

# The Feldman Method of Art/Visual Criticism

Describe

Analyze

Interpret

Judge

*From the work of Edmund Burke Feldman, available in many of his books from the late 1960's and early 70's*

## Step 1: Description

Make a list of the visual qualities of the work that are obvious and immediately perceived. Describe exactly what you see, in enough detail that your audience could visualize the work from your words. The descriptions should include content and subject matter in representational works, as well as abstract elements in nonrepresentational pieces. Do not use judgments or opinions.

Here are a few things to consider when writing your DESCRIPTION:

- Size
- Shape
- Texture
- Color
- Angles
- Perspective
- Light Source
- Media
- Form
- Space

## Step 2: Analysis

Examine the formal aspects of elements of art, principles of design, and other formal considerations.

The Principles of Design:

- Balance
- Emphasis
- Repetition
- Movement
- Contrast
- Unity

## **Balance**

Balance is the equilibrium of various elements in the visual work.

## **Emphasis**

Emphasis is given to a center of interest, which might be the largest, brightest, or lightest subject.

## **Repetition**

Repetition is the use of line, color, or a motif in more than one place in the composition.

## **Movement**

Movement can be the illusion of motion in the imagery, or the path the viewer takes starting with the emphasis.

## **Contrast**

Contrast shows the difference between the Elements of Visual Media (Line, Color, Shape, Value, Form, Space and Texture)

## **Unity**

Unity is the harmony between all of the visual elements in a composition.

## **Questions to ask yourself when completing an ANALYSIS:**

- How does the creative/maker visually organize the composition?
- What is in the foreground, middleground, background?
- How has the picture been arranged?
- What colors are used and how have they been arranged?
- What shapes are there and how have they been arranged?
- Are there any leading lines and if so, where is your eye lead,
- Is there any use of contrast? If so where?
- Is there any use of pattern? If so where?
- Is there a sense of space or perspective?
- Are there any special techniques employed by the creative/maker?
- Is there a mood or feeling being conveyed?

## **Step 3: Interpret**

Propose ideas for possible meaning based on evidence. Viewers project their emotions/feelings/intentions onto the work.

- What do you think it means?
- What was the creative/maker trying to communicate? (The intention?)
- What clues do you see that support your ideas?

## **Step 4: Judgment**

What are the overall strengths, meanings, and intentions of the work? Use research, Description and Analysis to support your Interpretation.