chapters was incisive and invaluable. She has continued to help me fashion the new REVEL environment. At Pearson, I am indebted to Project Manager Joe Scordato, to Ben Ferrini, Image Lead Manager, but most of all to Helen Ronan. Finally, I want to thank, once again, Lindsay Bethoney and the staff at Lumina Datamatics for working so hard to make the book turn out the way I envisioned it.

The marketing and editorial teams at Pearson are beyond compare. On the marketing side, Maggie Moylan, Vice President of Marketing, Wendy Albert, Executive Field Marketer, and Jeremy Intal, Senior Marketing Manager help us all to understand just what students want and need. On the editorial side, my thanks to Sarah Touborg, Editor in Chief, who has supported the ongoing development of this project in every conceivable way; to Helen Ronan, Senior Sponsoring Editor in the Arts, who together with Sarah, has forged the new direction in art publishing that REVEL represents; and to Victoria Engros, the Pearson Editorial Assistant, who has the daunting responsibility of keeping track of everything. Finally, I want to thank the late Bud Therien, who oversaw the development of most of the earlier editions of this book, and a man of extraordinary fortitude, passion, and vision. He is, in many ways, responsible for the way that art appreciation and art history are taught today in this country. I have had no better friend in the business.

Finally, as always, I owe my greatest debt to my colleague and wife, Sandy Brooke. She is present everywhere in this project. It is safe to say she made it possible. I can only say it again: Without her good counsel and better company, I would not have had the will to get this all done, let alone found the pleasure I have had in doing it.

Henry M. Sayre
Oregon State University—Cascades Campus

Student Toolkit

This short section is designed to introduce the over-arching themes and aims of *A World of Art* as well as provide you with a guide to the basic elements of art that you can easily access whenever you interact with works of art—in these pages, in museums, and anywhere else you encounter them. The topics covered here are developed much more fully in later chapters, but this overview brings all this material together in a convenient, quick-reference format.

Why Study the World of Art?

We study art because it is among the highest expressions of culture, embodying its ideals and aspirations, challenging its assumptions and beliefs, and creating new visions and possibilities for it to pursue. That said, “culture” is itself a complex phenomenon, constantly changing and vastly diverse. The “world of art” is composed of objects from many, many cultures—as many cultures as there are and have been. In fact, from culture to culture, and from cultural era to cultural era, the very idea of what “art” even is has changed. It was not until the Renaissance, for instance, that the concept of fine art, as we think of it today, arose in Europe. Until then, the Italian word *arte* meant “guild”—any one of the associations of craftspeople that dominated medieval commerce—and *artista* referred to any student of the liberal arts, particularly grammarians.

But, since the Renaissance, we have tended to see the world of art through the lens of “fine art.” We differentiate those one-of-a-kind expressions of individual creativity that we normally associate with fine art—painting, sculpture, and architecture—from craft, works of the applied or practical arts like textiles, glass, ceramics, furniture, metalwork, and jewelry. When we refer to “African art” or “Aboriginal art,” we are speaking of objects that, in the cultures in which they were produced, were almost always thought of as applied or practical. They served, that is, ritual or religious purposes that far outweighed whatever purely artistic skill they might evidence. Only in most recent times, as these cultures have responded to the West’s ever-more-expansive appetite for the exotic and original, have individual artists in these cultures begun to produce works intended for sale in the Western “fine arts” market.

To whatever degree a given object is more or less “fine art” or “craft,” we study it in order to understand more about the culture that produced it. The object gives us insight into what the culture values—religious ritual, aesthetic pleasure, or functional utility, to name just a few possibilities.

The Critical Process

Studying these objects engages us in a critical process that is analogous, in many ways, to the creative process that artists

engage in. One of the major features of this text is a series of spreads called The Creative Process. They are meant to demonstrate that art, like most things, is the result of both hard work and, especially, a process of critical thinking that involves questioning, exploration, trial and error, revision, and discovery.

One of the greatest benefits of studying art is that it teaches you to think critically. Art objects are generally “mute.” They cannot explain themselves to you, but that does not mean that their meaning is “hidden” or elusive. They contain information—all kinds of information—that can help you explain and understand them if you approach them through the critical thinking process that is outlined below.

Seven Steps to Thinking Critically about Art

1. Identify the artist’s decisions and choices.

Begin by recognizing that, in making works of art, artists inevitably make certain decisions and choices—What color should I make this area? Should my line be wide or narrow? Straight or curved? Will I look up at my subject or down on it? Will I depict it realistically or not? What medium should I use to make this object? And so on. Identify these choices. Then ask yourself why these choices were made. Remember, though most artists work somewhat intuitively, every artist has the opportunity to revise or redo each work, each gesture. You can be sure that what you are seeing in a work of art is an intentional effect.

2. Ask questions. Be curious.

Asking yourself why the artist’s choices were made is just the first set of questions to pose. You need to consider the work’s title: What does it tell you about the piece? Is there any written material accompanying the work? Is the work informed by the context in which you encounter it—by other works around it, or, in the case of sculpture, for instance, by its location? Is there anything you learn about the artist that is helpful?

3. Describe the object.

By carefully describing the object—both its subject matter and how its subject matter is formally realized—you can discover much about the artist’s intentions. Pay careful attention to how one part of the work relates to the others.

4. Question your assumptions.

Question, particularly, any initial dislike you might have for a given work of art. Remember that if you are seeing the work in a book, museum, or gallery, then someone likes it. Ask yourself why. Often you’ll talk yourself into liking it too. But also examine the work itself to see if it contains any biases or prejudices. It matters, for instance,

in Renaissance church architecture, whether the church was designed for Protestants or Catholics.

5. Avoid an emotional response.

Art objects are supposed to stir up your feelings, but your emotions can sometimes get in the way of clear thinking. Analyze your own emotions. Determine what about the work set them off, and ask yourself if this wasn't the artist's very intention.

6. Don't oversimplify or misrepresent the art object.

Art objects are complex by their nature. To think critically about an art object is to look beyond the obvious. Thinking critically about the work of art always involves walking the line between the work's susceptibility to interpretation and its integrity, or its resistance to arbitrary and capricious readings. Be sure your reading of a work of art is complete enough (that it recognizes the full range of possible meanings the work might possess), and, at the same time, that it doesn't violate or misrepresent the work.

7. Tolerate uncertainty.

Remember that the critical process is an exercise in discovery, that it is designed to uncover possibilities, not necessarily certain truths. Critical thinking is a process of questioning; asking good questions is sometimes more important than arriving at "right" answers. There may, in fact, be no "right" answers.

At the end of each chapter in this book you will find a section called The Critical Process, which poses a series of questions about a work or works of art related to the material in that chapter. These questions are designed both to help you learn to ask similar questions of other works of art and to test your understanding of the chapter materials. Short answers to the questions can be found at the back of the book, but you should try to answer them for yourself before you consult the answers.

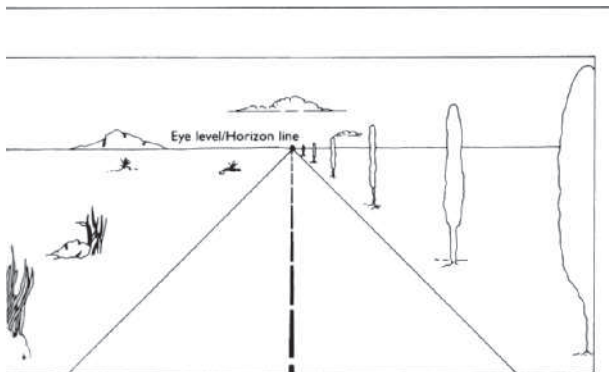
A Quick-Reference Guide to the Elements of Art

Basic Terms

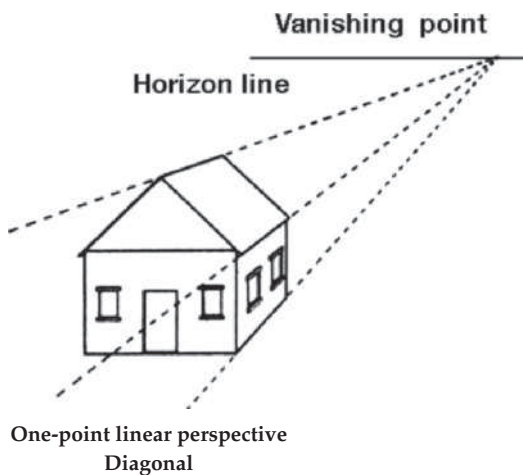
Three basic principles define all works of art, whether two-dimensional (painting, drawing, printmaking, and photography) or three-dimensional (sculpture and architecture):

- Form—the overall structure of the work
- Subject matter—what is literally depicted
- Content—what it means

If the subject matter is recognizable, the work is said to be representational. Representational works that attempt to depict objects as they are in actual, visible reality are called realistic. The less a work resembles real things in the real world, the more abstract it is. Abstract art does not try to duplicate the world, but instead reduces the world to its essential qualities. If the subject matter of the work is not recognizable, the work is said to be nonrepresentational, or nonobjective.



One-point linear perspective Frontal



One-point linear perspective Diagonal

The Formal Elements

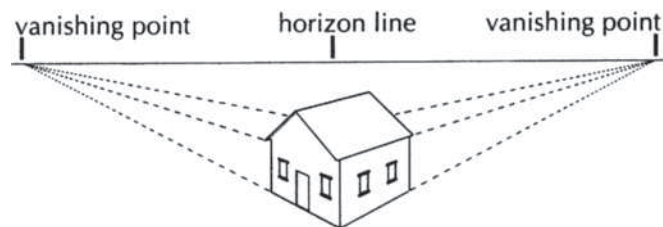
The term form refers to the purely visual aspects of art and architecture. Line, space, levels of light and dark, color, and texture are among the elements that contribute to a work's form.

LINE is the most fundamental formal element. It delineates shape (a flat two-dimensional area) and mass (a solid form that occupies a three-dimensional volume) by means of outline (in which the edge of a form or shape is indicated directly with a more or less continuous mark) or contour (which is the perceived edge of a volume as it curves away from the viewer). Lines can be implied—as in your line of sight. Line also possesses certain emotional, expressive, or intellectual qualities. Some lines are loose and free, gestural and quick. Other lines are precise, controlled, and mathematically and rationally organized.



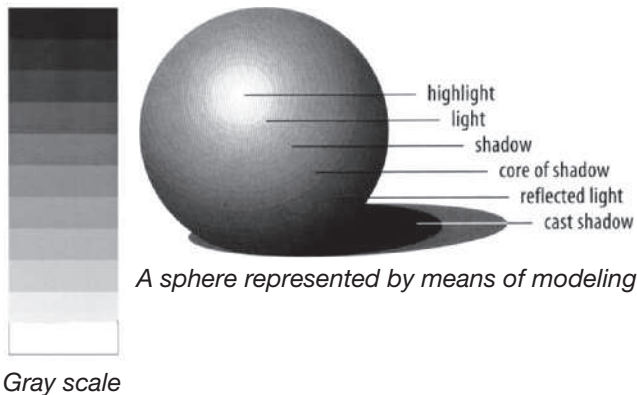
SPACE Line is also fundamental to the creation of a sense of deep, three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface, the system known as linear perspective. In one-point linear perspective, lines are drawn on the picture plane in such a way as to represent parallel lines receding to a single point on the viewer's horizon, called the vanishing point. When the vanishing point is directly across from the viewer's vantage point, the recession is frontal. When the vanishing point is to one side or the other, the recession is diagonal.

In two-point linear perspective, more than one vanishing point occurs, as, for instance, when you look at the corner of a building.



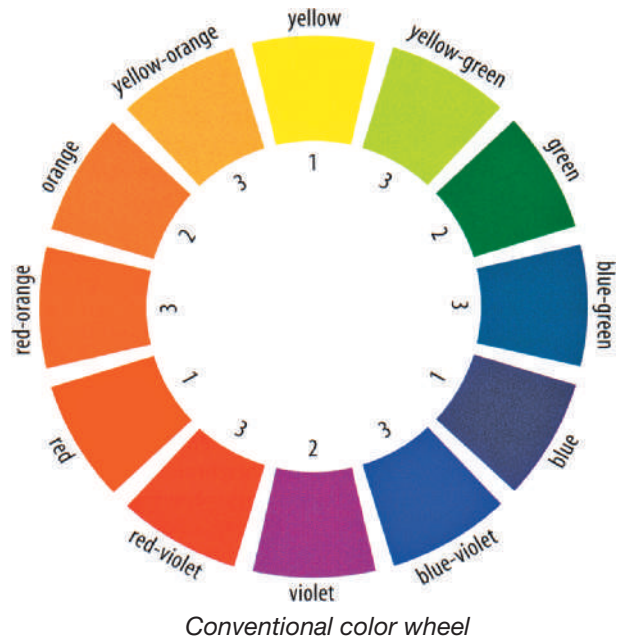
Two-point linear perspective

LIGHT AND DARK are also employed by artists to create the illusion of deep space on a two-dimensional surface. In atmospheric perspective—also called aerial perspective—objects farther away from the viewer appear less distinct as the contrast between light and dark is increasingly reduced by the effects of atmosphere. Artists depict the gradual transition from light to dark around a curved surface by means of modeling. Value is the relative degree of lightness or darkness in the range from white to black created by the amount of light reflected from an object's surface (the gray scale).



COLOR has several characteristics. Hue is the color itself. Colors also possess value. When we add white to a hue, thus lightening it, we have a tint of that color. When we add black to a hue, thus darkening it, we have a shade of that color. The purer or brighter a hue, the greater its intensity. Different colors are the result of different wavelengths of light. The visible spectrum—that you see, for instance, in a rainbow—runs from red to orange to yellow (the so-called warm hues) to green, blue, and violet (the so-called cool hues). The spectrum can be rearranged in a conventional color wheel. The three primary colors—red,

yellow, and blue (designated by the number 1 on the color wheel)—are those that cannot be made by any mixture of the other colors. Each of the secondary colors—orange, green, and violet (designated by the number 2)—is a mixture of the two primaries it lies between. The intermediate colors (designated by the number 3) are mixtures of a primary and a neighboring secondary. Analogous color schemes are those composed of hues that neighbor each other on the color wheel. Complementary color schemes are composed of hues that lie opposite each other on the color wheel. When the entire range of hues is used, the color scheme is said to be polychromatic.



TEXTURE is the tactile quality of a surface. It takes two forms: the actual surface quality—as marble is smooth, for instance; and a visual quality that is a representational illusion—as a marble nude sculpture is not soft like skin.

Visiting Museums

Museums can be intimidating places, but you should remember that the museum is, in fact, dedicated to your visit. Its mission is to help you understand and appreciate its collections and exhibits.

One of the primary functions of museums is to provide a context for works of art—that is, works are grouped together in such a way that they inform one another. They might be grouped by artist (all the sculptures of Rodin might be in a single room); by school or group (the French Cubists in one room, for instance, and the Italian Futurists in the next); by national and historical period (nineteenth-century British landscape); or by some critical theory or theme. Curators—the people who organize museum collections and exhibits—also guarantee the continued movement of people through their galleries by limiting the number of important or “star” works in any given room. The attention of the viewer is drawn to such works by positioning and lighting.

A good way to begin your visit to a museum is to quickly walk through the exhibit or exhibits that particularly interest you in order to gain an overall impression. Then return to the beginning and take your time. Remember, this is your chance to look at the work close at hand, and, especially in large paintings, you will see details that are never visible in reproduction—everything from brushwork to the text of newsprint incorporated in a collage. Take the time to walk around sculptures and experience their full three-dimensional effects. You will quickly learn that there is no substitute for seeing works in person.

A Do-and-Don't Guide to Visiting Museums

DO PLAN AHEAD. Most museums have websites that can be very helpful in planning your visit. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, for instance, and the Louvre in Paris are so large that their collections cannot

be seen in a single visit. You should determine in advance what you want to see.

DO HELP YOURSELF to a museum guide once you are at the museum. It will help you find your way around the exhibits.

DO TAKE ADVANTAGE of any information about the collections—brochures and the like—that the museum provides. Portable audio tours can be especially informative, as can museum staff and volunteers—called docents—who often conduct tours.

DO LOOK AT THE WORK BEFORE YOU READ ABOUT IT. Give yourself a chance to experience the work in a direct, unmediated way.

DO READ THE LABELS that museums provide for the artworks they display after you've looked at the work for a while. Almost all labels give the name of the artist (if known), the name and date of the work, its materials and technique (oil on canvas, for instance), and some information about how the museum acquired the work. Sometimes additional information is provided in a wall text, which might analyze the work's formal qualities, or provide some anecdotal or historical background.

DON'T TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS, unless cameras are explicitly allowed in the museum. The light created by flashbulbs can be especially damaging to paintings.

DON'T TOUCH THE ARTWORK. The more texture a work possesses, the more tempting it will be, but the oils in your skin can be extremely damaging, even to stone and metal.

DO TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE out of courtesy to others.

DON'T TALK LOUDLY, and be aware that others may be looking at the same piece you are. Try to avoid blocking their line of sight.

DO ENJOY YOURSELF, don't be afraid to laugh (art can be funny), and if you get tired, take a break.

A World of Art



Doug Aitken, *sleepwalkers*, 2007. Installation view. Six-channel video (color, sound), 12 min. 57 sec.

Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Dunn Bequest, 212.2008. © Doug Aitken, Courtesy of 303 Gallery, New York; Victoria Miro Gallery, London; Galerie Presenhuber, Zurich; Regen Projects, Los Angeles.

Part 1

The Visual World

Understanding the Art You See

Look at the work of art on the opposite page. What is its purpose? What does it “mean”? Does it even look like “art”? How do the formal qualities of the work—such as its color, its organization, its size and scale—affect my reaction? What do I value in works of art? These are some of the questions that this book is designed to help you address. Appreciating art is never just a question of accepting visual stimuli, but also involves intelligently contemplating why and how works of art come to be made and have meaning. By helping you understand the artist’s creative process, we hope to engage your own critical ability, the process by which you create your own ideas as well.

To begin to answer these questions in relation to the accompanying image, you’ll need a little context. Just as dark descended on New York City at 5 PM each night between January 16 and February 12, 2007, five 12-minute 57-second films were played on a loop for five hours, until 10 PM, in different combinations across eight different external walls of the Museum of Modern Art. Each film chronicled the nocturnal journeys of five inhabitants of the city from the time they awakened in the evening until dawn the next day—the iconic actors Donald Sutherland and Tilda Swinton as, respectively, a businessman and office worker, the less familiar but still recognizable musicians Chan Marshall (aka Cat Power) and Seu Jorge as a postal worker and an electrician, and a busker discovered in the subway by the work’s creator, Doug Aitken, named Ryan Donowho, who plays a bicycle messenger.

Aitken called the work *sleepwalkers*. In a very real sense, he turned the museum inside out, opening his art to the surrounding streets at a time of day when the museum itself is normally closed. As each of Aitken’s characters simultaneously awaken, greet the coming evening (their “day”), and move into the city’s streets—the

businessman into his car, the office worker into a taxi, the postal clerk onto a bus, the electrician into the subway, and the messenger onto his bike—a sense of isolation, loneliness, and introspection pervades, even as their movements reveal an almost uncanny commonality. The pace of Aitken’s films slowly crescendos as his characters start their work day until finally, walking down the street, the businessman is hit by a car, and then jumps on its hood to dance a jig, the office worker imagines herself a violinist in the New York Symphony Orchestra, the postal clerk suddenly begins a tight spin as she sorts the mail, the electrician makes a lariat out of a cable and whirls it above his head, and the bike messenger drums frantically on a bucket in the subway. As the films thus move from a state of virtual somnambulism to a fever pitch of motion, they come to parallel “the city’s disparate but fused systems of energy,” as curator Peter Eleey puts it in his catalogue essay for the MoMA exhibition. Eleey continues:

We, like each of Aitken’s characters, dream into being a wishful, imaginary architecture to connect us, built of the modest hope that others elsewhere are doing the same thing or thinking the same thoughts as we are. We harbor the secret suspicion, the aching desire, that in this hidden choreography someone else, right now, is picking at a sticker on the window of a cab, getting out of bed, listening to the same song, watching the same movie, and most importantly, sharing that same hope about us.

It is worth suggesting, as we begin this book, that this “modest hope” is what all works of art aspire to create, that they aim to connect us in a “hidden choreography,” the secret dance of our common desires, played out before us on the walls of a museum—or even out in the streets, where an increasing amount of art, taking increasingly novel and surprising forms, is being made and displayed.

Chapter 1

Discovering a World of Art



Learning Objectives

- 1.1 Differentiate between passive and active seeing.
- 1.2 Define the creative process and describe the roles that artists most often assume when they engage in that process.
- 1.3 Discuss the different ways in which people value, or do not value, works of art.

Is gunpowder a proper artistic medium? New York-based, Chinese-born Cai Guo-Qiang thinks so, and showed off his powers of intervention at the opening of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.

Born in 1957, Cai had left China in 1986 to study in Japan, where he began to explore the properties of gunpowder as a tool for making drawings—drawings that developed, eventually, into large-scale explosion events. Cai was interested in gunpowder as a medium because it seemed to him to have both destructive and constructive properties. It was, after all, a quintessential Chinese medium, used to make fireworks, the display of which, as every American has experienced on the 4th of July, can be stunningly beautiful. Fireworks are set off in celebration of almost every important social event in China, including weddings and funerals, the birth of a child, taking possession of a new home, the election of Communist party officials, and even after one of those officials delivers a speech.

Cai had staged one of the most dramatic of his explosive events in 1993, when, with a band of volunteers, both Japanese and Chinese, he returned to China to lay 10 kilometers (about 6 miles) of fuse and gunpowder clusters, one every 3 meters (10 feet), in the Gobi Desert, beginning at the place where the Great Wall ends, near Dunhuang, the traditional end of the great trade route

that had linked China to the Mediterranean since the time of the Roman emperors. At twilight, Cai detonated an explosion that slithered in a red line on the horizon to form an ephemeral extension of the Great Wall (**Fig. 1-1**). He titled the piece *Project to Extend the Great Wall of China by 10,000 Meters: Project for Extraterrestrials No. 10*, understanding full well that it was best viewed from high above the earth. But the event was awe-inspiring from the ground as well. One could only imagine what it might have looked like from on high. Where the Great Wall had originally been built to separate people, Cai's extension brought them together. Where gunpowder was originally a force for destruction, now it was a thing of beauty. These were the same goals that Cai wished to achieve in his pyrotechnic display at the 29th Olympiad.

On August 8, 2008—the eighth day of the eighth month of the eighth year of the twenty-first century—the 29th Olympic Games opened in Beijing, China. The time was 8:08:08 PM. Eight is considered a lucky number in Chinese culture because it sounds like the word for wealth and prosperity. Cai had been chosen by the Chinese government two years earlier to serve as director of visual and special effects for the opening and closing ceremonies of the games. Cai's opening gambit was a trail of 29 firework “footprints of history” (**Fig. 1-2**), representing each of the 29 Olympiads and



Fig. 1-1 Cai Guo-Qiang, *Project to Extend the Great Wall of China by 10,000 Meters: Project for Extraterrestrials No. 10*, realized in the Gobi Desert, February 27, 1993, 7:35 PM.
Photo by Masanobu Moriyama, courtesy of Cai Studio.

fired in succession for 63 seconds across the 9 miles of sky between Tiananmen Square in the center of the city and the Bird's Nest, the Olympic Stadium, designed by the Swiss firm of Herzog & de Meuron (**Fig. 1-3**). Itself a marvel, the stadium consists of a red concrete bowl seating some 91,000 people surrounded by an outer steel frame that structurally resembles the twigs of a bird's nest.

But *Footprints of History* met with almost immediate controversy. Although the pyrotechnic display actually occurred as Cai planned, it was not broadcast live. Television viewers saw instead a 55-second digital film, created from dress-rehearsal footage of the footprint fireworks exploding and sequenced using



Fig. 1-2 Cai Guo-Qiang, *Footprints of History: Fireworks Project for the Opening Ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games*, 2008.
Photo by Hiro Ihara, courtesy of Cai Studio.



Fig. 1-3 Herzog & de Meuron, The Bird's Nest—Beijing National Stadium, 2004–08.

© Xiaoyang Liu/Corbis.

computer graphics. Given the climatic conditions in Beijing, where smog often reduces visibility to a few hundred feet, Cai believed the video was necessary. In fact, he considered the video a second work of art. “From my own perspective as an artist,” Cai explained in 2008,

there are two separate realms in which this artwork exists, as two very different mediums have been utilized. First, there is the artwork that exists in the material realm: the ephemeral sculpture. This was viewed by people attending the ceremonies inside the stadium and standing outside on the streets of Beijing. . . . Second, there is a creative digital rendering of the artwork in the medium of video. It is a single version of the event viewed by a large broadcast audience. . . . And perhaps to also take *Footprints of History* into this second realm was necessary because in many of my explosion events, such as *Project to Extend the Great Wall of China by 10,000 Meters*, the very best vantage point is not the human one.

Cai has posted five videos made by audience members of the “ephemeral” event on his website, www.caiguoqiang.com, under Projects for 2008 (a short, 1-minute 7-second video of the *Project to Extend the Great Wall of China by 10,000 Meters* is available for viewing on the same site under Projects for 1993). To some people, Cai’s televised video seemed a form of subterfuge. Others wondered whether fireworks even qualified as art. Many people, however, found Cai’s work simply magical, a contemporary expression of the most ancient of Chinese traditions.

The World as We Perceive It

What is the difference between passive and active seeing?

Many of us assume, almost without question, that we can trust our eyes to give us accurate information about the world, and many of the objections to Cai’s *Footprints of History* were the direct result of his seeming violation of this trust when a 55-second digital film was broadcast instead of the “real thing.” Seeing, as we say, is believing. Our word “idea” derives, in fact, from the Greek word *idein*, meaning “to see,” and it is no accident that when we say “I see” we often mean “I understand.”

The Process of Seeing

But the act of seeing is not a simple matter of our vision making a direct recording of the reality. Seeing is both a physical and psychological process. Physically, visual processing can be divided into three steps:

reception → extraction → inference

In the first step, reception, external stimuli enter the nervous system through our eyes—we “see the light.” Next, the retina, which is a collection of nerve cells at the back of the eye, extracts the basic information it needs and sends this information to the visual cortex, the part of the brain that processes visual stimuli. There are approximately 100 million sensors in the retina, but only 5 million channels to the visual cortex. In other words, the retina does a lot

of “editing,” and so does the visual cortex. There, special mechanisms capable of extracting specific information about such features as color, motion, orientation, and size “create” what is finally seen. What you see is the inference your visual cortex extracts from the information your retina sends it.

Seeing, in other words, is an inherently creative process. The visual system draws conclusions about the world. It represents the world for you by editing out information, deciding what is important and what is not. We all know that our eyes can deceive us, and for centuries artists have taken advantage of this fact. The painter Richard Haas, for instance, is known for his *trompe-l’oeil* architectural murals—that is, murals designed to “trick the eye.” In 1989, Haas was commissioned by the Oregon Historical Society to paint the otherwise unappealing, even derelict west facade of their museum and historical center. Haas responded with a *trompe-l’oeil* rendering of four 35-foot-high sculptures of the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804–05, set in an elaborate architectural colonnade rising nine stories—all, of course, an illusion (Fig. 1-4).

But if the eye can be so easily deceived, it is equally true that it does not recall many things it sees even regularly with any measure of accuracy. Consider, for example, what sort of visual information you have stored about the American flag. You know its colors—red, white, and blue—and that it has 50 stars and 13 stripes. You know, roughly, its shape—rectangular. But do you know its proportions? Do you even know, without looking, what color stripe is at the flag’s top, or what color is at the bottom? How many short stripes are there, and how many long ones? How many horizontal rows of stars are there? How many long rows? How many short ones? The point is that not only do we each perceive the same things differently, remembering different details, but also we do not usually see things as thoroughly or accurately as we might suppose. As the philosopher Nelson Goodman explains, “The eye functions not as an instrument self-powered and alone, but as a dutiful member of a complex and capricious organism. Not only how but what it sees is regulated by need and prejudice. It selects, rejects, organizes, discriminates, associates, classifies, analyzes, constructs. It does not so much mirror as take and make.” In other words, the eye mirrors each individual’s complex perceptions of the world.

Active Seeing

Everything you see is filtered through a long history of fears, prejudices, desires, emotions, customs, and beliefs. Through art, we can begin to understand those filters and learn to look more closely at the visual world. Jasper Johns’s *Flag* (Fig. 1-5) presents an opportunity to look closely at a familiar image. According to Johns, when he created this work, the flag was something “seen but not looked at, not examined.” *Flag* was painted at a time when the nation was



Fig. 1-4 Richard Haas, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR, 1989. Keim silicate paint, 14,000 sq. ft. Architect: Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership. Executed by American Illusion, New York. Photo courtesy of Richard Haas. Art © Richard Haas/Licensed by VAGA, New York.

obsessed with patriotism, spawned by Senator Joseph McCarthy’s anti-Communist hearings in 1954, by President Eisenhower’s affirmation of all things American, and by the Soviet Union’s challenge of American supremacy through the Space Race. Many of the painting’s first



Fig. 1-5 Jasper Johns, Flag, 1954–55. Encaustic, oil, and collage on fabric mounted on plywood (three panels), 42¼ in. × 5 ft. ⅝ in. Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Gift of Ms. David M. Levy, 28.1942.30. © 2015. Digital image, Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence. Art © Jasper Johns/Licensed by VAGA, New York.

audiences were particularly disturbed by the lumps and smears of the painting's surface and the newspaper scraps visible beneath the stars and stripes. While contemporary viewers may not have experienced that Cold War era, the work still asks us to consider what the flag represents. At another level, because we already "know" what a flag is, Johns asks us to consider not what he represents but how he represents it. In other words, he asks us to consider it as a painting.

Faith Ringgold's *God Bless America* (Fig. 1-6) has as its historical context the Civil Rights Movement. In it, the American flag has been turned into a prison cell. Painted at a time when white prejudice against African Americans was enforced by the legal system, the star of the flag becomes a sheriff's badge, and its red and white stripes are transformed into the black bars of the jail. The white woman portrayed in the painting is the very image of contradiction: At once a patriot, pledging allegiance to the flag, and a racist, denying blacks the right to vote. She is a prisoner of her own bigotry. While the meaning



Fig. 1-6 Faith Ringgold, *God Bless America*, No. 13 from the series *American People*, 1964. Oil on canvas, 31 × 19 in. © Faith Ringgold, Inc. 1964.

of the work is open to interpretation, there is no question of its power to draw us into a closer examination of our perceptions and understandings of our world.

The World as Artists See It

What is the creative process and what roles do artists most often assume when they engage in that process?

Artists, of course, intend to convey their own sense of their world's meaning to us. But if the reactions to Jasper Johns's *Flag* or Cai Guo-Qiang's *Footprints of History* demonstrate how people understand and value the same work of art in different ways, similarly, different artists, responding to their world in different times and places, might see the world in very divergent terms. As it turns out, Cai did not choose to go to the remote oasis of Dunhuang simply because the Great Wall ended there, waiting for him to extend it with fireworks. At the terminus of the Silk Road, since the time of the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), Dunhuang was the place where the cultures of the East and West first intersected. Western linen, wool, glass, and gold, Persian pistachios, and mustard originating in the Mediterranean were exchanged in the city for Chinese silk, ceramics, fur, lacquered goods, and spices, all carried on the backs of Bactrian camels (Fig. 1-7), animals



Fig. 1-7 Caravaneer on a camel, China, Tang dynasty (618–907). Polychrome terra-cotta figure, 17½ × 14½ in.

Musée des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet, Paris.

Inv. MA6721. Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (musée Guimet, Paris)/Thierry Ollivier.

particularly suitable for the cold, dry, and high altitudes of the deserts and steppes of central Asia, which the Silk Road traversed. In fact, they can go for months at a time without water.

Dunhuang is also the site of the greatest collection of early Chinese art to be found anywhere. The story goes that, in 366 CE, a Buddhist monk named Le Sun traveling on the Silk Road had a vision of a thousand Buddhas bathed in a golden, flaming light flickering across the face of a mile-long sandstone cliff near the city. He was inspired to dig a cave-temple on the site. For centuries after, travelers and traders, seeking safety and prosperity, commissioned more caves, decorating them profusely. By the fourteenth century, the resulting Mogao Caves (*Mogaoku* in Chinese, meaning “peerless caves”) consisted of some 800 separate spaces chiseled out of the cliff (Fig. 1-8). Of these, 492 caves are decorated with murals that cover more than 484,000 square feet of wall space (about 40 times the expanse of the Sistine Chapel in Rome),



Fig. 1-8 Mogao Caves (Caves of a Thousand Buddhas) in Dunhuang, China.
© Joan Swinnerton/Alamy.

and some 2,000 sculptures fill the grottoes (Fig. 1-9). Today a World Heritage Site—and an increasingly popular tourist destination, despite that fact that it is some 1,150 miles from the Chinese capital of Beijing—the Mogao Caves are a monumental testament to human creativity.



Fig. 1-9 Reclining Buddha, Mogao Caves, Cave 148, Dunhuang, China, Middle Tang dynasty (781–847).
Length: 51 ft.

Photo: Tony Law. © Dunhuang Research Academy.