

▲ **FIGURE 1.1** Artists speak to us, the viewers, through their works. Sometimes, they tell a story. At other times, as in this self-portrait, they express strong emotions. What emotion, or feeling, do you “read” in this artist’s painting of herself? Does she appear happy? Sad? Explain your reaction.

Frida Kahlo. *Self-Portrait with Monkey*. 1938. Oil on Masonite. 40.6 × 30.5 cm (16 x 12”). Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York. Bequest of A. Conger Goodyear, 1966.

# Art in Your World

The urge to create art is as old as humanity itself. Since the dawn of history, people have used art to communicate information, tell stories, and record events. Art is one of the deepest forms of personal expression.

## In this chapter, you will:

- Identify the purposes of art.
- Compare and contrast sources to which artists turn for inspiration.
- Create visual solutions using direct observation and imagination.
- Compare and contrast the use of the elements of art in artworks.

### Focus on Art History

**Figure 1.1** is one of many self-portraits painted by the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo (1907–1954). Kahlo's tragic personal history was a driving force in her art. At the age of 6, she was stricken with polio, a crippling disease. Twelve years later, a bus accident broke nearly every bone in her body. She spent a year in a full-body cast and underwent 30 operations. Her self-portraits, which are highly expressive, seem to reflect a life of physical pain and emotional difficulties. She never appears smiling but, rather, always wears the expression appearing in Figure 1.1.

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**Compare and Contrast.** Examine the work in Figure 4.23 on page 82. It is also a self-portrait of a twentieth-century artist. List similarities and differences in the subject and content between the two works.

**Vocabulary**

artwork  
perceive

# What Is Art?

**A**n **artwork** is *the visual expression of an idea or experience created with skill*. Visual art is more than paintings hanging on a wall. Visual art includes drawing, printmaking, sculpture, architecture, photography, film-making, crafts, graphic arts, industrial and commercial design, video, and computer arts.

## Art Is Communication

When you talk to someone or write a letter, you communicate. You share your ideas and feelings by using words. You can also communicate through the arts. Art is a language that artists use to express ideas and feelings that everyday words cannot express. In order to experience art fully, you must do more than simply look at it with your eyes; you must develop the ability to perceive. To look is to merely notice and label an object with a name such as “chair” or “house.” To **perceive** is *to become deeply aware through the senses of the special nature of a visual object*. Perception is the result of perceiving. To understand a work of art, you must train yourself to perceive. Try to perceive what Meyer Straus is expressing in his painting, *Bayou Teche* (**Figure 1.2**). If you concentrate on his image, you can feel the humid atmosphere of the Louisiana swamps and hear the mosquitoes buzzing. You can understand how it feels to be enclosed by branches dripping with Spanish moss. You can almost hear the water lapping at the boat.



▲ **FIGURE 1.2** Straus captured the feel of the bayou by including details such as the flowers in the foreground and the gray Spanish moss hanging from the limbs of the live oak trees. Look at the figures in the boat. The trees and swamp overwhelm them. What do you think the figures are doing? What atmosphere does the painting capture?

Meyer Straus. *Bayou Teche*. 1870. Oil on canvas. 76.2 × 152.4 cm (30 × 60"). Morris Museum of Art, Augusta, Georgia.

**Illustrating Ideas from Direct**

**Observation.** Select an everyday object such as one that might be found in the classroom. Closely observe the object. Allow yourself two or three minutes to perceive the object. Then put the object where you can't see it and make a list of all the attributes of the object that you can think of. Look at the object again and add at least three more attributes or characteristics to your list. Use your list and your observations to illustrate an idea for an artwork.

## The Purposes of Art

People created art to record ideas and feelings long before they had written words. They used art then as we use it today. The following are some of the most common functions of art:

- **Personal functions.** Artists create art to express personal feelings. Edvard Munch had a tragic childhood. His mother died when he was very young, and one of his sisters died when he was 14. His painting, *The Sick Child* (Figure 1.3), shocked viewers who were used to seeing happy paintings with bright colors. The work was meant to remind viewers of personal family tragedies. Perhaps the artist wanted to tell them to appreciate what they had. Often people who have suffered a loss remind

others to live each day as if it were their last. That is what Munch is saying with his striking image.

- **Social function.** Artists may produce art to reinforce and enhance the shared sense of identity of those in a family, community, or civilization (Figure 12.17, page 332). That is why many families commission or hire an artist or photographer to produce a family portrait. Art produced for this purpose also may be used in celebrations and displayed on festive occasions. Think of the many forms of visual art that might be seen in a parade—costumes, band uniforms, floats, and dances are all forms of visual art that might be included in the public celebration of a parade to commemorate an important holiday or event.
- **Spiritual function.** Artists may create art to express spiritual beliefs about the destiny of life controlled by the force of a higher power. Art produced for this purpose may reinforce the shared beliefs of an individual or



► **FIGURE 1.3** The child in the painting appears pale and calm. She is not looking at her mother. What is she staring at? Notice the exaggerated drooping of the woman's head. What has the artist done to focus your attention on the sick child?

Edvard Munch. *The Sick Child*. 1907. Oil on canvas. 118.7 × 121 cm (46<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 47<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>). Tate Gallery, London, England. © 2003 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/BONO, Oslo

a human community. In *Pueblo Scene: Corn Dancers and Church* (**Figure 1.4**), the artists have created a three-dimensional representation of a religious festival that connects two cultures and two religions. Works of art have been created for religious purposes throughout history. Many experts believe that the prehistoric cave paintings of animals had ceremonial purposes, which means they were more than simple records of events. The Greek Temples were built to honor the ancient gods. During the Middle Ages in Europe, almost all art was created for the Catholic Church.

- **Physical functions.** Artists and craftspeople constantly invent new ways to create functional art. Industrial designers discover new materials

that make cars lighter and stronger. Architects employ new building materials such as steel-reinforced concrete to give buildings more interesting forms. In **Figure 1.5**, notice how the artist has combined a variety of precious and semiprecious materials to create a unique necklace.

- **Educational function.** In the past, many people could not read and art was often created to provide visual instruction. Artists produced artworks, such as symbols painted on signs, to impart information. Viewers could learn from their artworks. In the Middle Ages, artists created stained-glass windows, sculptures, paintings, and tapestries to illustrate stories from the Bible or about rulers of a kingdom.



▲ **FIGURE 1.4** The figures and buildings for this scene were made by a family of artists. Look closely and you will notice that some of the figures are made of painted clay, while others have hair made from yarn and clothing made of fabric. What do the different figures appear to be doing? What does the procession in the foreground seem to be about?

Vigil Family, Tesuque Pueblo, New Mexico. *Pueblo Scene: Corn Dancers and Church*. c. 1960. Painted earthenware. Girard Foundation Collection at the Museum of International Folk Art, a unit of the Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, New Mexico.



◀ **FIGURE 1.5** This necklace is unusual because each unit is different. The repetition of rectangles and the repetition of materials and shapes on the different rectangles create a unified work.

Earl Pardon. Necklace 1057. 1988. Sterling silver, 14k gold, ebony, ivory, enamel, mother of pearl, ruby, garnet, blue topaz, amethyst, spinel, and rhodolite. 43.1 × 2.8 × .3 cm (17¼ × 1¼ × ⅛"). National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Renwick collection.

In addition, when we look at art from the past, we learn from it. Art from other places and other times can tell us what people did. Paintings such as *Anne of Cleves* (**Figure 1.6**) show us people from the past, what they wore, and how they looked.

## Art as a Lifelong Pursuit

Art can be a part of your lifelong learning. You may choose to pursue a career in art or to explore art as an avocation, or hobby. Avocational opportunities in art include making art or craft projects at home, taking classes for personal enjoyment, and getting involved in community art programs.

In this book you will learn to analyze and evaluate artworks. You'll also find many opportunities to create artworks and discover the tools, materials, and techniques of various art media. There are many ways to make art a part of your life and education.



### Check Your Understanding

1. What does it mean to *perceive*?
2. Name the five purposes of art.
3. Describe two of the purposes of art.



▲ **FIGURE 1.6** This portrait of Anne of Cleves, one of the wives of Henry VIII, shows what a royal person in the sixteenth century might have worn for special occasions. The portrait was created before the wedding because King Henry wanted to know what his intended wife looked like. He had never met her. Notice the unusual jewelry on her hat and the rich fabrics of her dress. How many different fabrics can you identify? How does her clothing indicate her social position?

Hans Holbein. *Anne of Cleves*. 1539. Tempera and oil on parchment. 65.1 × 48 cm (25⅞ × 18⅞"). The Louvre, Paris, France.

**Vocabulary**

folk artists  
artists  
action painting

# Why Do Artists Create?

The urge to create is universal. Artists are driven by their sense of wonder and curiosity. The creative impulse is often suppressed if one becomes afraid of making mistakes. Artists exhibit the courage to take risks. They are able to see their surroundings in new and unusual ways. They are willing to work intensely for long periods of time to achieve their goals. *Artists who are self-taught and therefore have had little or no formal schooling in artistic methods* are called **folk artists**. Most artists learn skills and techniques from other artists. Eventually artists develop their own unique styles.

The impulses that drive artists to create vary. Both Leo Twiggs and Roger Brown created art in response to a devastating natural catastrophe: Hurricane Hugo. Twiggs, who lives in South Carolina and witnessed the hurricane, used strong lines to represent the force of the winds (**Figure 1.7**). Brown, who lives in Chicago, responded to the same tragedy in a different way. He illustrated only the aftermath of the hurricane. He turned the event into a giant postcard in which he depicted the fury of the storm by showing the trees in neat rows, broken off at exactly the same level (**Figure 1.8**).



► **FIGURE 1.7** Identify the door named in the title. Look at the dark shape near the center of the painting. How many figures are standing in the door? What part of this work tells you about the destructive force of the hurricane?

Leo F. Twiggs. *East Wind Suite: Door*. Hugo Series. 1989. Batik: Dyes and wax resist on cotton. 61 × 51 cm (24 × 20"). Private Collection.



◀ **FIGURE 1.8** This painting depicts the same event as shown in Figure 1.7. The two artists represent the hurricane in very different ways. What does this painting remind you of? Does it resemble an advertisement or a postcard? Why do you think the artist chose humor to present such a devastating event?

Roger Brown. *Hurricane Hugo*. 1990. Oil on canvas. 121.9 × 182.9 cm (48 × 72"). Morris Museum of Art, Augusta, Georgia.

## Where Do Artists Get Ideas?

**Artists** are *creative individuals who use imagination and skill to communicate in visual form*. They use the materials of art to solve visual problems. Artists look to many sources for inspiration. Some look outward to their natural and cultural environment for ideas. Others look within themselves for creative motivation.

## Nature

Sometimes artists look to their natural surroundings and record them. The first group of landscape artists in the United States was called the Hudson River School because most of them lived near that river in New York. They painted the world around them, paying meticulous attention to realistic detail. One Hudson River School artist, George Inness, lived in Newburgh, New York. His early work depicted the vast American landscape in a romantic manner (**Figure 1.9**).



◀ **FIGURE 1.9** This painting celebrates nature and industry, although the two are not necessarily compatible. If you look carefully, you can see the town of Scranton, Pennsylvania, accurately depicted in the distance. Why do you think the artist has included all the tree stumps in this painting? What symbols of industrialization has he used?

George Inness. *The Lackawanna Valley*. c. 1856. Oil on canvas. 86 × 127.6 cm (33<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 50<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"). National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. © 1998 Board of Trustees. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Huttonston Rogers.



## MEET THE ARTIST

### GRANT WOOD



*American, 1892–1942*

Grant Wood. *Self-Portrait*. 1932. Oil on Masonite panel. 37.5 × 31.4 cm (14<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" ). Collection of The Davenport Museum of Art, Davenport, Iowa. © Grant Wood/ Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

► **FIGURE 1.10** This painting has been used and parodied countless times. Because of this, it can be easy to overlook the message Wood intended. Symbols tell a story: the Gothic window represents the couple's European heritage, and the pitchfork stands for their determination. Can you identify other symbols in the painting and tell what they might mean?

Grant Wood. *American Gothic*. 1930. Oil on beaverboard. 74.3 × 62.2 cm (29<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 24<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" ). Friends of the American Art Collection. All rights reserved by the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois and VAGA, New York, New York. (1930.934).



## People and Real World Events

Another artist, Grant Wood, captured the essence of the Midwestern American spirit during the Great Depression in his work, *American Gothic* (**Figure 1.10**). The stern, small town citizens posed before their house. The couple's determination was meant to reassure those shaken by the stock market crash during the Great Depression.

## Myths and Legends

Some artists borrow ideas from famous works of literature. Romare Bearden interpreted one part of an ancient Greek legend, *The Odyssey*, in his painting *Return of Ulysses* (**Figure 1.11**). The Greek legend, written by the poet Homer, describes the adventures that befall a hero returning home from war. Bearden used his unique style to portray an important scene from this story.



◀ **FIGURE 1.11** This print is the last in a series of serigraphs illustrating the story of Ulysses, a legendary Greek hero. Bearden has simplified shapes and used unusual colors but you can still recognize people and objects in the work. Describe three things you recognize in this scene.

Romare Bearden. *Return of Ulysses*. 1976. Serigraph on paper. 47 × 57.1 cm (18½ × 22½"). Copyright restricted. National Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C. Gift of the Brandywine Graphic Workshop. © Romare Bearden Foundation/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

## Spiritual and Religious Beliefs

Visual artists in every culture use their skills to create objects and images to be used to express spiritual beliefs. Many non-Western cultures do not even have a word for “art.” Those who create objects do the best work they can because it is important. The mask in **Figure 1.12** was made to be worn during ceremonial winter dances by the Yup’ik people who lived in northwestern Alaska.



▲ **FIGURE 1.12** This bird mask was created for a dance ceremony. Notice how the artist has used natural earth pigments to color the wood, plus natural materials like feathers and sinew to decorate it.

Yup’ik. *Bird Mask*. 1988. Wood, feathers. Height: 64.7 cm (25½"). Robert H. Lowie Museum, University of California, Berkeley, California.

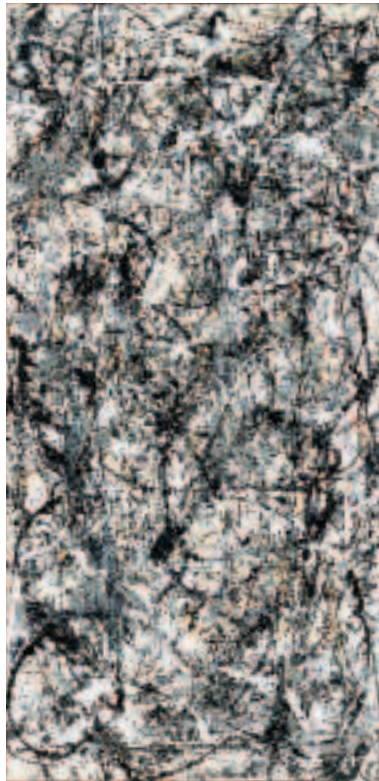
## Creative Techniques

Many artists founded new art movements and developed new techniques to create art. Jackson Pollock was a leader of the Abstract Expressionist movement. He studied painting in the 1930s with Thomas Hart Benton as his teacher. Benton was an American regionalist who painted realistic paintings and murals that celebrated American life (Figure 13.29, page 376). Pollock’s earliest works were in the realistic style of his teacher. After 1947, he developed

**action painting**, *the technique of dripping and splashing paint onto a canvas stretched on the floor* (**Figure 1.13** on page 14). The idea for this style of painting, which influenced many who came after him, came from within himself.

► **FIGURE 1.13** Pollock wanted to express his personal feelings when he created his art. He allowed his feelings to influence his choice of colors and the manner in which he applied them to the canvas.

Jackson Pollock. *Cathedral*. 1947. Enamel and aluminum paint on canvas. 181.6 × 89.1 cm (71½ × 35⅓"). Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard J. Reis. © 2003 Pollock-Krasner Foundation/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.



## Artists of the Past

Art is not made in a vacuum. Artists of a particular time period often influence each other. Artists also learn from and build on the work of artists who came before them. Pablo Picasso based his 1957 painting, *Las Meninas* (after Velázquez) (**Figure 1.14**), on *Las Meninas* (*The Maids of Honor*) by Diego Velázquez (**Figure 1.15**), which was painted in 1656. Although Picasso changed the colors and used his own Cubist style, you can recognize some of the figures and objects that are in the realistic Velázquez painting. How many figures and objects can you find that appear in both works?



▲ **FIGURE 1.14** This painting is based on Diego Velázquez's *Las Meninas* (*The Maids of Honor*) (**Figure 1.15**). Similar figures and objects are present in both paintings—the artist, the easel with the unfinished painting, the child who appears to be the subject of the artwork in progress, the dog, and the figure in the door. Compare these objects with the ones depicted in Velázquez's work. What has Picasso done to make the work uniquely his own? Do you think he was exhibiting a sense of humor?

Pablo Picasso. *Las Meninas* (after Velázquez). 1957. Oil on canvas. 2 × 2.6 m (6' 6¾" × 8' 6⅜"). Museo Picasso, Barcelona, Spain. © 2003 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

► **FIGURE I.15** This painting was interpreted by Picasso, another Spanish artist, three centuries after Velázquez completed it. Explain what is happening in the painting. The princess, in white, has a regal bearing. She is clearly the center of attention. Do you see the king and queen in the picture? Who is the person in the doorway? Can you describe the roles of the other people in the painting?

Diego Velázquez. *Las Meninas (The Maids of Honor)*. 1656. Oil on canvas. 3.18 × 2.8 m (10'5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" × 9'3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"). Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain.

## Ideas Commissioned by Employers

Many artists are hired by individuals or companies to create works of art. Graphic designers create corporate logos, brochures, and many other print materials. They may also design menus for restaurants. Fine artists, like sculptors and painters, are often commissioned to create artworks for display in public spaces and buildings.

## Ideas for Your Own Artwork

In the coming chapters, you will need to come up with ideas of your own for original works of art. Like all other artists, you may at times find yourself at a loss for ideas. You can look to the sources listed in this lesson for inspiration. The work of your peers can also inspire you. See the Student Art Portfolio features in Chapters 4–11 of this book for a showcase of student artworks and visual art journal ideas. You will find that keeping a visual art journal or sketchbook can be an enormous help. In addition to recording images, you may jot down ideas that come to you after participating in other art events such as concerts, movies, and theatre productions. You will also find that a sketchbook can be used to practice skills and techniques you learn in class.



### Activity

### Keeping a Sketchbook

**Creating Visual Solutions Using Direct Observation.** Artists develop perception and artistic skills by constantly sketching the world around them. Begin keeping a sketchbook of your own. Choose a notebook with unlined paper. Practice using direct observation to draw anything that catches your eye. The more you draw, the better you will “see” objects. Make written notes about your sketches, such as the quality of light or the colors you notice.



### Check Your Understanding

1. Define the word *artist*.
2. Identify four different sources for artistic ideas.
3. Why do artists keep sketchbooks?

## Vocabulary

symbol  
elements of art  
principles of art  
subject  
nonobjective art  
composition  
content  
credit line  
medium

# The Language of Art

**P**eople throughout the world speak many different languages. Spanish, Swahili, Japanese, Hindi, French, English, and Apache are just a few of the 3,000 different languages that are spoken. Each language has its own system of words and rules of grammar. To learn a new language, you need to learn new words and a new set of rules for putting those words together.

The language of visual art has its own system. All that you see in a work of art is made up of certain common elements. They are arranged according to basic principles. As you learn these basic elements and principles, you will learn the language of art. Being able to use the language of visual art will help you in many ways. It will increase your ability to understand, appreciate, and enjoy art. It will increase your ability to express yourself clearly when discussing art. It will even help you improve your ability to produce artworks.

## The Elements of Art

A **symbol** is *something that stands for, or represents, something else*. In a spoken language, words are symbols. The word *chair* stands for a piece of furniture that has a seat, a back, legs, and sometimes arms. In the language of art, we use visual symbols to communicate ideas.

The *basic visual symbols in the language of art* are known as the **elements of art**. Just as there are basic kinds of words—such as nouns and verbs—there are basic kinds of art elements. These are *line, shape and form, space, color, value, and texture*. The elements are the visual building blocks that the artist puts together to create a work of art. No matter how a work is made, it will contain some or all of these elements.

When you look at an image, it is difficult to separate one element from another. For example, when you look at **Figure 1.16**, you see a shiny, round bowl outlined with a thin yellow line filled with bumpy, red raspberries.

### Activity

### Create a Symbol

**Creating Visual Solutions Using Experiences.** In visual art, symbols can be concrete representations of abstract ideas, such as a heart standing for love. Create a visual symbol that represents something important to you. Elaborate on your experiences, such as an activity or club you are involved with. Share your symbol with your classmates. Can they identify what it represents?

**Computer Option.** Design a visual symbol using a computer application. Choose from the tools and menus to represent this idea with line, shape, or color. Hold down the Shift key when making straight lines or restricting shapes to circles or squares. Title, save, print, and display your best example. Include a short explanation about your symbol.



◀ **FIGURE 1.16**  
Notice how the artist has used color and texture to direct the viewer's eye through this artwork. Look at the number of different surfaces she depicts. How many different textures can you identify? Although the shiny surfaces catch your attention, notice the matte, or dull, surfaces as well.

Janet Fish. *Raspberries and Goldfish*. 1981. Oil on canvas. 182.9 × 162.6 cm (72 × 64"). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York. Purchase. The Cape Branch Foundation and Lila Acheson Wallace Gifts, 1983. (1983.171) © Janet Fish/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

However, rather than seeing the elements of texture (shiny and bumpy), color (red), shape (round), and line (thin and yellow) separately, you see the bowl of raspberries as a whole. You visually “read” the elements together.

Sometimes the differences between the elements are not clear-cut. A line may be so wide that it looks like a shape, or an artist may manipulate light and dark values to indicate different surface textures. Look at the variety of textures Janet Fish has created in *Raspberries and Goldfish* (Figure 1.16).

When you first learned to read, you did not begin with a full-length novel. You learned by reading one word at a time. That is how you will start to read the language of art: one art element at a time.

## The Principles of Art

After you have learned to recognize the elements of art, you will learn the ways in which the elements can be organized for different effects. When you learn a language, you learn the

rules of grammar by which words are organized into sentences. Without these rules, people would find it difficult to communicate.

Visual images are also organized according to rules. The *rules that govern how artists organize the elements of art* are called the **principles of art**. They also help artists organize the art elements for specific effects. The principles you will learn about are *rhythm, movement, pattern, balance, proportion, variety, emphasis, and harmony*. When the elements and principles of art work together to create a sense of wholeness, *unity* is achieved. The elements and principles of art are often referred to as the *formal qualities* in artworks.

## The Work of Art

In art, it is important to understand the three basic properties, or features, of an artwork. These are *subject, composition, and content*.

## The Subject

The **subject** is *the image viewers can easily identify in a work of art*. The subject may be one person or many people. It may be a thing, such as a boat. It may be an event, such as a dance. What are the subjects in Gabriele Münter's painting, *Breakfast of the Birds* (**Figure 1.17**)?

Some artists choose to create nonobjective artwork. **Nonobjective art** is *art that has no recognizable subject matter* (Figure 1.13, page 14). In these types of works, the elements of art themselves become the subject matter.

## The Composition

The second property of a work of art is the composition of the work. The **composition** is *the way the principles of art are used to organize the elements of art*. Notice how Münter has used the reds to separate indoors from outdoors, yet she ties the woman to the birds by using related colors. The woman is

### ► FIGURE 1.17

Gabriele Münter was one of the founders of modern German Abstract Expressionism. In 1911 she joined with other radical artists to form the group known as *Der Blaue Reiter* (The Blue Rider). She stayed in Germany through World War II but was forced to work in secret during the Nazi era, when German Expressionism was outlawed. Since this was painted in 1934, it is one of her "secret" paintings.

Gabriele Münter. *Breakfast of the Birds*. 1934. Oil on board. 45.7 × 55.2 cm (18 × 21¾"). The National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C. Gift of Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay.



placed with her back toward the viewer, so that the viewer looks in the same direction as the woman, toward the birds. As you learn more about the elements and principles of art, you will discover how to control the composition of your artwork.

## The Content

The third property of a work of art is the content. The **content** is *the message the work communicates*. The message may be an idea or a theme, such as patriotism or family togetherness. It may be an emotion, such as pride, love, or loneliness. Sometimes you know what the intention of an artist might have been when he or she created the work, therefore the meaning of the work may be clear. However, at other times, you may not be certain of what the work might mean, and you have to consider all possibilities. Many artists can paint the same subject, a woman looking out a window, but each painting may have a different message. What do you think is the content of Münter's painting?

## The Credit Line

Look at Figure 1.17. The credit line appears beneath the caption. A **credit line** is *a list of important facts about a work of art*. Every artwork in this book has a credit line.

Most credit lines contain at least six facts. They are as follows:

- **Name** of the artist.
- **Title** of the work. This always appears in italics.
- **Year** the work was created. Sometimes, in the case of older works, "c." appears before the year. This is an abbreviation for *circa*, a Latin word meaning "about" or "around."

- **Medium** used by the artist. This is *the material used to make art*. If more than one medium is used, the credit line may read "mixed media."
- **Size** of the work. The first number is always the height, the second number is the width, and if the work is three-dimensional, the third number indicates the depth.
- **Location** of the work. The location names the gallery, museum, or collection in which the work is housed and the city, state, and country. The names of the donors may also be included.

### Activity

### Using Credit Line Information

**Applying Your Skills.** Who is the artist of the work in Figure 1.9 on page 11? What is the title of the painting by Frida Kahlo (Figure 1.1, page 4)? Which work in this chapter was completed most recently? Which is the largest work in this chapter? Which works in this chapter are not housed in the United States?



### Check Your Understanding

1. List the elements and principles of art.
2. Compare and contrast the use of the elements of art in Figure 1.16 on page 17.
3. How do subject and composition differ?
4. Name the six facts most credit lines include.



# Art Criticism

## *in Action*



▲ FIGURE I.18

Andy Warhol. *100 Cans*. 1962. Oil on canvas. 182.9 x 132.1 cm (72 x 52"). Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York. Gift of Seymour H. Knox, 1963. © 2003 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/TM Licensed by Campbell's Soup Co. All Rights Reserved.

# Critiquing the Artwork

Art criticism is a four-step process for using your perception skills to get deeply involved in a work of art. You will learn more about these four steps in Chapter 2.

▶ **1 DESCRIBE** *What do you see?*

**During this step, you will collect information about the subject of this artwork.**

- List all the information from the credit line.
- What is the subject of this work?

▶ **2 ANALYZE** *How is this work organized?*

**This step deals with the work's composition or formal qualities. In it, you note the art elements used as well as the art principles that organize them.**

- How are the shapes arranged in this work?
- What colors are used?
- How large is each can? (Note: Refer to the credit line to help you determine your answer.)
- Are the cans evenly spaced throughout? Explain.
- In what way is the bottom row of cans different from the others?

▶ **3 INTERPRET** *What message does this artwork communicate to you?*

**This step focuses on the content of the work. In it, you make assumptions and guesses about the meaning.**

- Why do you think the artist made the bottom row different?
- Why do you think the artist spaced the cans as he did?
- Form a conclusion about the meaning of depicting ordinary soup cans.

▶ **4 JUDGE** *What do you think of the work?*

**In this step, you will tell whether you think the artwork is successful or not.**

- Do you think this is a successful work of art? Why or why not?

Meet the **ARTIST**

**Andy Warhol**

1928–87



Andy Warhol. *Self-Portrait*. 1986. Acrylic screenprint on canvas. © 2003 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Andy Warhol was born in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, just outside of Pittsburgh. He began his career as a commercial artist in New York City. He was a painter, movie director and producer, and publisher. Warhol was a leader of the Pop art movement, an art style that celebrated images from contemporary culture, such as comic book characters and everyday objects, helping viewers to see them in a whole new light. Warhol's favorite subjects included celebrities and product packaging, as in **Figure 1.18**. When asked why he chose soup cans as his subject, he explained that he had soup for lunch every day for 20 years.

# Virtual Art Tours

**Museum Web sites offer interactive art experiences.**

Imagine peeling back the layers of paint on a canvas to discover a “hidden” image underneath, or hearing the words of one of your favorite artists. You may not be able to do that on a visit to a museum. However, you may be able to do that on a visit to a museum’s Web site! With a click of the mouse you can visit the “virtual” Louvre Museum in Paris, or museums closer to home. Museum officials hope that Web sites will get more people interested in art.

The interactivity of Internet technology allows people to explore art in a new, exciting way. They can get a taste of what the museum experience offers. For example, the Web site of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City lets users move the cursor over the image of a piece of art. For each spot highlighted, users get an explanation of that feature’s importance—the symbolism of a specific object in the painting, for example.

Visitors to the Web site of the Getty Museum in Los Angeles go behind the scenes to learn about research projects on some of the museum’s artworks. The Frick Museum in New York City offers Web browsers a virtual tour of its exhibits, complete with audio histories of the paintings and the artists.

Of course, Web sites can’t duplicate the experience of seeing artworks in person. But for many people, it’s the next-best thing to being there!



THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



THE FRICK MUSEUM

## TIME to Connect

Using a search engine, locate an art museum or art gallery Web site that interests you. Analyze and evaluate the site. Then write a one-page critical analysis of the site.

- Analyze the features of the site. Which appeal to you? Which don't? How easy is it to navigate around the site?
- Describe any parts of the site you would change or improve. Evaluate the site's overall design, visual representations, and clarity of language.
- Evaluate the credibility of information represented on the site.

TOP: A page from the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art allows viewers to study a painting in depth. ABOVE: The Internet offers an online tour of the Frick Museum in New York City.

### Building Vocabulary

On a separate sheet of paper, write the term that best matches each definition given below.

1. The visual expression of an idea or experience created with skill.
2. To become deeply aware through the senses of the special nature of a visual object.
3. Self-taught artists who have had little or no formal schooling in artistic methods.
4. Something that stands for, or represents, something else.
5. The basic visual symbols in the language of art.
6. The rules that govern how artists organize the elements of art.
7. Art that has no recognizable subject matter.
8. The way the principles of art are used to organize the elements of art.
9. A list of important facts about a work of art.
10. A material used to make art.

### Reviewing Art Facts

Answer the following questions using complete sentences.

11. Describe the five purposes of art.
12. Name and describe four sources of inspiration for artists.
13. Explain the relationship between the elements of art and the principles of art.
14. Select a work of art in this chapter and identify the subject.
15. Read the credit-line information of an artwork from any chapter and list the figure number, the title, the year the work was created, and the medium.

### Thinking Critically About Art

16. **Compare and Contrast.** Survey the avocational opportunities in art mentioned on page 9. Then research art classes and programs in your community. Compare and contrast these avocational opportunities to decide which one interests you the most. Consider such factors as time required, materials, training, and personal interest.
17. **Compare and Contrast.** Study Figures 1.14 on page 14 and 1.15 on page 15 to list their similarities and differences. Are light and dark values of colors used in the same places in each work?
18. **Historical/Cultural Heritage.** Review the Meet the Artist feature on page 12. Compare Grant Wood's American Gothic in Figure 1.10 to his self-portrait on the same page. Can you identify the theme of determination in each artwork? What else do these works have in common? Where does Grant Wood reveal part of his cultural heritage in his self-portrait?



Take a Web Museum Tour of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

Click on the link at [art.glencoe.com](http://art.glencoe.com). Explore their online tour of still lifes to appreciate why this art genre is still popular.

### Linking to the Performing Arts

Use the Performing Arts Handbook to discover the art of masks and the many ways this art form has been created and worn throughout the world's cultures. Faustwork Mask Theater presents the message of masks on page 413.





▲ **FIGURE 2.1** The goal of some artists is to imitate life. Their works are lifelike, down to the smallest detail. The goal of other artists is to create a mood or feeling. What do you think was the goal of the artist who created this work? Explain your reaction.

Red Grooms. *Ruckus Rodeo* (detail). 1975–76. Wire, celastic, acrylic, canvas, and burlap. 442 × 1539.2 × 746.8 cm (174 × 606 × 294"). Collection of the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, Texas. Museum purchase and commission with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts and The Benjamin J. Tillar Memorial Trust, 1976. I.P.S. © 2003 Red Grooms/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.