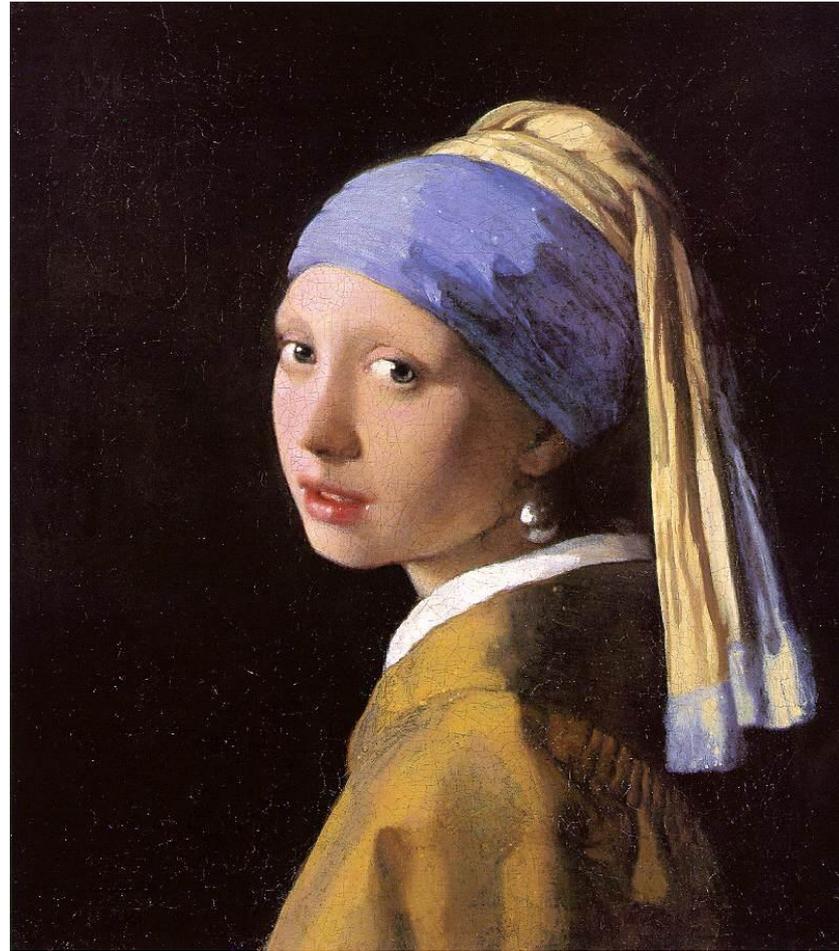
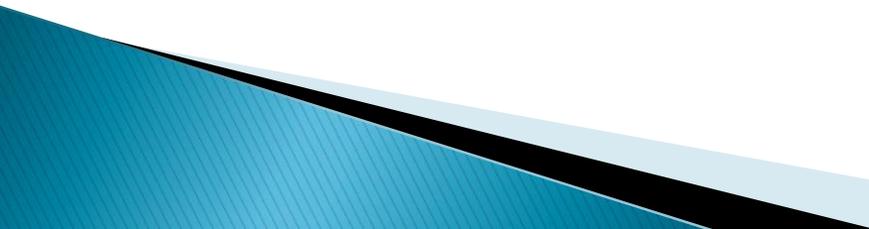


Area of Knowledge: Arts

Painting



Methods of Gaining Knowledge

- ▶ What is the proper function of the arts to capture a perception of reality, to teach or uplift the mind, to express emotion to create beauty, to bind a community together or to praise a spiritual power?
 - ▶ To what extent and in what ways might the arts be regarded as a representation of reality? What kinds of art might be seen as “realistic”?
 - ▶ Is originality essential in the arts? Is the relationship between the individual artist and tradition similar in all the arts, in all cultures and across all time?
 - ▶ Most arts have used technology, over many centuries. Has the relationship between the arts and technology changed as a result of the possibilities of mechanical reproduction and digital manipulation?
- 

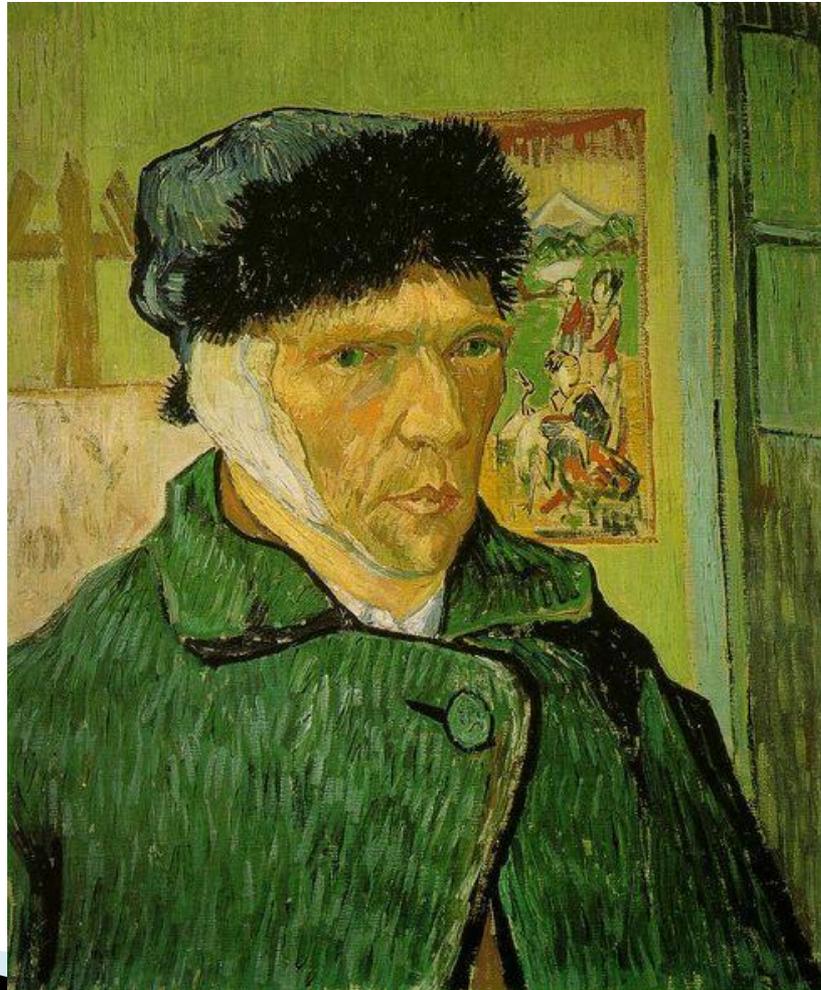
Durer



The arts and knowledge claims

- ▶ Does familiarity with art itself provide knowledge and, if so, of what kind? Knowledge of facts? Of the creator of the art form? Of the conventions of the form or traditions? Of psychology or cultural history? Of oneself?
- ▶ Does art, or can art, tell the truth? If so, is artistic truth the same as truth in the context of the natural sciences, the human sciences, or history? How might the knowledge claims of art be verified or falsified?

Van Gogh



The arts and knowledge claims

- ▶ In science the idea of progress is dominant: new knowledge builds on what is already known; knowledge once discovered cannot be “unlearned”. Is the same true in the arts?
 - ▶ Is explanation a goal of the arts? How do the arts compare in this regard with other areas of knowledge?
 - ▶ What did Frank Zappa mean when he claimed that “Talking about music is like dancing about architecture”?
- 

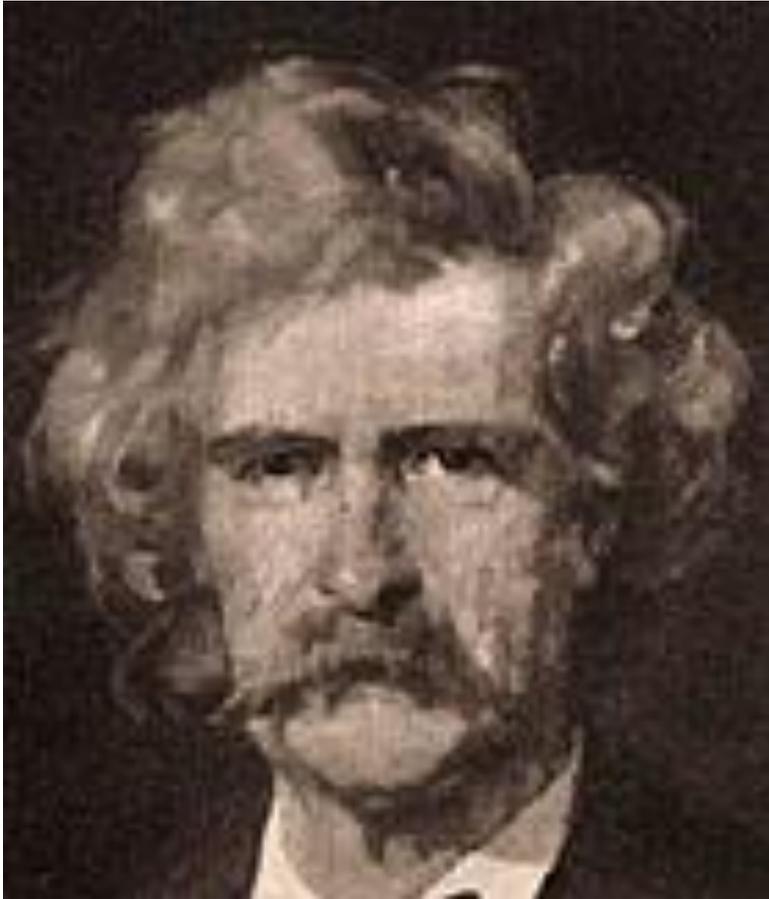
DaVinci



The arts and knowledge claims

- ▶ What do artists do to exercise “critical control” over the imagination, in Popper’s phrase?
 - Far from being engaged in opposing or incompatible activities, scientists and artists are both trying to extend our understanding of experience by the use of creative imagination subjected to critical control, and so both are using irrational as well as rational faculties. Both are explaining the unknown and trying to articulate the search and its findings. Both are seekers after truth who make indispensable use of intuition.
--Karl Popper

Literature



⁺
~~A~~ [^]perfectly True Story, re-
peated word for word
as I heard it.
=

It was summer
time, & twilight. We
were sitting on the porch
^{on the summit of the hill,}
of the farm-house, ⁺
"Aunt Rachel" was sit-
[^]ting respectfully below
^{on the steps,}
our level, [^]— for she was
our servant, & colored.
She was of mighty frame
& stature; she was sixty

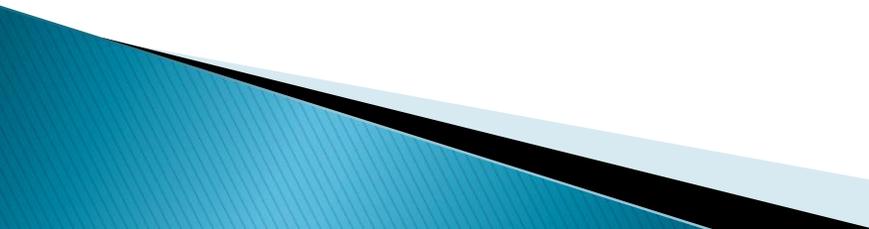
The arts and values

- ▶ What is the value of learning an art form?
 - ▶ What is of value in each of the different art forms (dance, film, literature, music, theatre, visual arts, and so on)?
 - ▶ Are any of the arts of more or less value than the others?
 - ▶ Can what is of value in arts education be learned in other ways?
 - ▶ How are value judgments in the arts justified?
 - ▶ How is “good art” recognized or decided on?
- 

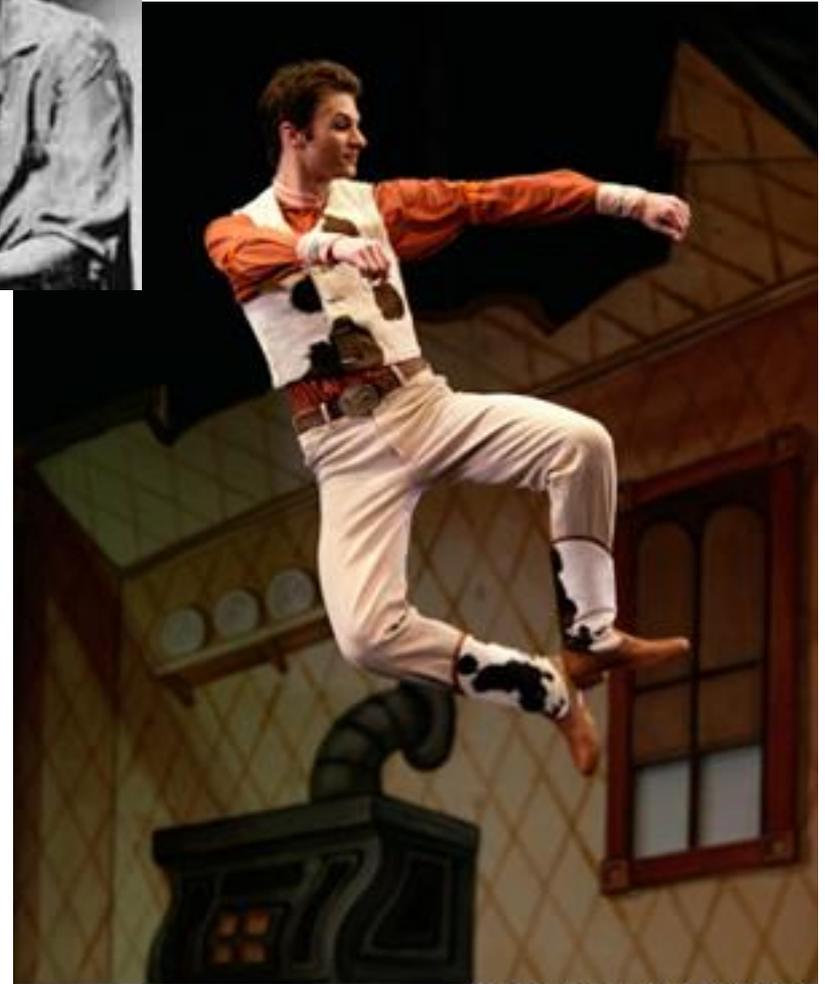
Music



The arts and values

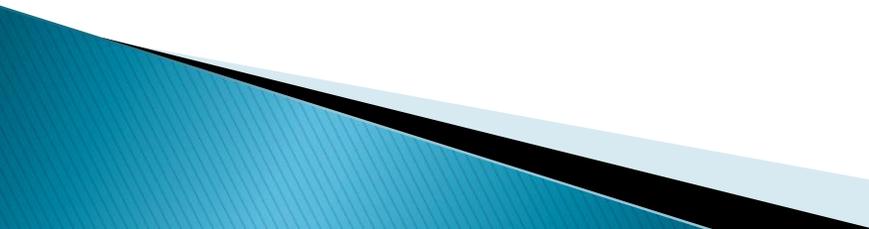
- ▶ What are the justifications and implications of claiming that there are absolute standards for good art, or that the only standard for good art is individual taste?
 - ▶ Does the artist carry any moral or ethical responsibility? Is it possible for an artwork to be immoral? Should art be judged on its ability to please or shock?
 - ▶ If art has power to change how people think, does this mean it should be controlled? Should art be politically subversive? Or should it serve the interests of the community, or the state, or the patron or funding organization?
- 

Dance

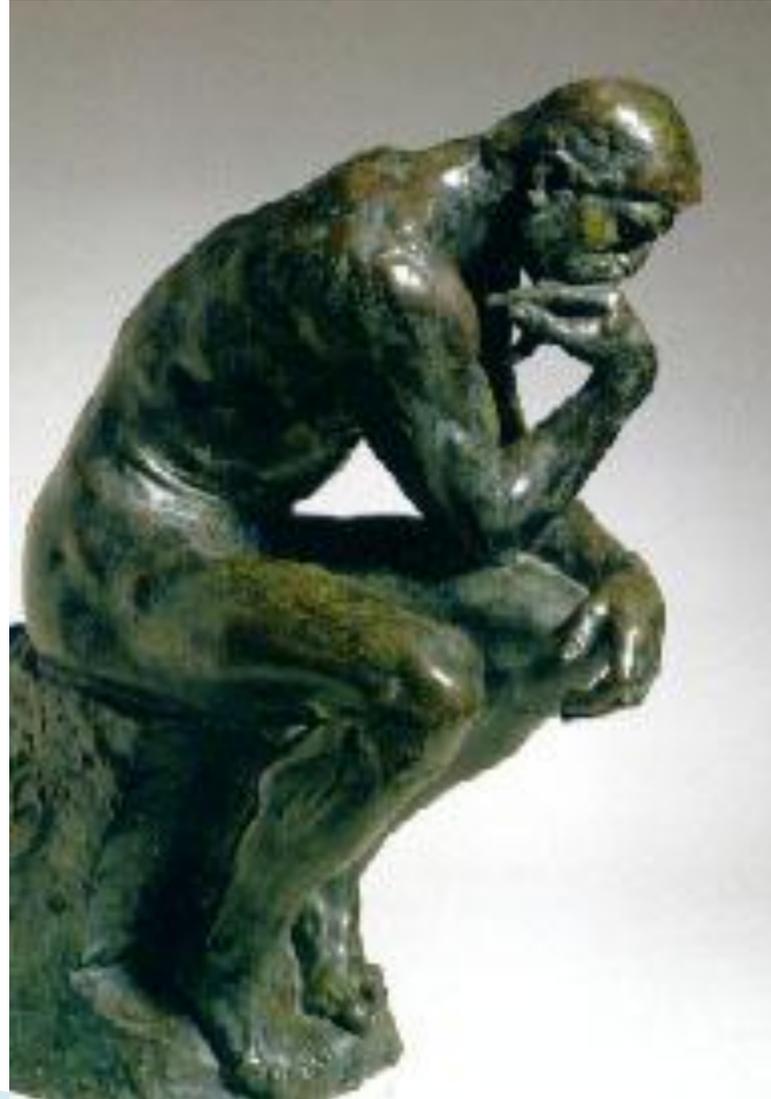


Rory Hohenstein in "Rodeo"
Photo: Erk Tomasson

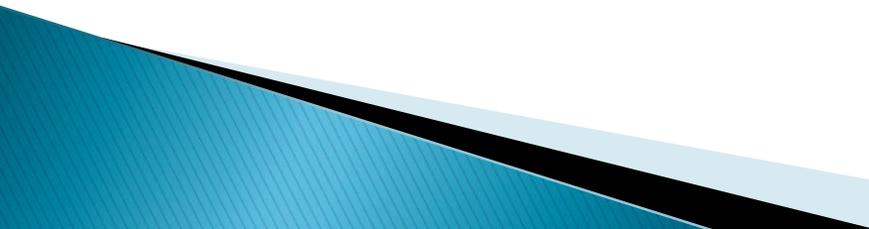
The arts and knowledge perspectives

- ▶ What knowledge or art can be gained by focusing attention on the **artist**?
 - ▶ Can or should artists' intentions, and the creative process itself, be understood through observing artists or knowing something of their lives?
 - ▶ Is the creative process as important as the final product, even though it cannot be observed directly?
 - ▶ Are an artist's intentions relevant to assessing the work?
 - ▶ Can a work of art contain or convey meaning of which the artist is oblivious?
- 

Sculpture



The artist and knowledge perspectives

- ▶ What knowledge of art can be gained by focusing attention solely on the **work** itself, in isolation from the artist or the social context?
 - ▶ Can or should technical virtuosity in itself, a skilled mastery of the medium be enough to distinguish a work of art?
 - ▶ Are certain compositions, ways of structuring sounds or shapes, inherently more pleasing than others?
 - ▶ Can a work be judged primarily by the harmony of form and content, the way in which structure and style work effectively to create or support the subject matter?
- 

Film



The arts and knowledge perspectives

- ▶ What knowledge of art can be gained by focusing attention on the **reader or audience's** response?
- ▶ Can it be plausibly argued that art is brought into being only in the response of the audience, that a work is created anew each time it is viewed, heard, or read?
- ▶ What is the role of the critic in judgment of the worth of art?
- ▶ Are any of the following sufficient indicators of the value of a work: its popularity, its commercial value in the market, its universality in its appeal beyond its cultural boundaries, and/or its longevity?

Architecture



The arts and knowledge perspectives

- ▶ What knowledge of art can be gained by focusing attention on its **social, cultural or historical context**?
 - ▶ To what extent do power relationships determine what art or whose art is valued? Is
 - ▶ Is all art essentially a product of a particular place and time in terms of its subject matter and conventions of expression?
 - ▶ Is art best seen as an anthropological or historical documentation, bringing to life a remote society or era, but understood esoterically, only with independent knowledge of that remote life?
 - ▶ Does art become obsolete?
 - ▶ Is art understood more fully by emphasizing what all cultures have in common rather than by stressing what is unique to each?
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