

ART ASSIGNMENT #12

Feldman's 4 -Step Method For Reflecting On and Critiquing Art

Frida Kahlo, *Self-Portrait As A Tehuana (1943)*

WHAT IS ART CRITICISM, EXACTLY?

- **The term *art criticism* refers to the analysis, evaluation and discussion of an artwork. It requires the participant to reflect about a particular work of art and make a personal, *substantiated* interpretation of the piece.**

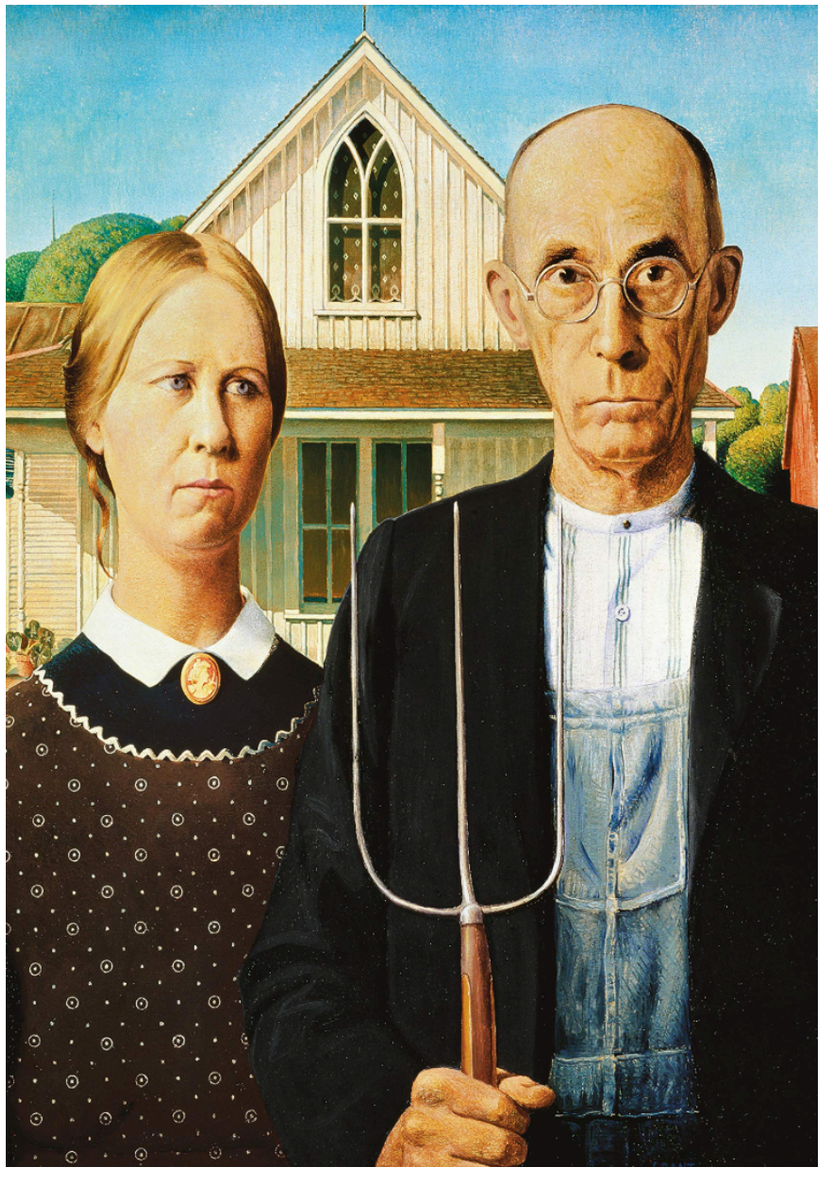
- Throughout history, there have been various systems created to analyze art constructed by art critics and specialists.

- This said, most methods of critiquing involve both analyzing how Elements and Principles of Art where used by the artist (what can be objectively seen), but also the background of the piece (its historical context, how it relates to works before it, what is known about the artist's own experience, etc.).

- **It's important to recognize that constructive criticism is based *on facts (not only opinions)*, and only after proper analysis can judgement be made. **Negative opinions void of any objective reasoning should be ignored.***



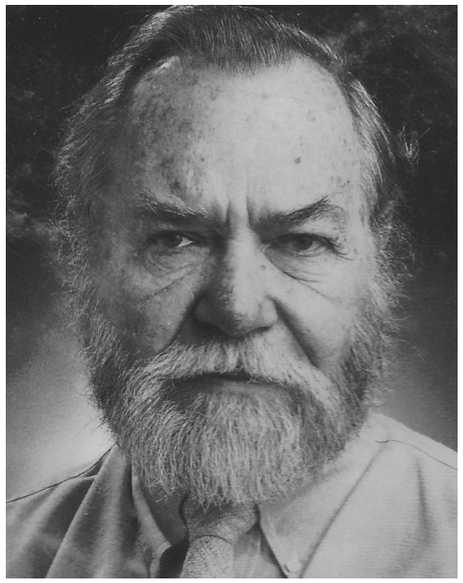
WHY IS IT USEFUL TO PRACTICE ANALYZING/CRITIQUING ART?

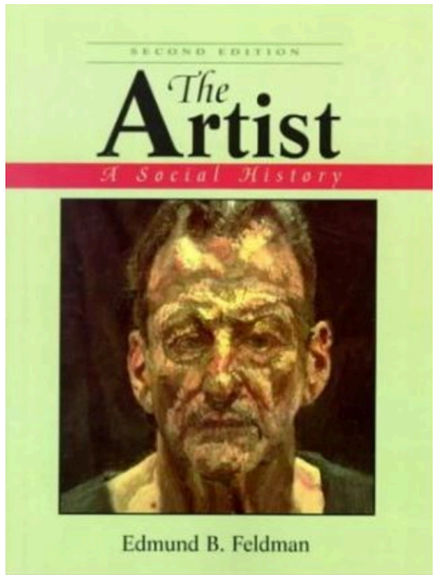


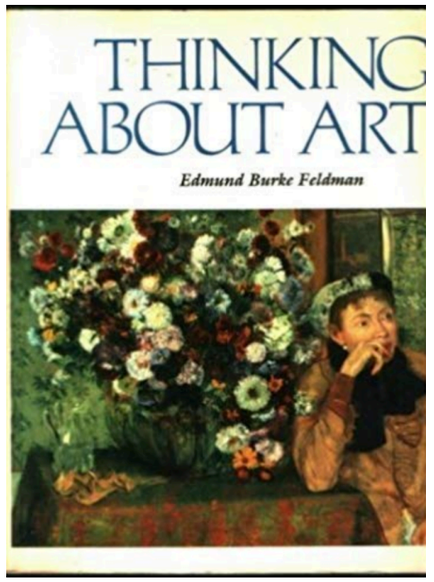
***Grant Wood**, American Gothic (1930)*

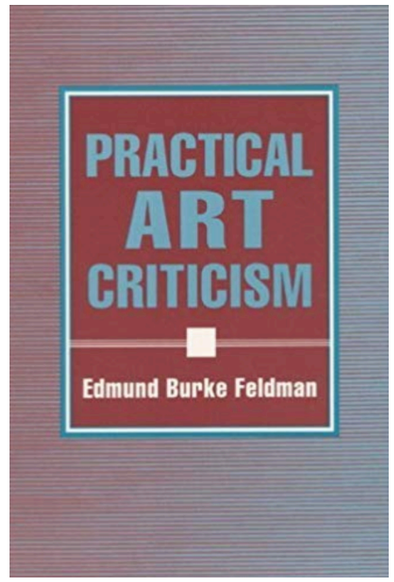
- It helps us appreciate art at a deeper level.
- **As artists looking to improve our work, thoroughly analyzing another's work helps us make important questions about our own. ****Self-evaluation is an essential part of improving artistically.***
- It puts our knowledge of Elements and Principles of Art, as well as other Art Fundamentals to the test, in order to form our own substantiated opinions.
- **It helps us develop our artistic language so that we're better able to communicate our thoughts about both our own art and the artwork created by others.**
- **As artists, it's important to be able to talk about art, *especially* when it comes to our own!**
- **We should actively seek ways to better our skills, not only in terms of technique, but in how well we are able to engage and connect with the public.** Even though most of us create in solitude, we do it with the purpose of eventually sharing our art with the world.

INTRO. TO FELDMAN'S 4-STEP CRITIQUING METHOD









- **Edmund Feldman was a professor of Art at the University of Georgia, as well as an author and art historian who developed an easy way to intelligently analyze and critique art in 1970.**
- **At it's core, it's a method that helps us analyze art in both objective and subjective aspects utilizing four consecutive steps. It helps us provide opinions that are actually backed up by evidence.**
- It is taught in many art schools today.

HOW TO USE FELDMAN'S 4- STEP METHOD

- **Feldman's system involves four steps that are meant to be done in order, as each step builds on the previous step.**

- The first two steps of the process are the study of hard, objective facts that we can actually see in an artwork, whereas the second half is more subjective as it requires thought on part of the participant.

- ***Description* and *Analysis* involve noticing use of Elements and Principles of Art. Statements are neutral and no opinions are shared yet.**

- ***Interpretation* and *Judgement* are when the viewer reflects, makes connections and reaches personal conclusions.**



- It helps us notice positives in artwork we may not like at first glance, and viceversa, and allows us to reach solid conclusions backed up by facts.

1. Description

***Be 100% objective / Think of facts**

-What specific **Elements of Art** (color, line, shape, texture, form, space, value) can you find within this piece?

-What's the title of the artwork?

-Who is the artist?

-When/where was it created?

-What media was used?

-Is there a primary subject in the piece?

2. Analysis

***Be 100% objective / Think of facts**

-What **Principles of Art** (balance, emphasis, movement, pattern, repetition, proportion, etc.) can you find within this piece?

-How do the Elements of Art interact with each other? Are there interesting visual effects created?

-What specific elements stand out in this composition and why? Is there a focal point?

-How is the work organized?



***Pablo Picasso*, *Guernica* (1937)**

3. Interpretation

***Subjective / Requires thought on your part**

-What is the artist trying to communicate?

-What thoughts or feelings come up when you see this piece?

*Abstract works quite frequently require us to learn more about the context the work was created in (artist's life and time/place in history) in order to better understand them.

-Express your opinion, but ALWAYS back it up with evidence.

4. Judgement

***Subjective / Requires thought on your part**

-Finally, you can share personal thoughts based on previous steps.

-Do you like it? Why/why not? Again, use solid evidence to support your opinion.

-Is this piece effective? Is it saying what the artist is intending to say?

-Are you judging based on technique or emotional content? What criteria do YOU think are important when judging an artwork?



***Pablo Picasso*, *Guernica* (1937)**

LET'S ANALYZE AN ARTWORK!


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CREATIVE ASSIGNMENT #12:

- **Choose an artwork that calls to you and do a thorough analysis of the piece, using Edmund Feldman's 4-step method.**
- **Make sure that you're bringing in your knowledge on Elements and Principles of Art that we have talked about in the past classes.**