



THE STEPS OF ART CRITICISM

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Criticism

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The Steps of Art Criticism

When you become involved in the process of art criticism, you learn from the work of art. **Critiquing an artwork is like playing detective. You must assume the artist has a secret message hidden within the work.**

Four-step approach that will help you find the hidden meaning in art. The four steps, which must be taken in order, are description, analysis, interpretation, and judgment. By following these steps you will be able to answer the following questions:

- What do I see? (description)
- How is the work organized? (analysis)
- What message does this artwork communicate? (interpretation)
- Is this a successful work of art? (judgment)

As you go through the steps of **description** and **analysis**, you will **collect facts and clues**.

When you get to **interpretation**, you will make guesses about **what message you think the artwork is communicating**.

Finally, during **judgment**, you will make your own decisions about the artistic merit of the work.

Step One: Description (What do I see?)

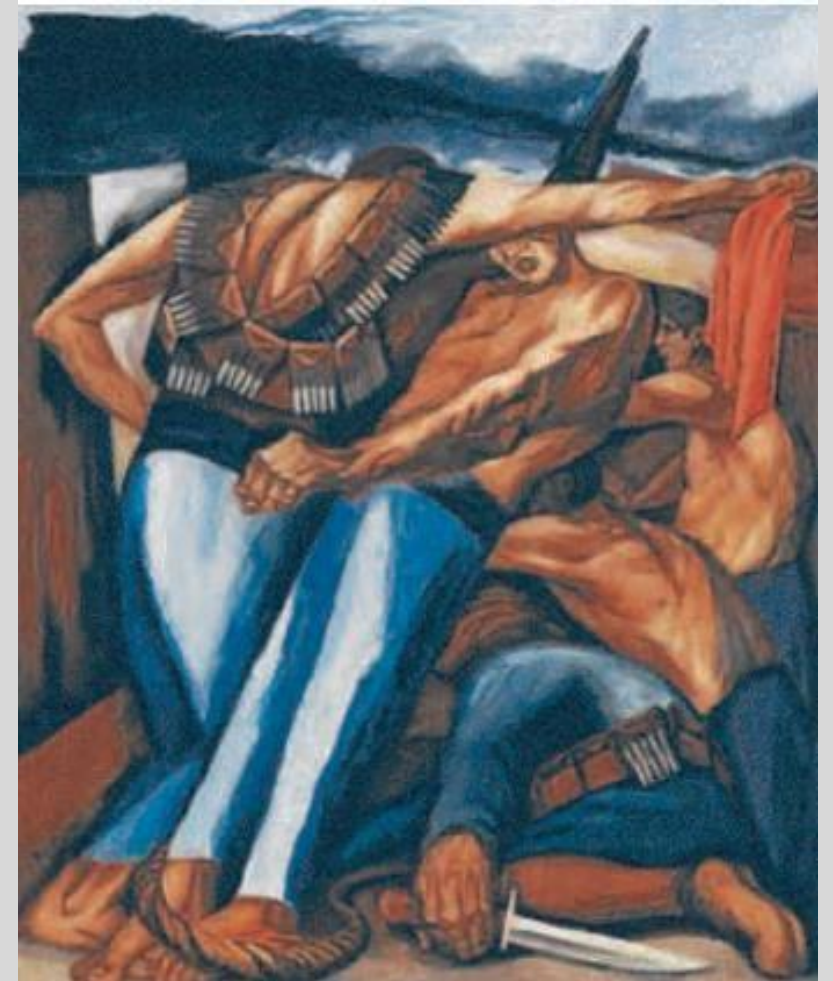
In the first step of art criticism, description, you carefully make a list of all the things you see in the work. These include the following:

- The size of the work, and the process used.
- The subject, object, and details.

- How does that compare to your own height?
- If this artwork were standing on the floor, would the figures be larger or smaller than you?
- What materials were used to create this work?

During the description step, you must be **objective**.

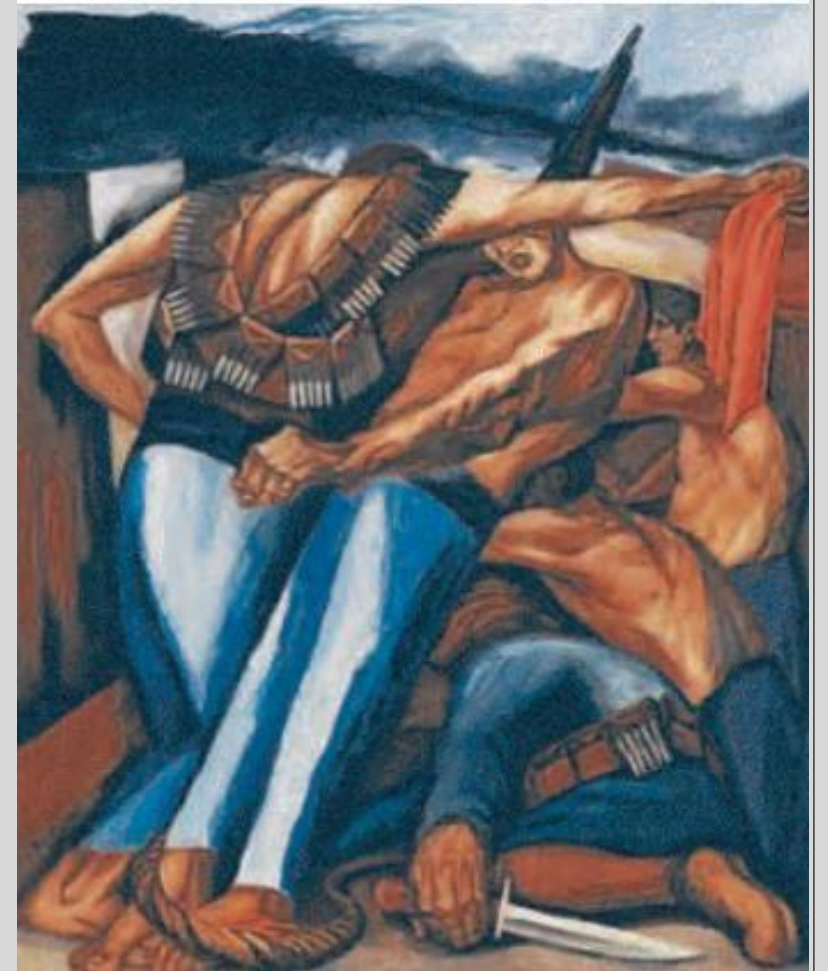
- In describing Orozco's painting, you can say that you see five people.
- You could not say they are all men. That would be a guess.
- You can describe the person crouched on the ground as wearing a blue shin and holding a large knife.
- You can describe the tense muscles that are bulging on the other four figures, but at this point in the criticism process, you should not try to guess why they are tense.



What do you think?

Step Two: Analysis (How is the work organized?)

- During this step, you are still collecting facts about the elements and principles of art that are used in the artwork.
- In analysis you discover how the principles of art are used to organize the art elements of line, color, value, shape, form, space, and texture.
- You will learn how the artist has used these formal qualities to create the content of the art, which is known as the theme or the message.
- Look again at Line and color are two of the an elements that play an important part in this work. Can you identify the other art elements used?

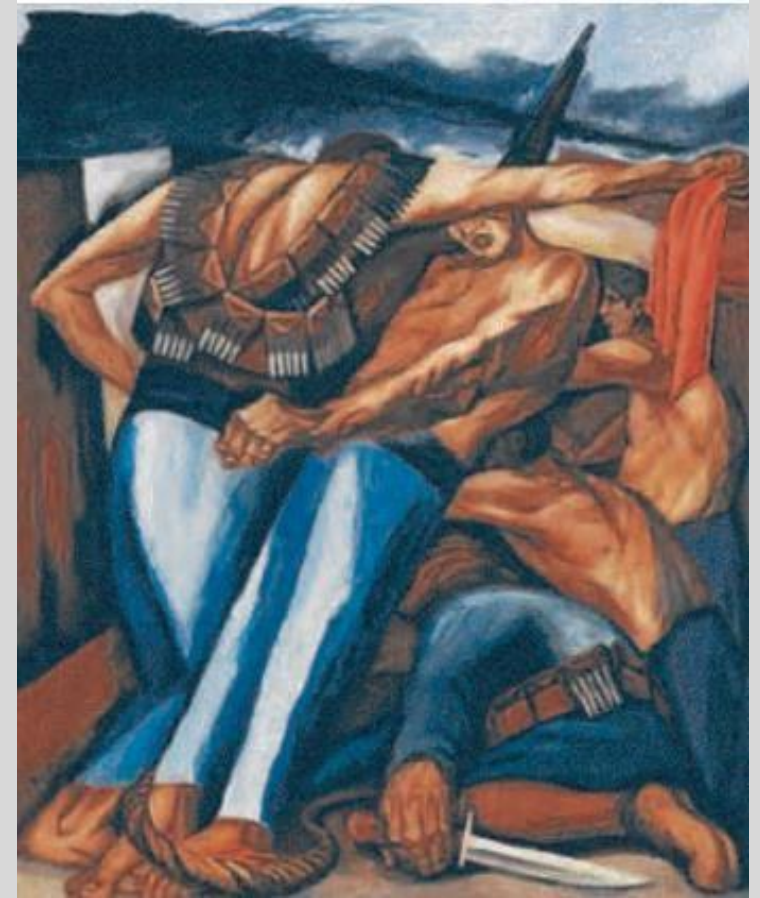


Step Three: Interpretation (What message does this artwork communicate to you?)

- During this step, you will answer the question, "What message does this art-work communicate to me?"

'We can assume that he is complaining about the society in which he live, with a realism style, he also critic the racism against the poorest'.

- " In interpretation you will explain or tell the meaning or mood of the work. It is here that you can make guesses about the artwork, as long as they appear to be supported by what you see in the work.

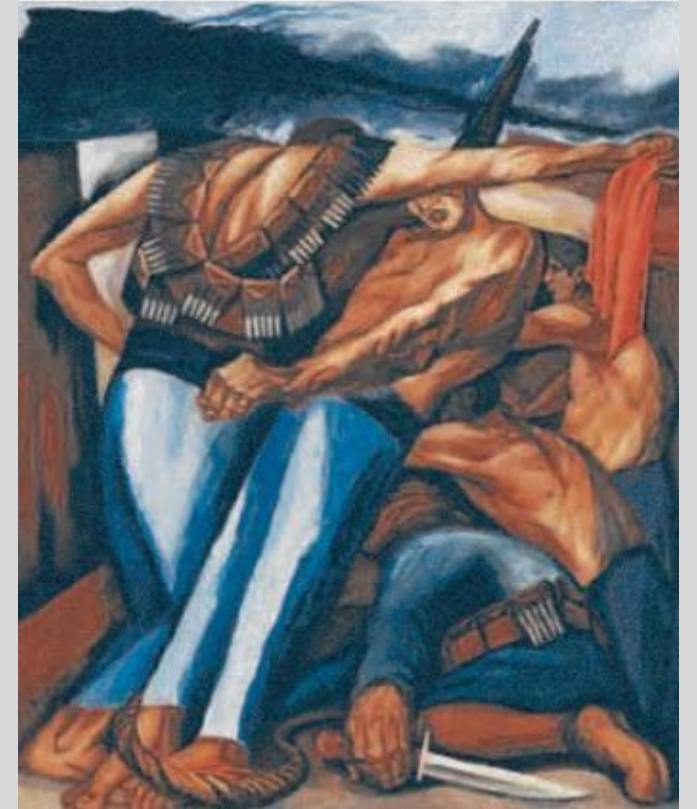


Use your intelligence, imagination, and courage.

Don't be afraid to make an interpretation that is different from someone else's.

After all, you are different from other people. **Your interpretation will be influenced by what you have experienced and seen in your life.**

Your interpretation **can be based on your feelings**, but your feelings must be backed up by the visual facts and clues you collected during the first two steps.



Step Four: Judgment (Is this a successful work of art?)

In this step you will judge whether or not the work is **successful**.

In judgment you determine the degree of artistic merit.

This is the time to make your own decisions.

There are two levels of judgment to be made:

- **The first is personal.**

Do you like the work? No one can ever tell you what to like or dislike. You must make up your own mind. To make a **fair judgment**, you must be **honest with yourself**. Only you know why you feel the way you do.

• The second level of judgment you must make is subjective, but it is somewhat different.

At this point, you use aesthetics to help you decide whether the work is successful.

work can be very successful aesthetically, but you might not want to live with it.

**What about Architecture Projects,
Can we apply the Steps on them?**

Do you have any questions?

References

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