The Methodologies Of Art: An Introduction

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An Introduction

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Since the 19th century, when art history became an established academic discipline, works of art have been read in a variety of ways. These different ways of describing and interpreting art are the methodologies of artistic analysis, the divining rods of meaning. Regardless of a work’s perceived difficulty, an art object is, in theory, complex. Every work of art is an expression of its culture (time and place) and its maker (the artist) and is dependent on its media (what it’s made of). The methodologies discussed here—formal analysis, iconology and iconography, Marxism, feminism, biography and autobiography, psychoanalysis, and structuralism—reflect the multiplicity of meanings in an artistic image.

Excellent introduction to the various approaches to writing about art. She discusses Freudian art criticism, feminist art history, semiotics, biography and autobiography, among other topics, in a clear and cogent style.

This book isn’t really about the methodologies of a working artist. It’s about the ways art historians read our work after the fact. I don’t find that it is organized very well, and a good deal of the writing seems incredibly opinion-based. I wouldn’t recommend this to artists.

Well written. Cuts through the philosophy speak and presents a clear picture of the spectrum of critical theories.
Very useful.

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