

# Art Criticism & Aesthetic Judgment

*ArtTalk Chapter 2 Summary*

~ Have you ever seen - or skipped - a movie based on a friend's recommendation? We all make judgments about music, movies, television shows, clothes, etc. We share with others what we like and what we don't like. Making such *aesthetic judgments* about art is called *art criticism*.

In this chapter review, you will:

- ~ Learn the purpose of art criticism.
- ~ Analyze artworks using the steps of art criticism to form precise conclusions.
- ~ Explain the 3 aesthetic theories of art.

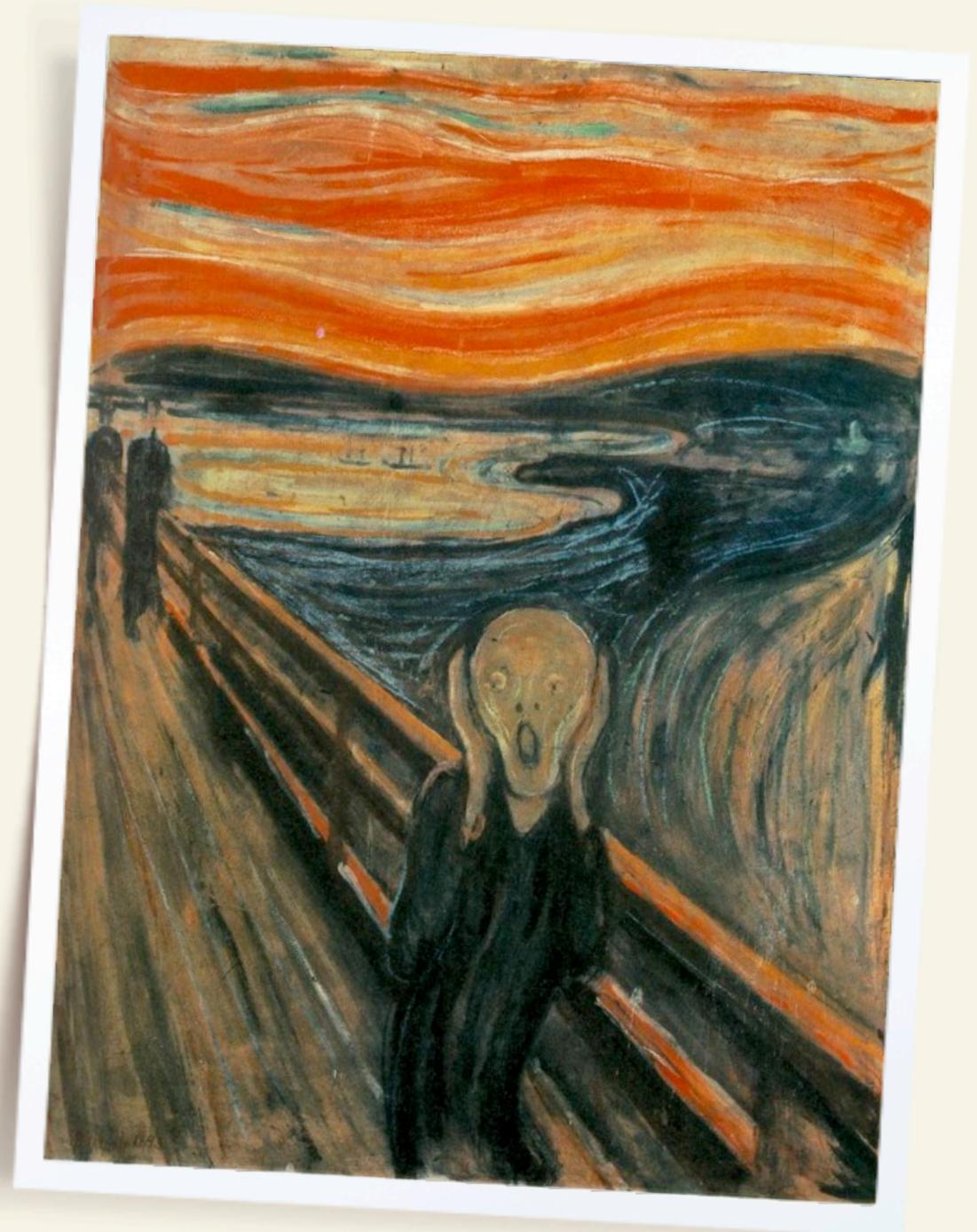
# Learning from a work of Art

- ~ Art Criticism - is an organized approach for studying a work of art made up a four questions.

# Description

*What do I see in this artwork?*

- ~ Notice the subject, objects, and details.
- ~ What can be seen in the work.  
*(people, bridge, river, etc.)*
- ~ Size, medium & process used  
*(20 x 36 Oil on canvas. - found in the credit line.)*



# Analysis

*How is this work organized?*

*What art elements & principles are used?*

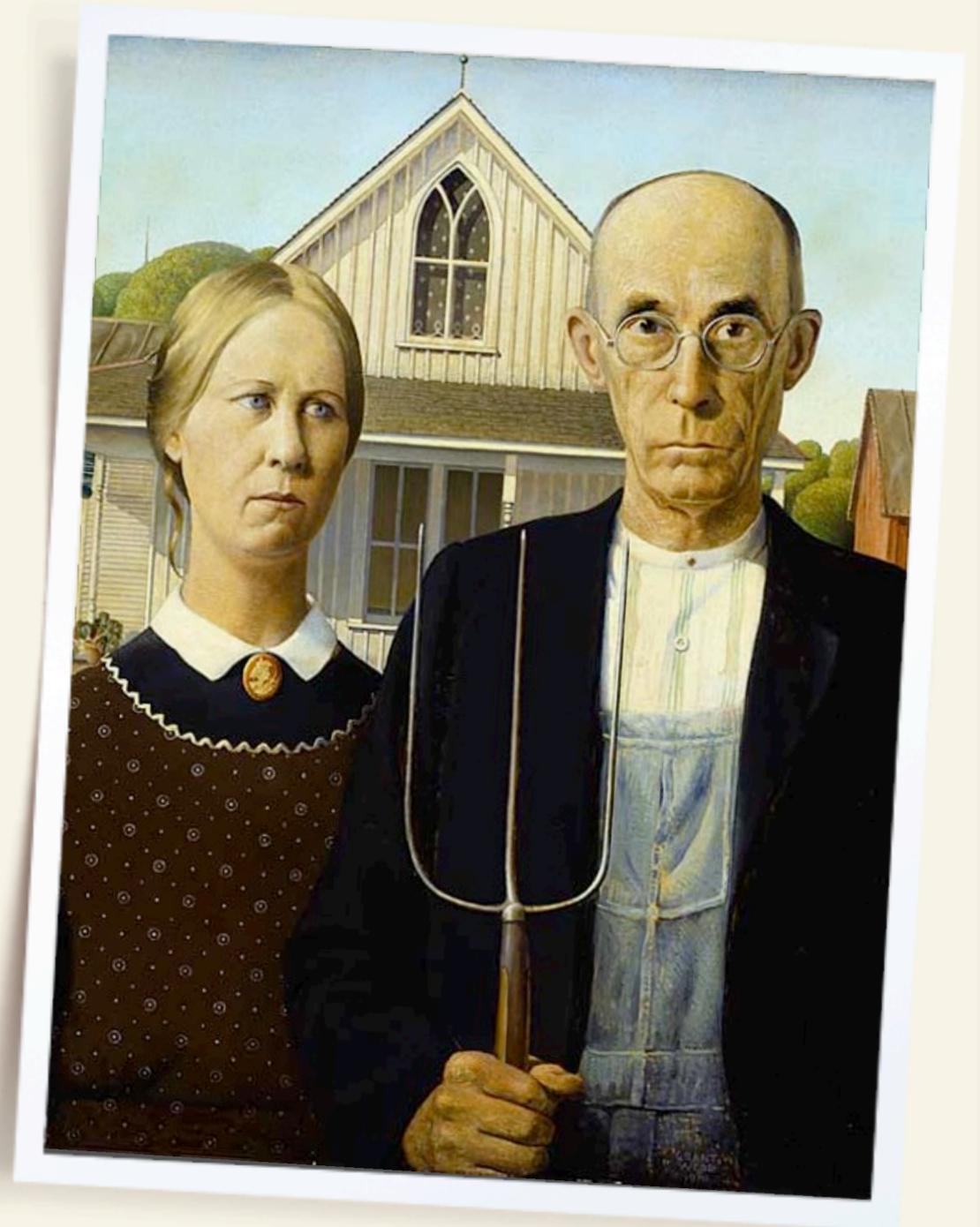
- ~ What colors are used? Where are the darkest colors? Where are the lightest colors?
- ~ What type of lines are used?
- ~ Does it have any type of texture?



# Interpretation

*What is the artist trying to communicate?*

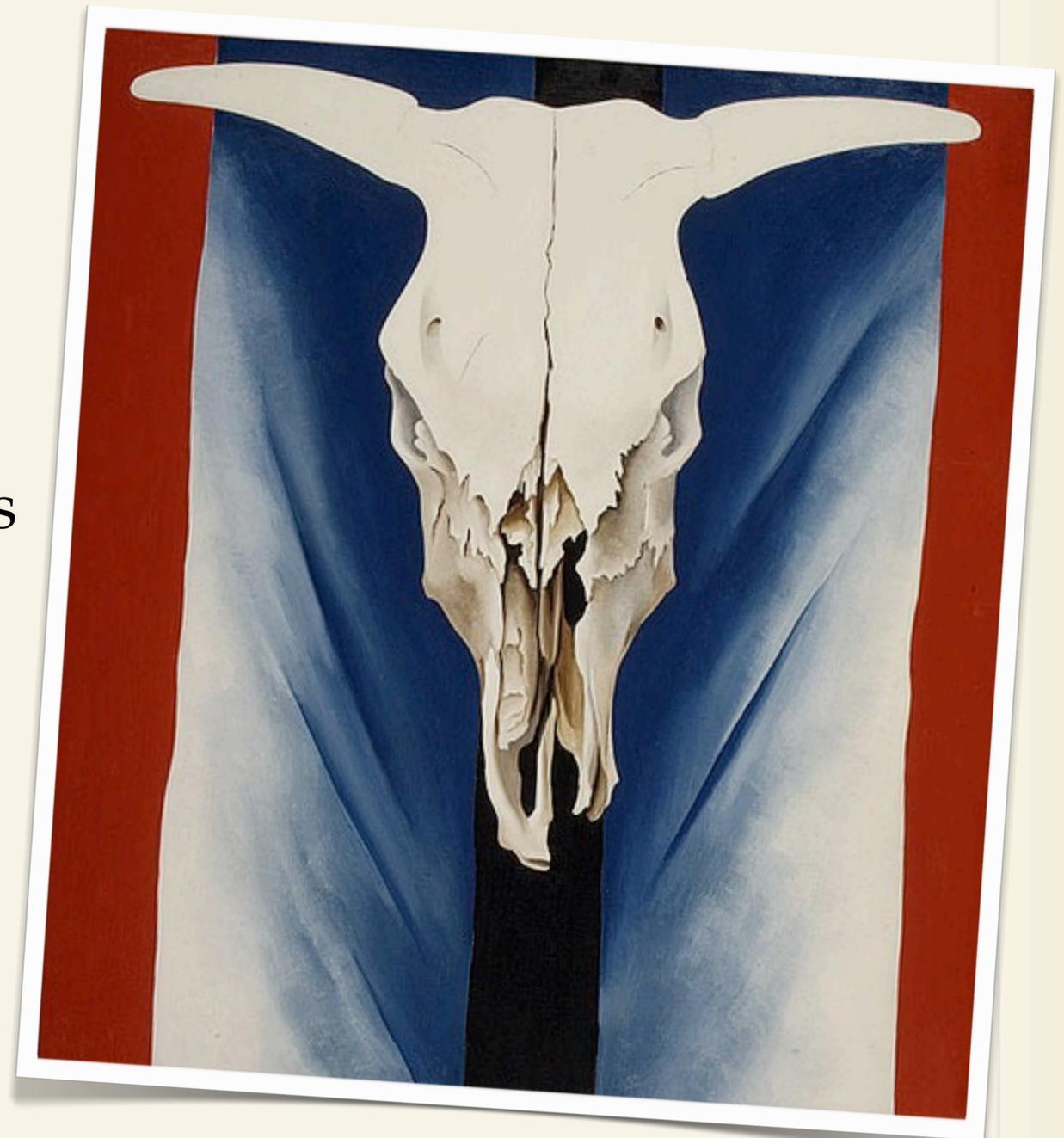
- ~ Make guesses about the work, supported by what you **see**.
- ~ Use your imagination, and intelligence to make an interpretation.
- ~ What is the meaning this painting?



# Judgment

*Is this a successful work of art?*

- ~ This is the time to make your own decision.
- ~ The **first level** is personal. Do you like the work? Yes, no?
- ~ The **second level**, you use aesthetics to decide.
- ~ A work may be very successful aesthetically, but you may still not like it personally.
- ~ Ask yourself, is this a work of artistic merit? Is it successful?



# Thinking about a work of art

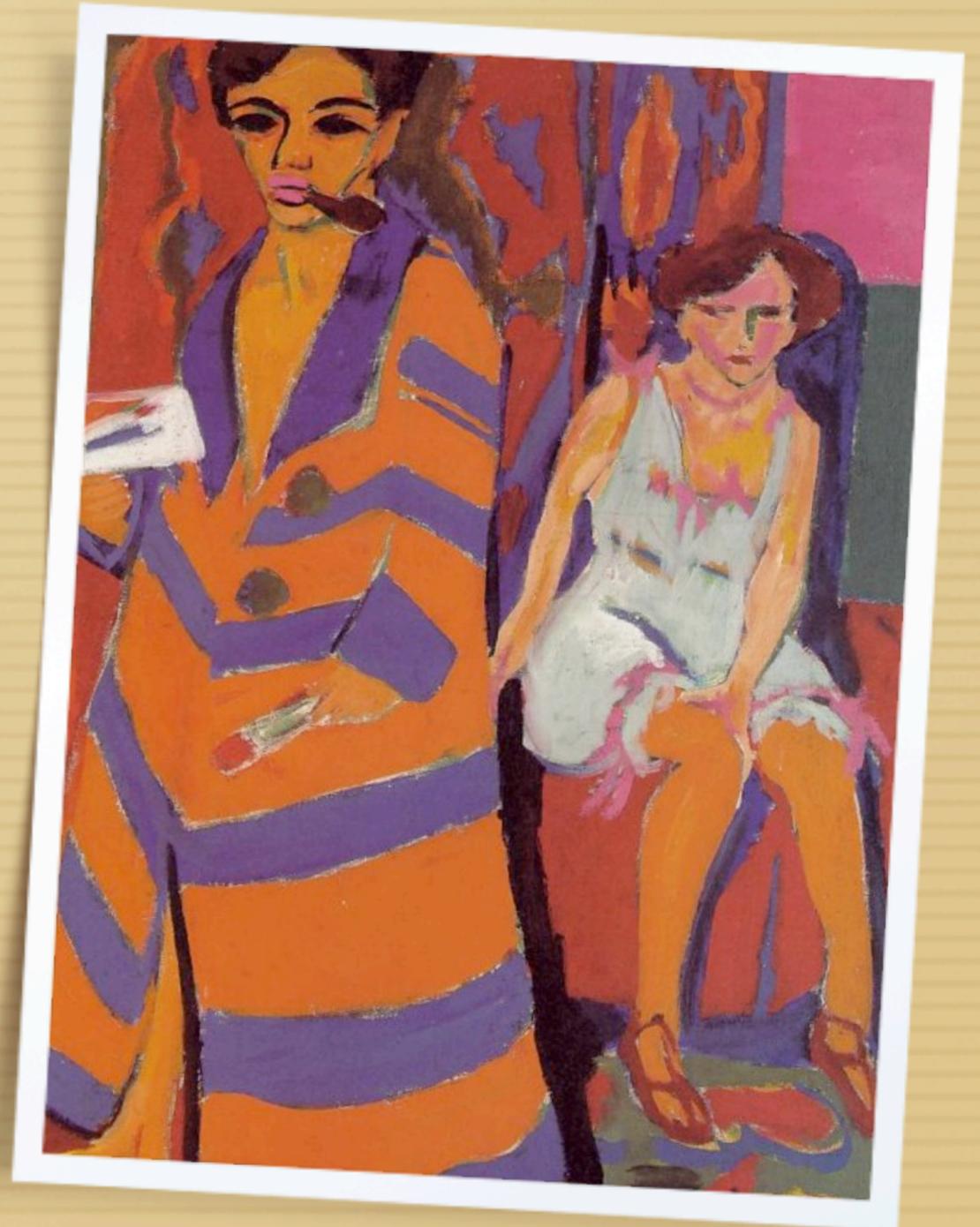
- ~ **Aesthetics:** is a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and value of art.
- ~ Today artwork is judged by a set of criteria and a good work of art is called successful.
- ~ Some works of art may not look pretty, but they may be well-organized, and / or give an emotional responses to viewers that make them successful.

# 3 Qualities of Art

- ~ When deciding on how successful a work of art is you will look at the *literal qualities*, the *formal qualities*, and the *expressive qualities* of works of art.
- ~ These are directly related to the properties of art: subject, composition and content.

# 3 Aesthetic Theories

The theories that rate these 3 different art qualities most highly are called:  
**Imitationalism, Formalism, and Emotionalism.**



# Imitationalism

Focuses on **realistic**  
representation in the artwork



**Mary Cassatt**  
*The Child's Bath*, 1893  
Oil on canvas

# Formalism

Places emphasis on the  
**design qualities**  
(art elements & principles)



**Georgia O' Keeffe**  
*Black Iris*  
Oil on canvas

# Emotionalism

Requires that a work arouse a response of **feelings, moods** or **emotions** from the viewer



**Pablo Picasso**  
*The Tragedy*, 1903  
Oil on canvas

