

Content and Analysis

Formal Analysis

Stylistic Analysis

Iconographic Analysis

Contextual Analysis

Feminist Analysis

Gender Studies Analysis

Psychological Analysis

Formal Analysis

Understanding the Visual Elements, such as line, color, texture, space, shape, mass, time & motion.

As well as the Principles of Design of emphasis, unity & variety, rhythm, balance, pattern, scale & proportion.

To explore the language used by the artist and to grasp how she or he applies these elements and principles in a particular work.



Edward Hopper

Nighthawks

1942

Stylistic Analysis

Certain characteristics which might be recognized as work made by a particular artist, or a group of artists with similarity in technique, time period or studied from the same place.

There can also be a level of abstraction or nonrepresentational in artistic appearance.

One could possibly recognize a Vincent van Gogh or a Georgia O'Keeffe painting; or an Alberto Giacometti sculpture for their distinct styles and contribution to avant-garde art during their lifetime.



The City Scene 1948-1949

A Wheatfield with Cypresses 1889

Iconographic Analysis

Known as “image-writing” and refers to identifying and interpreting possible symbolic meanings of objects and elements in works of art; sometimes revealing previously unsuspected insights into their content.

Icons or symbols can reflect religious, mythological or historical contexts and the meaning of which was often more directly understood at a particular time by a specific culture, but may now be less apparent to us.

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres

Jupiter & Thetis 1811



Contextual Analysis

The content or meaning of a work of art varies greatly between artworks.

Both artist and viewer play roles in providing meaning.

A work of art may convey a particular meaning to those who view it in the context in which it was made, but the same artwork may convey a different meaning to someone living in another time and place.

One needs to understand the context of a work of art fully, by doing research or looking closely at the artwork itself.

Religious Context, Historical Context and Biographical Context are several ways to analyze art.



Jacob Lawrence

The Builders - 19 Men

1979

Feminist Analysis

A subset to Biographical Context Analysis, which also includes race, gender and societal positions.

Feminist Analysis studies the life experience of women artists in relation to their work.

Feminist Analysis has expanded to include gender studies.

Feminist Analysis considers the perspective toward gender of viewers, the treatment of women as subjects and/or the role of women at the time the artwork was made.

Not all female artists are considered feminist artists.

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres
with student Jean-Pau Flandrin
Odalisque with Slave 1842

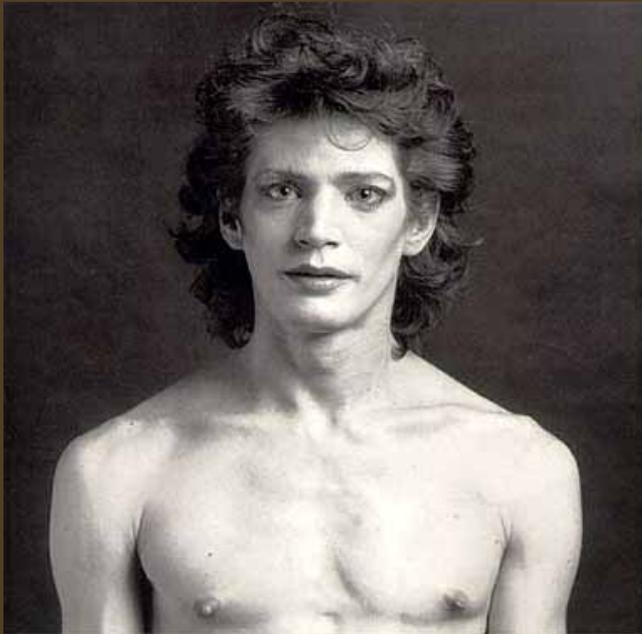


Lalla Essaydi
Odlisque with Bullet Shells
2000s

Gender Studies Analysis

Considers and explores ways in which a work reflects experience based on a person's gender.

It can also reflect the intentions of an artist, the perspective of a viewer, the interpretation of a critic or all three.



Robert Mapplethorpe

Self-Portrait 1980



Sylvia Sleigh

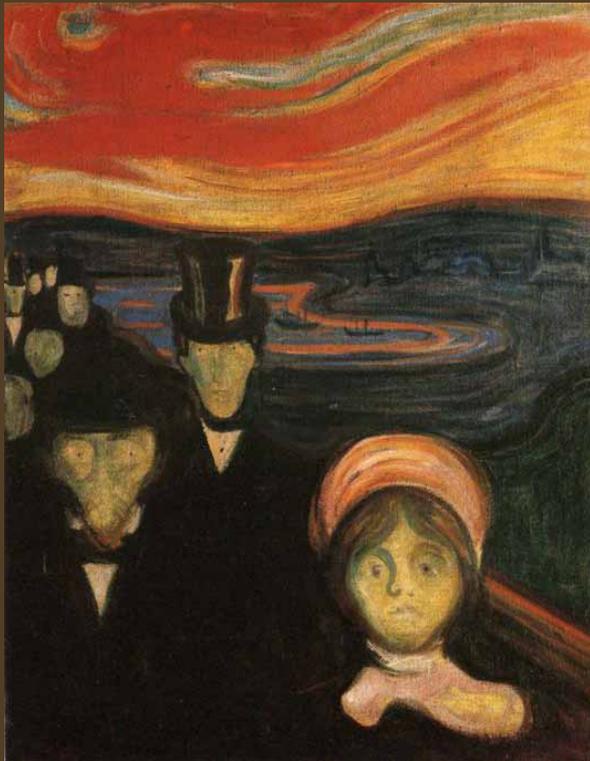
Philip Golub Reclining 1971

Psychological Analysis

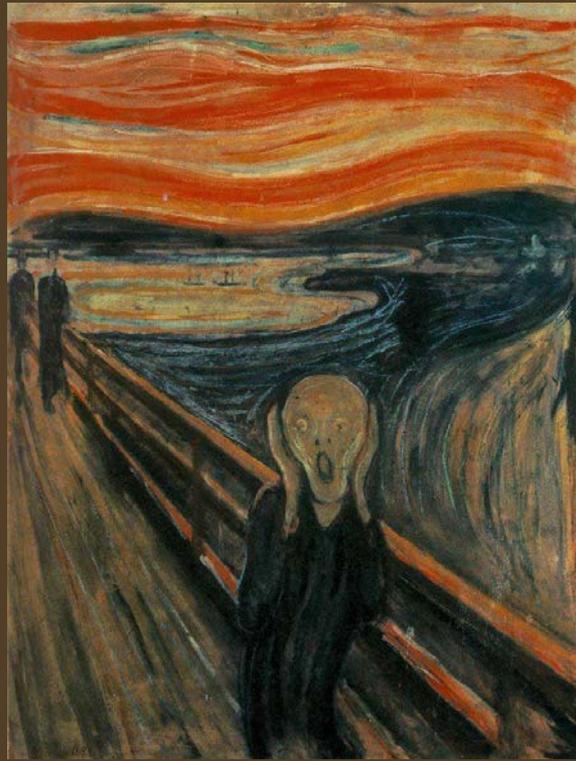
Investigates an artwork through consideration of the state of the artist's mind.

Sometimes such interpretations make use of important psychological studies, such as those of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung.

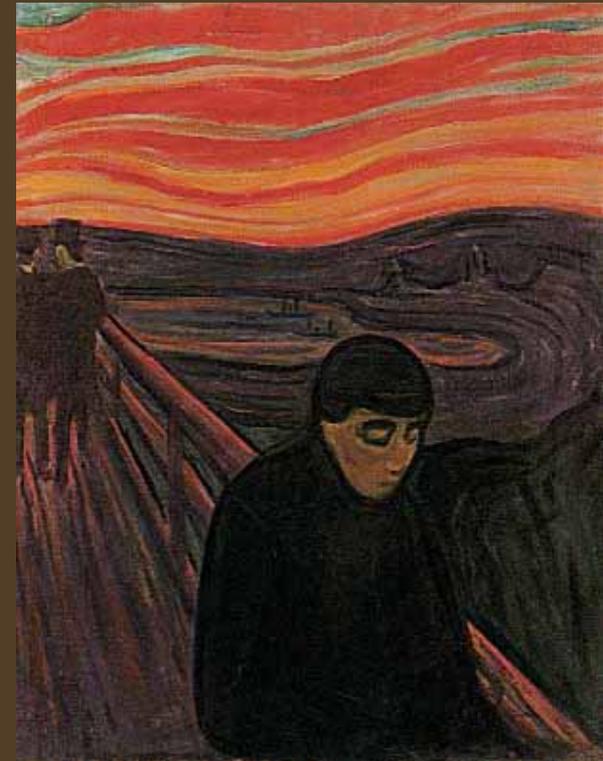
These three paintings by Edvard Munch could demonstrate his state of mind over a three year period in his thirties from the imagery painted and the title he gave each painting.



Anxiety 1892



The Scream 1893



Despair 1894

Combined Analysis

Works of art might have multiple analyses.

One could formally analyze this painting with the principles of design and visual elements.

This painting could have a contextual analysis to better understand the content of the image by providing information about the time it was made and who the figures represent.

Also, biographical analysis, since the artist painted himself within the scene.

Lastly, iconographic analysis could explain symbolic representations, such as the cross on the artist's chest.



Diego de Silva y Velázquez

La Meninas (Maids of Honor) 1656