Interpretive Frameworks

What are the standards by which we judge art and how can we justify them?
Consider your view on art

• What is your favorite painting?
• Who is your favorite artist?
• Who is the greatest artist?
• Name the greatest painting or sculpture ever made.
• Is some art better than others?
• Can anything be art, who decides?
Some ART/TOK questions

• Why are the arts important?
• What are the roles of emotion and reason in the arts?
• What are the standards by which we judge art and how can we justify them?
• What moral responsibilities does the artist have? Are they different from any other knower?
• To what extent does an artist have a moral obligation to avoid or confront issues that might shock or be contrary to the common populace?
• Is art simply an imitation of an idea?
• Is the artist’s intention relevant to the viewer?
• To what extent does the work of the artist influence the culture in which it was created? To what extent does the existing culture influence the artist working in it?
• Is it important for artworks to be original? Why?
• What do we expect from art? Truth? Seduction? Provocation? Beauty?
Interpretive frameworks

- It is possible to learn to apply different aesthetic or interpretive stances (define aesthetic), develop different frames of reference for viewing and appreciating art. The more a person is able to understand and apply these perspectives the richer the experience she/he might have.
Imitationalism

To imitate the appearance of nature. Realism or naturalism. Skill and craft required.
Formalism emphasizes formal composition, design.
Emotionalism
or expressionism. Intensity of expression, emotional content more important than formal rendering or likeness.
Conceptual

a type of art in which the artist's idea, or concept, of a work of art and of the means of executing that idea have primary importance while the artwork itself, which may or may not be produced, is regarded as secondary.
Working in small groups, identify interpretive frameworks for the following images. You can refer to these frameworks and maybe others as well.

- Imitationalism, Formalism, Emotionalism, Iconoclastic, Conceptual, as discussed,
- Gender interpretive framework
- Cultural interpretive framework
- Narrative interpretive framework
- Psychoanalytic interpretive framework
- Materials and processes interpretive framework
- There can be multiple frameworks for any work!

Viewed together, these frameworks help you to appreciate how an artwork contains many different aspects of meaning – from the formal to the political, and from the historical to the cultural.
Louise Nevelson
Vija Celmins
Cornelia parker
Anselm Kiefer
Joseph Albers
Louise Bourgeois
Mona Hatoum
Edvard Munch
Cy Twombly
Consider again... your view on art.

Are there absolute standards for good art, or is the only standard for good art individual taste?
In your Investigation Workbook apply some interpretive frameworks to the artists’ works that you are looking at in your individual research. What frameworks help you to understand and analyse the work?

Now apply them to your own work!