

# *The* ART of SEEING

THIRD EDITION



PAUL ZELANSKI · MARY PAT FISHER



# *The* **ART** *of* **SEEING**

THIRD EDITION

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University of Connecticut

MARY PAT FISHER



Prentice Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632

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10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

ISBN 0-13-059916-6

This book was designed and produced by  
CALMANN & KING LTD, LONDON

Designer: Karen Osborne  
Picture researcher (3rd edition): Donna Thynne  
Maps: Eugene Fleury  
Typeset by Fakenham Photosetting Ltd, Norfolk  
Printed in Hong Kong

Cover: (*front*) Pablo Picasso, *Portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter*, 1937.  
Oil on canvas, 39¼ × 33¾ ins (100 × 86 cm).  
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JOHN J. MCKEE





Romare Bearden, *She-Ba*, 1970. Collage on composition board, 48 × 36 ins (122 × 91 cm).  
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10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

ISBN 0-13-059916-6

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CALMANN & KING LTD, LONDON

Designer: Karen Osborne  
Picture researcher (3rd edition): Donna Thynne  
Maps: Eugene Fleury  
Typeset by Fakenham Photosetting Ltd, Norfolk  
Printed in Hong Kong

Cover: (*front*) Pablo Picasso, *Portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter*, 1937.  
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# PREFACE

This third edition constitutes a major revision and expansion of *The Art of Seeing*. We have strengthened those features that already made it very popular and have developed new ways of bringing the reader closer to an informed, awakened appreciation of the art of all cultures and all media. Even more than in previous editions, we present art from the artist's point of view.

Artists' own words about their work are a treasure mine for the student of art appreciation. We have therefore woven many more such statements by artists into the text. In addition, we have created 22 feature boxes in which artists speak at length about some facet of their work that is related to the subject under discussion. Some of these are developed from our personal interviews with these artists, some from historical documents.

To acknowledge major new areas of excitement in the art world, we have greatly increased our illustration and discussion of multicultural art and of art by women. In addition to doing so throughout the text, we have also added to the history chapter new sections on the growing critical appreciation of the richness of such previously ignored sources of art. In the same vein, we have also developed a new section on the "discovery" of outsider art.

Similarly, to help broaden previously Euro-centric Western tastes in art, we have added a new section to Chapter 15, which examines a few works in great detail, incorporating all the forms of appreciation discussed in the book. This new section looks at the use of a craft medium—beadwork—as complex sculpture by a contemporary African-American woman, Joyce Scott, who is also a performance artist. Her observations about how she is working can be applied not only to the understanding of political and emotional statements made in the art of oppressed cultures but also to recognizing the human complexities with which many artists are dealing.

We are also excited to introduce six maps in Chapter 14. These show the regions where major trends in Western art were developed, and indicate

key artistic centers and the location of important buildings and monuments. Each of the maps is accompanied by a timeline giving a global historical context to the evolution of Western art.

Throughout the book, coverage of many topics—both traditional and contemporary—has been expanded, including creativity, encaustic, fresco, wood engraving, computer art, graphic design, photography, xerox and FAX art, video art, conceptual art, performance art, earthworks, installation pieces, folk art, and outsider art.

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## THE NATURE OF THIS BOOK

As before, we have made considerable effort in *The Art of Seeing* to make art come to life. The language we use is vigorous and down-to-earth, with numerous quotations from the artists themselves to help explain, in their own words, what they were trying to do. Unfamiliar words are carefully defined when they are first used and also in an extensive illustrated glossary at the end of the book.

Perhaps even more important than the writing in *The Art of Seeing* is the art. The illustrations for each concept are clearly related to the text and conscientiously described. There are some 605 illustrations, 260 of them in color, and many of these are reproduced at full-page size. They are taken from all the visual arts, from painting and sculpture to clothing and industrial design. Many cultures are represented, as is the work of many women artists. As well as being good reference for the explanations in the text, the illustrations provide a stimulating, exciting visual gallery.

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## ITS ORGANIZATION

Part 1 of *The Art of Seeing* lays the foundation for truly seeing the aesthetic aspects of a work of art. In the first chapter of Part 1 we develop an initial vocabulary and an intellectual framework for considering artworks: the basic forms of art, the

functions of art for the artist and the viewer, and the ways in which art can be appreciated. Chapter 2 is devoted to extensive analysis of the visual elements with which the artist works: line, shapes, form, space, texture, light, color, and time. Chapter 3 covers the subtle organizing principles by which these elements are used in a work of art.

The next two parts of the book approach art through the materials and techniques used by artists. By revealing the difficulties associated with each method, we hope to enhance appreciation of the artists' accomplishments in the face of the intractabilities of their media. Part 2 covers two-dimensional techniques and media: drawing, painting, printmaking, graphic design, photography, photocopy, fax, film, television, video, and computer graphics. Part 3 covers three-dimensional media: sculpture, crafts, industrial design, clothing design, architecture, interior design, environmental design, and the performing arts.

Part 4 approaches art as it exists in time. We first offer a succinct and intelligible approach to historical styles in Western Art. Some 45 major movements, from prehistoric to contemporary, are concisely covered, with an illustrated timeline on pages 416 and 417 as an aid to understanding how the distinctively different aesthetic movements are related in time. In addition, six maps show close-ups of particular periods so that one can see where the major artists of the time were working, in the context of major world events of the time.

The final chapter is a unique in-depth examination of specific works of art, including their evolution in time. It approximates the actual experience of encountering a work of art, drawing on all levels of

appreciation developed in the book in order to analyze and respond to five special works: a round stone barn built by a Utopian community, Picasso's *Guernica*, Rodin's *The Gates of Hell*, Michelangelo's *Sistine Chapel ceiling*, and the bead sculpture of Joyce Scott.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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In revising *The Art of Seeing*, we have been helped by many people, including Sal Scalora, Katherine Ferina, Richard Swibold, Peter and Jan Good, The Schomburg Society for the Preservation of Black Culture, the National Museum of African Art, Jamison-Thomas Gallery. We would also like to thank the following reviewers for their helpful comments on the text: Professor Elizabeth C. Nuell of Middle Tennessee State University, Professor Kevin Harris of Northern Kentucky University, Professor Pamela A. Lee of the University of Washington, Professor LeRoy D. McDermott of Central Missouri State University, and Professor Frederick J. Zimmerman of SUNY Cortland. As always, Bud Therien of Prentice Hall, Rosemary Bradley, Melanie White, and Karen Osborne of Calmann and King, and Annette Zelanski have offered great support.

We feel that these improvements will be very helpful to all those who seek an educated, sharpened sense of art appreciation. We ourselves grow in appreciation each time we approach this book.

Paul Zelanski  
Mary Pat Fisher

# PART 1

## LEARNING TO SEE

*Art is life intensely experienced. For those with eyes to see, an encounter with a work of art can be deeply satisfying. With training, we can begin to recognize the elements and principles of design which are the artist's aesthetic tools. We may also learn to perceive the artist's intentions for the work.*