

Art 491

Art & Fear Journal Questions

Introduction

- 1) What are some of the universal and familiar difficulties (personal fears) you face as an artist?

Art and Fear – Chapter 1

- 1) What does the face of uncertainty mean to you?
- 2) How do you feel about the notion of “doing something no one much cares whether you do and for which there may be neither audience nor reward?”
- 3) The Assumptions – Consider the following assumptions and your relationship to each. How does each assumption relate to your feelings and thoughts toward art and artmaking? *Please write a paragraph for each assumption describing your relationship to it.*
 - A) Artmaking involves skill that can be learned.
 - B) Art is made by ordinary people.
 - C) Making art and viewing art are different at their core.
- 4) To most viewers, other than yourself, the finished artwork is the most important. Do you agree? As an artist, how do you view failed pieces?
- 5) The definition/stereotypes/identity of artist has drawbacks and benefits. Make a list of the 5 most prominent stereotypes you encounter about being an artist. How do these definitions shape your self-understanding? How do you think those definitions shape how others see you?
- 6) What impacted you the most in this chapter AND how will you integrate it into your life?

Art and Fear – Chapter 2

- 1) According to the book, what seems to be the difference between those artists who continue to make art and those who quit?
- 2) Once you (the artist) has come full circle with your art making cycle, what is the next step? What point are you at right now in the art making cycle? What do you do when you are done?
- 3) For you, what is the difference between quitting and stopping?
- 4) What does this statement mean to you? “Your current goal should never be your only goal.”
 - A) Name 3 goals you have for the remainder of the semester.
 - B) Name 3 goals you hope to gain with your current series of artworks
 - C) Name 3 goals you hope to gain AFTER you leave MSU
- 5) Consult the list of doubts on page 13 again. Please give 3 doubts not listed and give a relevant explanation behind them.
- 6) “Vision is always ahead of execution – and it should be.” What does this mean and tell me about a time this was true for you.
- 7) What art material seduces you with its potential and why?
- 8) What are some of the blunt truths about the materials you work with?
- 9) What kinds of risks are you taking as an artist? What are the rewards?
- 10) What impacted you the most in this chapter AND how will you integrate it into your life?

Art and Fear – Chapter 3 Fears About Yourself

- 1) Fears about making art fall into 2 families. Explain those two families and how do each of those fears impact you?
- 2) What does it take for an artist to make good work?

- 3) How do art and talent relate?
- 4) Perfection – Read the first paragraph on page 29 again and then answer this question:
Which group would you see yourself a part of? The left side of the studio that produced a quantity of work or the right side of the studio that worked to produce the one perfect piece? Which approach to you makes the most sense?
- 5) How does perfection impact you?
- 6) In what are the seeds of your next work of art embedded?
- 7) On page 32, about mid page, our authors discuss method and routine and how that worked for Anthony Trollope and Brett Weston.
 - A) What are your art making routines?
 - B) Are there changes you need to make to your routines to better your artmaking?
- 8) What impacted you the most in this chapter AND how will you integrate it into your life?

Art and Fear – Chapter 4 Fears About Others

- 1) Knowing that if one does, in academia, steer your work in certain directions, the “A” grade can be yours.
 - A) How do you deal with that thought/conflict when it comes time for you to create your own work? Do you consciously make decisions based on what you believe the academic standards might be (In better words: what you think the teacher wants to see.)?
 - B) Are these standards mere opinion or are they supported by the expertise, education, and experiences of the professor?
 - C) To what extent do you consider the grade when making work? How does it impact your design choices?
 - D) When else might you feel this pressure to produce work for others?
- 2) Do you think people understand your art? Does it send a clear message to your audience? Is there a clear message that you are trying to send? What, if anything, are you trying to say with your art at this point in your career?
- 3) Consider this quote: “risk rejection by exploring new worlds, or court acceptance by following well explored paths.” Which direction do you follow? Why?
- 4) What is it that you have learned from art history? What will you teach those in the future with your art of the now? Is it too early for you to make any statement about the work of the now?
- 5) When you look back in 5, 10, or 20 years to what you have produced today, will you be able to say that is “your” artwork or that you re-produced art of art history? Did you follow your own artistic path?
- 6) What impacted you the most in this chapter AND how will you integrate it into your life?

Art and Fear – Chapter 5 Finding Your Work

- 1) “In the outside world, there may be no reaction to what we do; in our art work there is nothing but reaction... When you are lazy, your art is lazy; when you hold back, it holds back; when you hesitate, it stands there staring, hands in pockets. But when you commit, it comes out like blazes.”

Look back on your own work – choose one piece from each category (lazy, blazing).
Describe your memory of the process in making those works.

- 2) What about your art is about this place, time, and culture? (20whatever, Minot State)

University, Minot, ND)

- 3) What are your 3 leading nominee's for "artist's funk"? Why are they real for you?
- 4) How have the limits of your materials put limits on what you've been able to visually communicate with your art? What do you need to push past these limitations?
- 5) Have you conquered the dilemma of reaching out to new and unfamiliar tools and embracing new possibilities? What was the last new tool or method you learned? What did it do for you creatively? What is next?
- 6) Are there any habits you have regarding the making of art that are not visible in the actual finished work of art? (ie: my brushes have to be a certain way, I have to work standing up [a la Ernest Hemmingway], I have to have music playing really loud...)
- 7) What impacted you the most in this chapter AND how will you integrate it into your life?

Art and Fear – Chapter 6 - Fears About Others

- 1) What are some of the ordinary problems the authors discuss regarding an artist's place in the art world (place, production, etc...) and how do they impact your life?
- 2) How has the work you have been producing stayed fairly close to, or gone very far from, the safety zone you may or may not have been comfortable working in? Is your work "guarded" so that you don't get "eaten," or are you "unguarded" in your work? Please explain your answers.
- 3) What have you done to live in another's world?
- 4) What have others done to live in your world?
- 5) Is it yet wired into you to be competitive with your artwork? Are you driven to make the next work better than the last?
- 6) When faced with a sense of defeat, or disappointment in your artwork, how have you been able to deal with or contended with it?
- 7) What impacted you the most in this chapter AND how will you integrate it into your life?

Art and Fear – Chapter 7 The Academic World

- 1) Describe 2 of your challenges and success from your studies in art.
Consider the system of academia which is a system that produces new artists while at the same time also producing ex-artists. Because of the time requirement making art demands, how could one continue to make art while maintaining a full time OTHER job in teaching others to make art?
- 2) Pages 83 and 84 discuss the students seeing what the instructor has done, the path they have traveled. Consider all the professors you have studied with (not just in the arts) and seeing what they have done with their specialty inside and outside of the academic world, how has this influenced what you do or how you do it? (Long and confusing question, I know...) Perhaps more succinctly...how have your professors most influenced you?
- 3) How can you continue to make art after you have stopped being a student and stepped into the great big world?
- 4) How have non-art majors in your art courses, impacted your artwork? What can you take away from your interactions with non-art majors in your art courses?
- 5) What fears do you have upon leaving here?
- 6) To the critic – art is a noun. What is it to you? Explain your answer.
- 7) Consider the final products you have made, do any of the finished works provide with clear answers to the questions you had while making them?
- 8) Reflect on this: "The point is simply that none of this will help you get the paint to fall to the canvas the way you need it to. None of this will tell you what it's like to set the hammer

to the marble for the first time. None of this will convey the terror of walking onto the stage to face a thousand people. For many artists, the very best writings on art are not analytical or chronological; they are autobiographical. The artist, after all, was *there*.” (91). While reading is important, books cannot get you to feel exactly what it’s like to DO the aforementioned things. How does reading vs. doing play out in your life?

- 9) What impacted you the most in this chapter AND how will you integrate it into your life?

Art and Fear – Chapter 8 - Conceptual Worlds

- 1) What are the 3 questions Henry James proposed when looking at an artist’s work:
What are the strengths **and** weaknesses of James’ schema?
- 2) Consider one of the works from the current show in one of the MSU galleries (tell me the piece name, artist, medium etc) and answer the above three questions for the work you have chosen.
- 3) What are the primary questions *you* ask when engaging a work of art?
- 4) Are you an artist who sets clear goals and looks for measurable feedback? Is it the technical stuff you challenge yourself with? Are you “doing a perfect swan dive off of the low board?” Have you learned to see beyond the simple and measurable goals and set the challenge a bit higher for yourself?
- 5) What do you think about the statement “art that deals with ideas is more interesting than art that deals with [just] technique.” How are concept and technique related?
- 6) The text speaks about how the terms “art” and “craft” are so overgrown they have nearly lost meaning. Is there a difference between the two? If so, how do you define that difference? Please give examples of what is and is not Art and why?
- 7) “Art lies embedded in the conceptual leaps between pieces – not in the pieces themselves.” Do you see a conceptual difference in your work – piece to piece? How has this evolved in your work?
- 8) Based on the reading... what is the difference between science and art? Do you see any similarities?
- 9) What impacted you the most in this chapter AND how will you integrate it into your life?

Art and Fear – Chapter 9 - Fears About Others

- 1) What, if anything, do artists have in common with one another? Look at the artists you’ve been reading about, studying, copying, writing about, and working along side of. Do you have anything in common with them? If so, what is held in common?
- 2) The only work you can do convincingly is the work that focuses on the things you care about. Put aside the facts that you are in an educational program that has requirements for each course:
Does the work you are making right now focus on the things you care about?
If yes – what are these things.
If no – why not? How can you fulfill your school projects *and* focus on things you care about?
- 3) Reflect on this... Artwork is ordinary work – for us as artists, it is our work. It is not about inspiration, it is about the work... Your art does not arrive miraculously from the dark, but is made uneventfully in the light.
- 4) Why is art hard? (according to the book.)
- 5) Why is art hard? (according to you.) Has it been harder than you thought it would be?
- 6) What impacted you the most in this chapter AND how will you integrate it into your life?