

UNDERSTANDING ART

Generally speaking, the following tips and questions are intended to guide how a person might learn about a visual art work.

Gathering Data:

When looking at an object the art historian first describes the article as fully as possible and then asks a series of questions:

- When was it made?
- Where was it made?
- Who made it?
- Who was it made for?
- What was its purpose?
- What does it symbolize or represent?
- How was it made? What materials and processes were used?

Interpreting the art work:

1. Identify and describe the **form** of the work, including such things as: character of line, colour, shape, value, and texture as well as the works compositional arrangement.
2. **Trace the path through which your eye is intended to travel through the work.**
3. Identify and describe the **content** of the art work (objects, relationships, activities, etc...)
4. What attracted you to the art? Explain
5. What does this art work mean to you?
6. What does this art work or aspects of it, remind you of?
7. What do you think this work meant to the artist?
8. What was happening socially and politically in the time and place when this art work was made? How does this work reflect its time and place in the world?
9. What do you think the public's response to this work was? Explain.