

TOK Journal Assignment

My grandmother is a wonderful artist. She has a loft in Tribeca where she lives, the walls are covered floor to ceiling with her work. My mother is an artist too. She draws the pictures in books and gives the kids at the preschool where she works the opportunity for them to discover the ways in which a paintbrush becomes a tool for expression. My dad is a musician. He plays the bass in little jazz clubs all around the city. Lots of different kinds of people watch him perform. It is interesting, having the perspective that I have. I watch the process. I watch my dad write songs and I watch my mother draw and when I was little I stayed at my grandmothers house for hours, watching her paint and listening to stories from her youth. I've learned the difference between art that is made with an intention and that that is made without one. It makes you wonder how intention really affects results and whether art can ever be accurately interpreted without having the perspective of the artist. How important is the artists objective in relation to the way their work is looked at?

My grandmother used to say that lengthy captions would disgrace a good piece of art, that a talented artist knows how to produce a piece of work that speaks for itself. And yet when a person sets out with their own personal set of knowledge and beliefs as well as hopes of communicating something specific through a more ambiguous form of language, like painting, it is easy for their message to be muddled. I think that it is impossible for somebody to ever know precisely what an artist was thinking about when they made their piece. This concept has to do with a topic we covered in class. The idea that when one person knows something, it is often very difficult for them to communicate their knowledge to someone who does not already possess it. What I do think is possible, is to know the way they were feeling. Though it is sometimes vague and convoluted, art is one of those things that summons up intuition, and depending on the piece, can lose its value when attempted to be reasoned with. Many people go to galleries and attempt to pick work apart. To me, they are often going about it in the wrong way. A good piece of art relies on subconscious color associations, automatic sensory responses,

and connections that your brain makes almost instinctively because of the repetitive nature of these ways of thinking. Associations are everywhere, the more times we make them, the more automatic they become, until one day you're looking at a painting and feeling sad without really knowing why. Art uses connections like these to conjure up this mysterious ability to harness empathy and throw it on to an inanimate object. I think the experience is personal, and a little bit different for everybody.