

Art Report Guidelines

Digital Sculpture - Professor: Joe Meiser

This assignment will count toward your Research Binder grade.

LEARNING GOALS

Students will gain the following from this assignment:

- An increased familiarity with contemporary sculpture.
- An improved ability to articulate one's own ideas about the meaning and significance of art objects.
- An enhanced understanding of the interplay between art and ideas, and a heightened awareness of *how* things mean.
- Improved writing and critical thinking skills.
- A greater awareness of one's own artistic interests and priorities.

STEPS

1. Look at some examples of contemporary three-dimensional art that you're not yet familiar with. To find some interesting options you can either look through the links that are provided on the class website, or go to the reserve desk at the library and request some of the books I've put on hold there. If you'd like to browse the available books in advance then follow this link:

<http://bucknell.worldcat.org/wcpa/courseReserves?action=courseReserveManagerViewCourse&courseId=1345414&query=meiser>

2. Choose one three-dimensional work of art that interests you.

3. Go to the class website and logon as a user.

For Digital Sculpture this will be: [http:// digitalsculpture.blogs.bucknell.edu/wp-admin](http://digitalsculpture.blogs.bucknell.edu/wp-admin)

4. Create a new post by clicking up toward the top of the page on the "+ New" button.

5. Once the post screen comes up, check the "Research Binder" box to the right to put the post in the proper category.

6. Create a title for your post in the field provided. Please include your name, and the name of the artwork you've chosen, so something like: "Joe Meiser, La Nona Hora"

7. Find or create a digital photo of the artwork you've selected.

8. Upload the photo by clicking on the "add media" button above the text field. *Remember to click the "insert into post" button while you're on the upload screen.*

9. In the body of your post, please include the artist's name, the title of the work, and the title and page number of the book in which you found the artist's work.

10. Please answer the following questions. This has been adapted and expanded from The Critique Handbook, by Kendall Buster and Paula Crawford:

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Immediate Response

What are your immediate responses to the piece? These are uncensored, irrational, un-self-conscious impressions of the work, and might include: what you notice first, what stands out to you, how the piece affects you, and/or what it makes you think of. *This section should be roughly 100 words long.*

Objective Description

Objectively describe what you see. Pretend that you are describing the work to a person who cannot see the work, and you want to tell them about every significant detail so that this person can see the piece in their mind's eye. In this step you should not yet be delving into the analysis of the work's meaning, instead focus on vividly relating adjective and facts. *This section should be roughly 100 words long.*

Technical Decisions

Analyze the work's construction, its presentation, the material choices, composition, context, craftsmanship, its designed orientation toward the viewer, etc.—how do each of these particulars affect your perception and understanding of the artwork? Any work of art is created through a series of decisions, and each decision has meaningful implications; what significance do you see in the technical decisions made in the creation of this piece? (see below for further clarification) Also, how does the work's title impact your understanding of the work or direct your interpretation of it? *This section should be roughly 100 words long.*

** Please don't feel that you have to cover all of these categories, just choose the category or categories that are most relevant to the work you are analyzing. **

Construction and "craftspersonship":

The decisions that the artist made in craft and construction say something about what the artist was thinking—the work is *visual evidence of a thought process*. Does the work appear to be tediously and painstakingly constructed, or is it cobbled together? As you look at the work, can you identify attributes that were of a high or low priority to the artist? What do these decisions say about the artist's thinking, process, values, or intentions?

Presentation:

Does the work sit on a pedestal, does it hang on the wall or overhead, is the work an installation which fills a room? Is the work displayed in a gallery, in an outdoor setting, in an unconventional space? Analyze how the work's specific method of display would influence how the viewer interacts with, approaches, or takes-in the piece.

Material choices:

Every material has a unique set of properties and connotations. Building a sculpture with balsa wood might lead a viewer to think of scale models and lightness of form, while building with discarded kitchen appliances may lead the viewer to think about designed obsolescence, domestic spaces, our contemporary expectations of speed and efficiency.

Context:

The varied circumstances in which a work of art is (or was) produced and interpreted—the specific time, place, and audience surrounding the work. "When you look at a painting in the nave of a church, with stained glass windows and prayer candles and parishioners kneeling in the pews, it's quite unlike viewing that painting in a museum, where it is surrounded by informative wall texts, strolling visitors, a café and a gift shop. Go a step further, and imagine the same painting on a postcard that you take away, removing it to yet another container. When you see this painting reproduced on a T-shirt or mouse-pad, and think about how far it has traveled from its

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original context.” (taken from www.artlex.com) So, in summary, how does the context of the work influence your interpretation of it?

Designed orientation toward the viewer:

Some works are designed to actively engage the viewer, while others are created to be more passive or autonomous. Some pieces go as far as to implicate the viewer by allowing them to participate in a vital function of the work. What is your work’s orientation to the viewer, and how does this change the meaning of the piece?

The Work in the World

Discuss how the particular items in your chosen artwork relate to similar items from the world at large. For example, if you are analyzing a work that includes a number of glass soda bottles, then it would make sense to write about the associations that you have with this type of bottle, and the affect these associations have on your understanding of the artwork. Also, how does this artwork relate to events or objects from history, and how do these relationships change your understanding of this artwork? How does your chosen artwork relate to other works of art? *This section should be roughly 100 words long.*

The Story it Tells

This is the category that deals with *meaning*. At this point you should be pulling together all of the ideas and information that you have previously generated about the work, and trying to decide what it all adds up to. Draw upon your previously expounded ideas, but focus especially on developing connections among them. Articulate your interpretation of the work as clearly as possible. Support your position by explaining how you arrived at your interpretation of the work, and by telling why you believe what you do—reveal your reasoning. Please also try to anticipate ways that other viewers might interpret this work. *This section should be roughly 100 words long.*

To receive full credit for this assignment, your art report should do the following:

- > Include an image of the artwork.
- > Follow the instructions listed above.
- > Include the five section titles in your post (Immediate Response, Objective Description, Technical Decisions, The Work in the World, The Story it Tells).
- > Please do the following in your writing:
 - Present ideas clearly and provide details about your reasoning. Tell *why* you feel as you do, and support your claims with particular observations about the artwork.
 - Be well organized: proceed from general to specific and make good use of transitions.
 - Make sure that your work is free of grammatical and spelling errors.