

TBA Exhibition Critical Review Due Tues. October 25th

Reviews are relatively short (one typed page, at least 3 paragraphs). **Make every word count**, choose your adjectives and adverbs with great specificity and economy. For example think of the different connotations which arise if you describe a way of working as “traditional” rather than “common” or “usual”. Don’t fall into banality, be interested in the work. You do not have to be “objective” — the reader understands you are putting forth your own opinion—choosing to write about a specific exhibition already indicates a certain investment in it. You should, however, **be as informed as possible about the artist, the contemporary and historical art context, the specifics of the work (its topics and particular cultural/social/historical/material references) and the curator and gallery (if this is relevant)**. Talking to the artist or curator directly is how a majority of reviewers glean important information (from Judy Radul: notes on writing exhibition reviews: <http://www.sfu.ca/~jaradul/reviews.html>)

- 1) Select an exhibit from The TBA Washington HS exhibition that struck you the most and that created the strongest response. (positive or negative)
- 2) Research the artist, read the statement in the catalogue, read the artist statement. Learn more about the context in which the piece was created
- 3) Reflect on what you remember, refer to notes you took in your visual journal.
- 4) Read at least 3 critical reviews of other art work: (You will record the author and who the review was about and a brief summary of the review and what insight you gained from it)
- 5) Draft a Critical Analysis of your chosen work, including the following information:
 - **Local Context** (start your review with some inclusion of Name of Exhibition, Name of Artist, Name of Curator, Location of Exhibition)
 - **Information about the artist:** Make sure this information is relevant to the work you are discussing. Many reviews say little or nothing about the artist’s biography. The review is primarily concerned with the work. For instance, we don’t need to know where the artist was born or went to school unless this bears directly on their work.
 - **(Physical) description of the work:** this doesn’t have to exclude all other descriptive/interpretive language but should be a thorough description of the art, rather than conceptual interpretation, this lets the reader imagine the work. Remember you can’t assume the reader has seen the work.
 - **Art historical/theoretical contextualization:** How does the work relate to the broader context of art history or other artists? What philosophies or aesthetic perspectives are connected to this work? What is the perspective of the artist?
 - **Readings, interpretations of the work: what is the work “about”?** What are the concepts/ ideas the artist is working with? What is the work expressing?
 - **Observations, assessments, critiques of the work:** The review need not be uniformly “positive” or “negative” in fact the aspect of “judgment” or assessing the “success” of the work might be secondary to a more general outlining or interpretation of the project or aims of the artist
 - A good reviewer doesn’t boldly proclaim success or failure of the work, but enters the work into a conversation with readers, theory, history etc. by focusing on the work and making it public though the publication of the review.
- 6) Revise and edit your writing!
- 7) Post your article on Mrs. Zeller’s VA Blog by Due Date: Tues. October 25th