

**The Lively Arts  
Fall Semester 2009  
Topic Guide**

**Topic #2**

Sept. 16, 2009

**Visual Art: Ways of Looking**

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*Lynn Peterfreund has been working as a professional artist since receiving her MFA from Pratt Institute in New York in 1980. She works primarily in printmaking and painting, and also as a muralist, photographer, and video artist. Her work, covering a variety of subjects, has been exhibited both nationally and internationally. Her murals and public art can be seen in Williamstown, Springfield, Amherst, Holyoke, the JFK Middle School in Northampton, Cooley Dickinson Hospital, Baystate Medical Center, and in Thompson Hall at University of Massachusetts. She has been an art instructor at Hunter College in NY, Smith College, UMass, Greenfield Community College, Zeamays Printmaking in Florence and in her own studios in Amherst and Florence.*

*Ms. Peterfreund lives in Leverett, MA, with her husband, Nicholas Xenos, a professor at UMass. They have two sons, both of whom attended UMass. "Being an artist means spending time, almost every day, making art. Art is a practice and also a way of seeing, thinking and experiencing the present world, and past worlds. For me, it is a means of making deep connections with people in my community and with the human condition in general. Seeing art in a deeper way is a pleasure and source of understanding available to everyone, at all levels of visual literacy."*

**Vocabulary for visual art literacy:**

**Materials:** What is it made of? **Iconography:** pictorial image: symbolic, metaphoric, representation, abstraction

**Form and content:** Unity is the goal. **Form:** Formal elements express **content**.

**Formal Elements:**

**Line**-qualities of line: gesture, contour, expression, quality of mark, edge, texture, spatial

**Shape/form**- flat shape or dimensional volume, overlapping shapes express space

**Space**- composition: where what is put, depth/flatness, positive/negative, relationships in space

**Color/Value**- relationship of colors "Color is relative." warm/cool, saturation, value (tone)-b-w

**Texture**- linear, tonal, color analogue (2D) or actual texture of material (3D) (still analogue)

**Style:** How do you discern a style? (analysis of formal elements and imagery) and why?

**How to look:** \*\*Slowly

Be open to what is being expressed: Wait for art to work its magic.

Trust yourself with unfamiliar visual language.

Intuition and intellect: Analysis and feelings work together.

\*Enjoy the confusion, disorientation, provocation, emotional power, information from another individual, another culture, another time, another sensibility. There is no one answer in aesthetics.

**Look at art to determine the "raison d'être," reason for being:**

What do you see? (literal answer). How does it make you feel? What do you notice most?

What do you think the piece is trying to say? (content, expression, emphasis)

How are formal elements used to express content? What choices have been made and why?

**Examples shown are included in this list:**

**Cave Painting:** Lascaux 15000 BC

**Classical:** Greek caryatids-Erectheion (421-406BC)

**Renaissance:**

Leonardo Da Vinci -Mona Lisa (1503-06)

Michelangelo -Sistine Chapel (1508-12, 1535-41)

**Baroque:**

Rembrandt -Return of the Prodigal Son (1662)

The Jewish Bride (1665)

Self Portraits (1628, 1659)

Vermeer -Woman With Balance (1664)

Girl with the Pearl Earring (1665)

Red Hat

**Romantic**

Goya: The Third of May (1814-15)

Delacroix: Liberty Leading the People (1830)

**Impressionism:**

Manet -Dead Toreador (1864)

Monet- Water Lilies (1906, 1916)

**Post Impressionism**

Van Gogh -Starry Night (1889), Sunflowers (1888)