

BEAUTIFUL LIES

Learning to think by
looking at art

I CAN
understand
art
everywhere



workbook

CURATED AND EDITED BY
BIBIANA VARGAS + MANEL TRENCHS





What do you think



What does this image says to you?

Clue: this image is part of a series within a campaign that captures a major contradiction: while we culturally revere women in religion and mythology, gangrapes and abuse keep on happening making the world, still an unsafe place for women citizens. Designed by Taproot agency, for The India Times. 2017.

it all starts with a **SPARK**



A spark that allows teaching for understanding beyond lectures and plain concepts. This exercise is meant to help us create space in our minds and allow our own thinking to arise. There is no right or wrong here, just organized facts that will help you build your own conclusions on what is art, what is original and what it means to be truly creative.

Critical thinking is often referred to as a philosophical exercise. Nothing more further from truth. In our day and age, when visual communication is the code of collective conscience, critical thinking is more needed than ever. Digital channels bombard incessantly with misleading and out of context messages that we believe to be state of the art, trending and made by and for rising generations. Are those messages that new? Is there any connection between and among them?

We have taken the liberty of using many resources for you to dig in deeper in your research and enjoy a journey of discovery. For you, some of those resources will seem odd and somehow antique. You are entitled to. These belong to previous generations who make up today's collective imaginary. Just like Ariana Grande belongs to your time frame, people who work for her have built up a visual culture based on strong popular iconography.

Art in any of its shapes is a powerful tool of communication for human beings. The more we understand it, the more efficient our thinking will be. From anthropology to math or engineering, learning to think by looking at art will enhance your perception and therefore thinking skills. That's why it is so useful.

If we take one small piece of today's "art icon", dissect it under the prism of its context and grant it its original meaning to it, what are we able to decipher? We all think. We think mechanically most of the time. In this journey we want to make you think critically, make connections and build your own conclusions. We will go through some key words along the way, journey into some history, and understand why the ARTS are a beautiful mean of expression of either the highest of truths or the biggest of lies. Sometimes one, others a little of both. You will choose your answer.

Before we dive in, there are a few concepts we need to understand. Wider definitions of these terms are available for reference through the internet. Here we will sum them up in our own way so we are on the same page. Our Index will show you what we will be working on.

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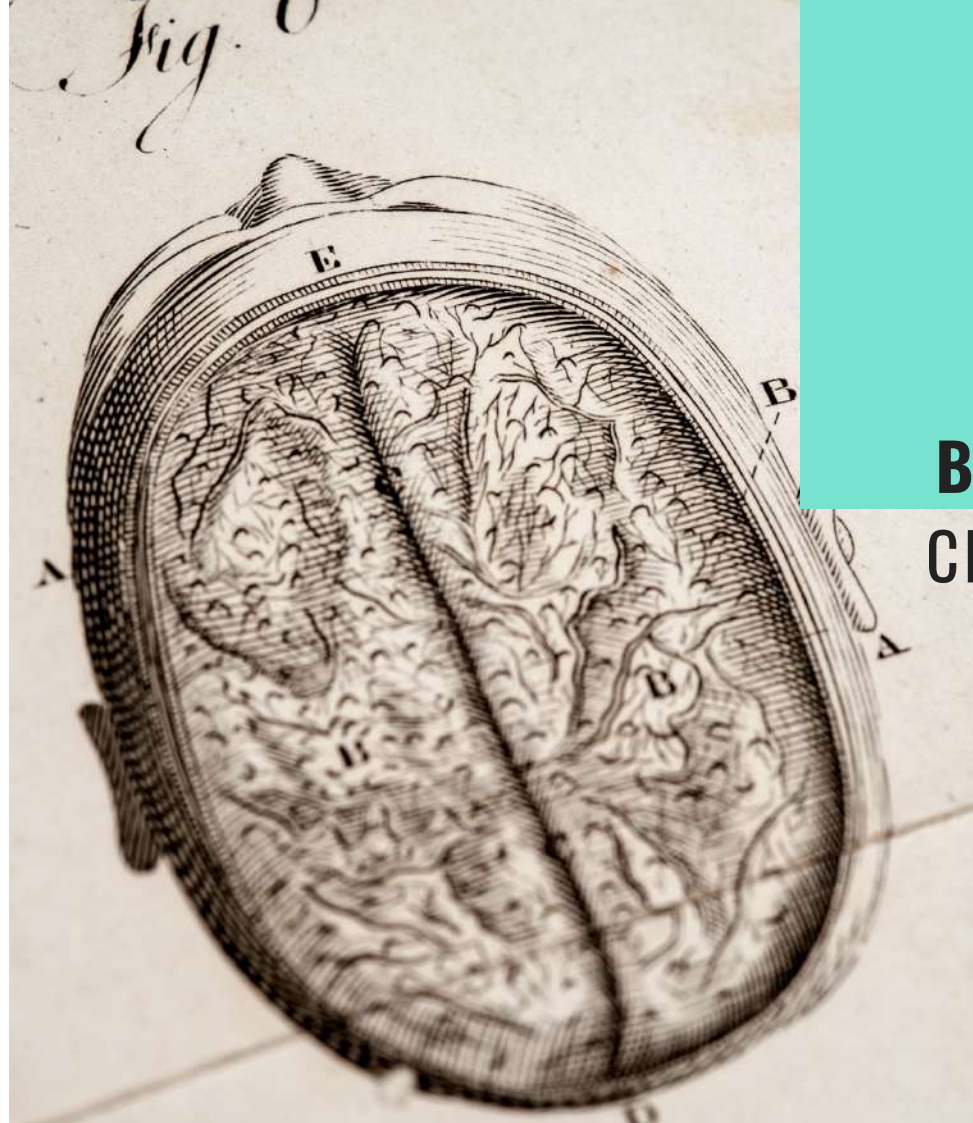
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01 BASIC CONCEPTS CRITICAL THINKING

"The essence of the independent mind lies not in what it thinks, but in how it thinks"

Christopher Hitchens.

Critical thinking can be summed as the analysis of facts to form a judgement. Involves a process by which reasoned judgments are made being logical and well-thought out. It is a way of thinking in which you don't simply accept all arguments and conclusions. You are exposed to, but rather have an attitude involving questioning such arguments and conclusions.

Why is it important?

It will help you analyze the way you think and present evidence for your ideas, rather than simply accepting your personal reasoning as sufficient proof. It will ease better control of your own learning and create empathy for other points of view are for instance but a few of the most immediate benefits gained doing this kind of thinking.

Critical Thinking is self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective thinking. It entails effective communication and problem solving abilities and a commitment to overcome our native egocentrism and sociocentrism.

Our global knowledge economy is driven by information and technology. One has to be able to deal with changes quickly and effectively. So much more will you when you leave school. The new economy places increasing demands on flexible intellectual skills, and the ability to analyse information and integrate diverse sources of knowledge in solving problems. Good critical thinking promotes such thinking skills, and is very important in a fast-changing workplace. It is a lifelong learning skill regardless of any field of specialization one focuses on.

Asking questions is a good place to start thinking critically.

Muscle is built in our brains when we ask systematic questions. We have created a cheat sheet for you to carry around. Please feel free to cheat as much as you like using this image.

WHO

...made this piece of work...
...is it intended for...
...influenced the author...

WHAT

...was happening around the author of this piece...
...is the message he/she conveyed...
...techniques were used to deliver this message...

01

CRITICAL THINKING

WHEN

...the author built his/ her message...
...were his/her pieces of work socially validated...
...did his/her message became important for society...

WHERE

...was his/her work more influential...
...did this piece(s) helped society achieve a landmark...
...did you discovered this pieces...

WHY

...is this message important...
...are these artists/characters recognized...
...is the concept or expression/ innovative...

HOW

...did these messages impact society...
...changes were made to existing conditions because of these
pieces of art ...
...original, innovative, revolutionary are they...

01 BASIC CONCEPTS PROPAGANDA

For our class purposes propaganda is a form of persuasion used to influence people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. A working definition of propaganda is the spreading of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of influencing people's beliefs and attitude towards certain ideas. While propaganda has been around for almost a thousand years, only recently (last 100 years) with the advent of technologies that allow us to spread information to a mass group has it evolved to a scientific process capable of influencing a whole nation of people. Marketing and media are elements of propaganda. Understanding how propaganda and marketing work will help us understand the role of consumers and its behaviours. Those who control and have access to media have access to and potential control of public opinion. Propaganda and marketing are powerful because everyone is susceptible to it. We will see through images in this booklet how art is indeed a media outlet for thoughts, ideas and perceptions. Power is expressed through the arts in many and unsuspected ways.



**"All art is propaganda.
It is universally and
inescapably
propaganda; sometimes
unconsciously, but
often deliberately,
propaganda."
— Upton Sinclair**

01

BASIC CONCEPTS

COLLECTIVE CONSCIENCE

Is the set of shared beliefs, ideas, and moral attitudes which operate as a unifying force within society. In general, it does not refer to the specifically moral conscience, but to a shared understanding of social norms. In this text, he explains that the phenomenon is "the totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society." Durkheim observed that in the modern, industrialized societies that characterized Western Europe and the young United States when he wrote, which functioned via a division of labor, an "organic solidarity" emerged based on the mutual reliance individuals and groups had on others in order to allow for a society to function. In cases such as these, religion still played an important role in producing collective consciousness among groups of people affiliated with various religions, but other social institutions and structures would also work to produce the collective consciousness necessary for this more complex form of solidarity, and rituals outside of religion would play important roles in reaffirming it. Social institutions include the state (which fosters patriotism and nationalism), news and popular media (which spreads all kinds of ideas and practices, from how to dress, to who to vote for, to how to date and be married), education (which molds us into compliant citizens and workers), and the police and judiciary (which shape our notions of right and wrong, and direct our behavior through threat of or actual physical force), among others. Rituals that serve to reaffirm the collective conscious range from parades and holiday celebrations to sporting events, weddings, grooming ourselves according to gender norms, and even shopping (think Black Friday).

"Ideally, advertising aims at the goal of a programmed harmony among all human impulses and aspirations and endeavors. Using handicraft methods, it stretches out toward the ultimate electronic goal of a collective consciousness.

Marshall McLuhan



**"Myth is much more important and true than history. History is just journalism -and we know how reliable that is-".
Joseph Campbell**

Myths are important stories. Maybe people believe them. Maybe they don't. Their truth value isn't at issue. Approaching, but not quite reaching an adequate, thorough definition of myth is the following: Myths are stories told by people about people: where they come from, how they handle major disasters, how they cope with what they must and how everything will end. If that isn't everything, what else is there? Myths have become part of humanities greatest achievements: storytelling. In short, a myth is a story good enough to stand the test of time with enduring values that give a sense of belonging to those who decide to believe in them. Whether expressing origins, dreams, archetypes, science, metaphysical or sacred themes, they act as glue for societies and communities in a shared belief system. As long as there is one single human being, a myth will arise to explain his what, when and how.



01

BASIC CONCEPTS

MYTH

Activity 1

Objectification VS Empowerment

Or maybe we will share some facts
that will exercise your critical
thinking muscle

Arianators: What do you understand from thie lyrics?

You, you love it how I move you
You love it how I touch you
My one, when all is said and done.
You'll believe God is a woman

And I,
I feel it after midnight
A feelin' that you can't fight
My one, it lingers when we're done
You'll believe God is a woman

I don't wanna waste no time, yuh
You ain't got a one-track mind,
Have it any way you like, yuh
And I can tell that you know
I know how I want it

Ain't nobody else can relate Boy,
I like that you ain't afraid Baby,
lay me down and let's pray
'm tellin' you the way I like it, how I want it

And I can be all the things you told me not to be
When you try to come for me,
I keep on flourishing
And I can be all the things you told me not to be
When you try to come for me,
I keep on flourishing

And he see the universe
when I'm in company
it's all in me

You'll believe God is a woman
I'll tell you all the things you should know
So, baby, take my hand, s
ave your soul.

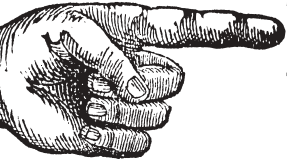
We can make it last,
take it slow, hmm
And I can tell that you know
I know how I want it, yuh

But you different from the rest
And boy, if you confess,
you might get blessed
See if you deserve what comes next.

And I can be all the things you told me not to be
When you try to come for me,
I keep on flourishing
And he see the universe when I'm in company
It's all in me

You, you love it how I move you
You love it how I touch you
My one, when all is said and done
You'll believe God is a woman

And I, I feel it after midnight
A feelin' that you can't fight
My one, it lingers when we're done
You'll believe God is a woman



Answer these questions now. When we have covered our discussion and class work, return to them. Will your answers be different? There are no right or wrong answers. This will help us identify our personal and shared knowledge.

What are the lyrics of this song referring to?

Identify three core subjects that define what is this song about.

Who is the goddess referring to?

- a) A woman who is ready to have sex
- b) A woman who is creative/ productive/
- c) Other/ state your answer.

In your personal opinion what qualities would make a goddess?

Is being worshiped by peers of your gender, or opposite sex an objective you believe worth aiming for?

Where does the power of a woman lie?

Explain your answer



02

OBJECTIFICATION WHAT DOES THAT MEAN

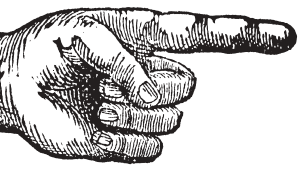
"A girl should be two things: who and what she wants."

Coco Channel

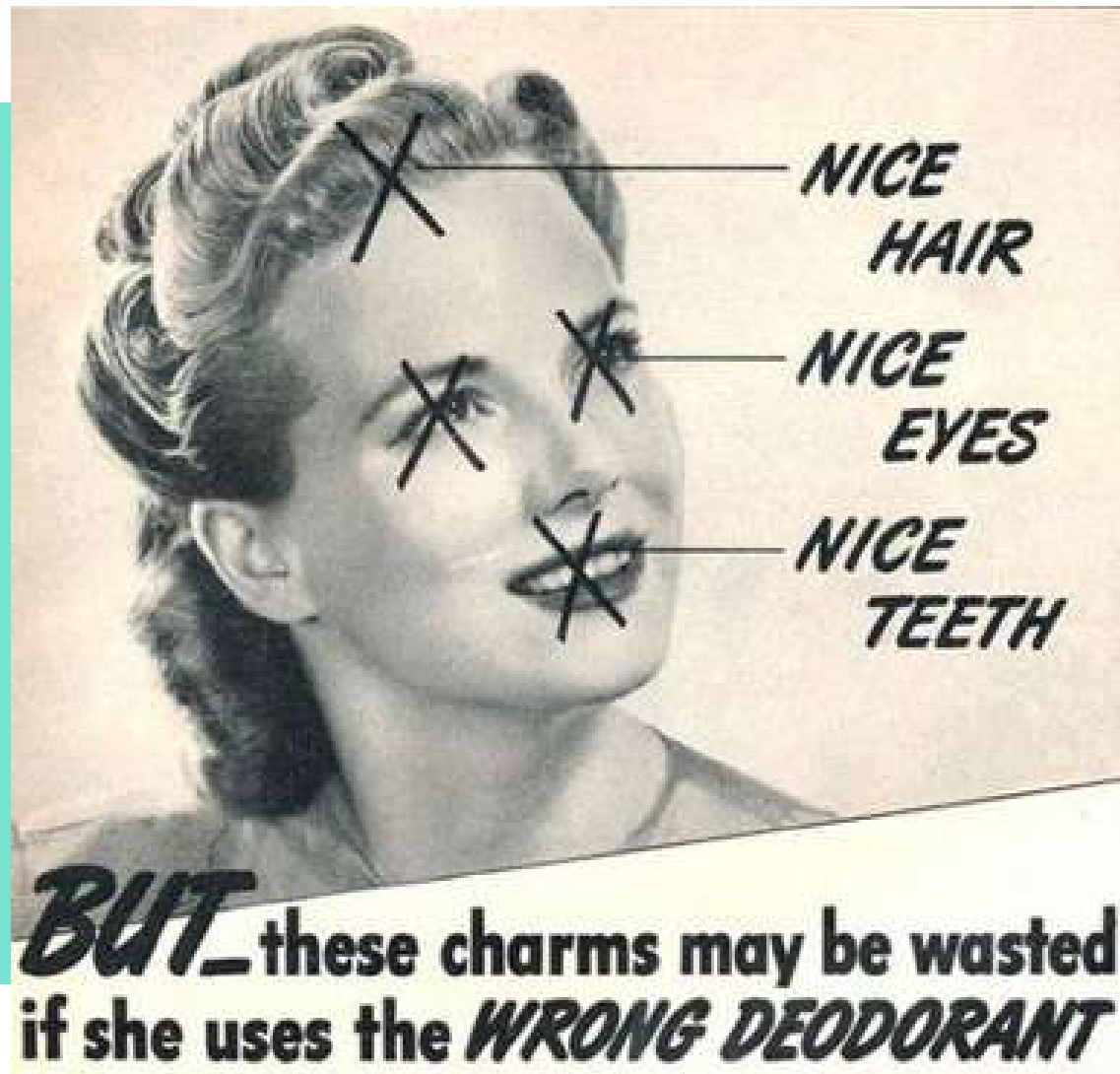
Objectification involves viewing and/or treating a person as an object, regardless of his/her thought or feeling. Often, objectification is targeted at women and reduces the subject to object of sexual pleasure and gratification. This tendency has stirred much debate and reform over the years, mainly on the part of feminists and other civil rights advocates, although much work remains to be done in this area.

While both men and women are prone to being seen and treated as objects, women are most commonly victimized in this way as a minority group. From magazine ads to television shows and commercials to movies and more, it does not take much digging to see that the sexual objectification of women is pervasive. In fact, some believe it is such a deeply ingrained aspect of modern society that most do not realize the full extent of its prevalence nor its negative effects on the psychological development of young women and men.

Regarding the objectification of women, in particular, Rae Langton, philosophy professor at Cambridge University has written that when men's desires and beliefs dominate a situation, society, or relationship, women are forced to submit to their whims and become the desired object (Stanford, 2010; 2011). These create the notion that women should be seen as sexual objects having no value beyond their physical appearance and potential to provide sexual pleasure.



In your own words Grasping Objectification



Is objectification a new concept?

as it developed in the second half of the XXth century?

Has Art as an expression of thought and values been
used as distribution outlet?

What do you think are notorious characteristics of
women in general?

How would you represent or portray them?

The image on the next page is a painting by renaissance artist and master Hans Von Aachen, the most important painter in the court of Emperor Rudolph II, King of Hungary, Croatia and Prague, an influential patron of Mannerism and intellectual devotee of learning who helped seed the scientific revolution. A powerful king who personally chose the subject and style of the paintings he appointed. In this case Ceres, the Roman goddess of fertility, dominates the foreground of the painting in a striking rear view. Her elongated limbs and the opposing movements of her torso and head are characteristic features of Mannerism.

Bacchus, the god of wine, has approached Ceres from behind. He tenderly touches her, looking at her in joyful anticipation, while she fixes her gaze on the viewer. The boy at the bottom left presents them with a basket of fruit and vegetables. Although the figure of the child has not been clearly identified as Amor, this interpretation would make sense: “Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus” – “Without Ceres and Bacchus, Venus is cold” (or figuratively: “Without food and drink, love cools”. The gaze makes the viewer believe the women has her eyes fixed on him. Certainly a male, in this case Rudolph II, for whose pleasure the painting was made by the artist.

Historically speaking, the typical viewer of artwork was male. The term ‘male gaze’ has been a subject of much debate by art historians and has been used to describe the sexual objectification of women in fine art as well as other various media outlets. Most depictions of the female in paintings throughout history have been commissioned and painted by men for the pleasure of other men, thus, leading to the ‘male gaze’. Since women throughout most of history have been subjugated, kept illiterate and treated as property of their fathers and husbands, they have learned to be acutaly aware of that gaze.

Hans von Aachen was a versatile artist who produced portraits, paintings of historical and religious subjects, genre pictures and allegories. He was one of the principal representatives of the late Mannerist style of art that had been nurtured at the court off Rudolf II in Prague around 1600. His style ranges between an idealized style of painting close to Roman and Florentine Mannerism as well as to Venetian masters: Titian, Veronese and Tintoretto and the newly emerging tradition of northern realism.

Von Aachen developed his own mannerist technique from his study of Tintoretto and Michelangelo’s followers. Throughout his career his principal influences were the style of Bartholomeus Spranger and Hendrick Goltzius who dominated the art scene in Germany at the time.
Wikipedia Commons .



Couple with a mirror, self-portrait of the artist with his wife.

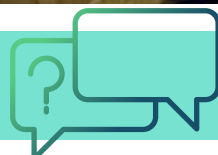
Bacchus, Ceres and Amor (painting)

Hans Von Aachen 1595-1605

Northern Mannerism

1130 x 1160 cm

Kunt Historisches Museum Wienn



who, what when, where, how

Mirror mirror

In his book, *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger raises questions about hidden ideologies in visual images. His analyses caused great commotion during the 70's in western ideology, and sparked independent thinking.

"She has to survey everything she is and everything she does because how she appears to others, and ultimately how she appears to men, is of crucial importance for what is normally thought of as success in her life. Her own sense of being in herself is supplanted by a sense of being appreciated as herself by another..."

His conclusion on the discussion of the female nude, Berger asserts that only twenty or thirty nudes in the European oil painting tradition depict a woman as herself rather than as a subject of male idealisation or desire.

Renaissance artists progressively introduced more sexual content in their work. For example, Cerse as a woman "is aware of being seen by the spectator," who presumably was a male and is appealing to his sexuality (Berger, 1977, p. 56). Interestingly, the man in the painting looks longingly at the nude woman, while she does not acknowledge his gaze. Instead, she looks outward at the spectator—the man who owns the painting—and passionately returns his gaze, knowing he watches her. As a result, the woman has now become an object for both the man viewing the piece and the men in the painting (Berger, 1977).

The method of "the gaze" has been a major theme for scholars who discuss gender equality and gender stereotypes displayed in advertisements. Scholars such as Berger (1977) have argued its ability to make a painting appear lustful with assistance of the female form for her male viewer. Additionally, the psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan argues of the impact of "the gaze," which he claims begins at a young age, and continues throughout an individual's life.

Many paintings prior to the renaissance involved naked figures of biblical characters, which are often seen as innocent where the nakedness was not in focus. As time went on, the naked figures became nudes and the imagery became erotic. One of the major techniques for expressing "the gaze" used by many renaissance artists was that of the mirror.

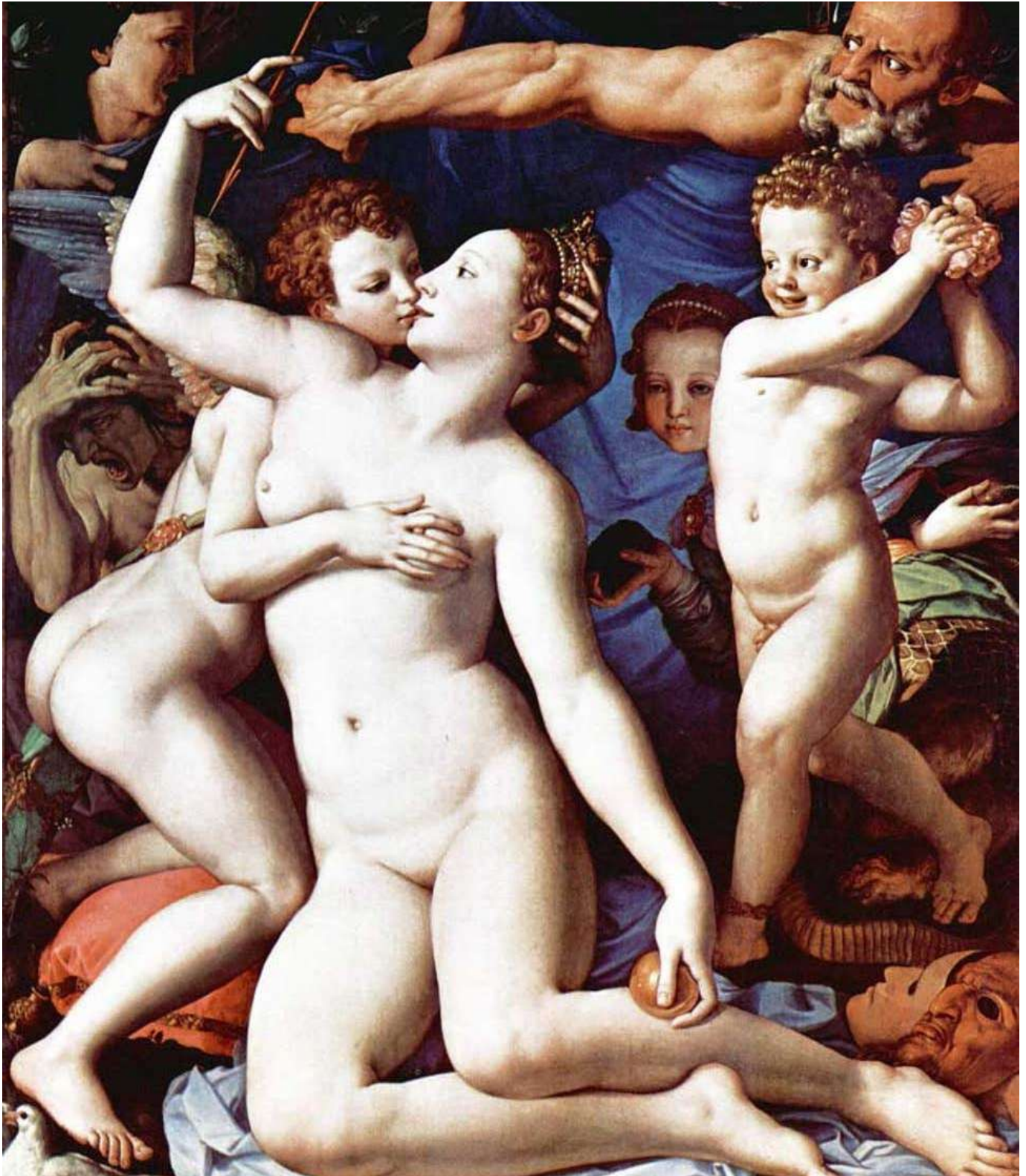
The mirror has become "a symbol of the vanity of a woman" (Berger, 1977, p.57). Because of this, he uses many examples of women who are often interpreted as a figure utilizing the mirror, exploring women's arrogance and view of herself. Sussanah and the elders, by renaissance artist Tintoretto uses this mirror technique, in which Sussanah views her own image as the spectators within the painting look on, watching her in nude state. Here, the viewer can see a woman intimately bathing herself as she gazes at her own image in the mirror. The male elders in the painting view her in her private time, as does the viewer who is also looking on. Because of this, the character representing Sussanah has now become an object of man's desire. Sussanah is openly allowing others to view her, which is a theme that has become popular in advertisements today and helps to connect us back to "the gaze"

Sussanah and the Elders (painting)
Jacopo Robusti/ Tintoretto 1555-1556
Italian Mannerism
1936 x1460cm
Kunt Historisches Museum Wienn



who, what when, where, how

In Bronzino's (originally Agnolo di Cosimo) painting, *An Allegory of Time and Love*, Cupid is kissing Venus as the other characters look on. The painting was originally created for the King of France, and it was, as Berger argues, "made to appeal to his sexuality" (1977, p. 55). Venus' body is arranged in a way that displays her to the man looking at the painting. Berger (1977) points out that women in renaissance paintings—especially *An Allegory of Time and Love*—"are there to feed an appetite, not to have any of their own" (p. 55). Later on in his studies, Berger discusses ways of seeing, which are evident in paintings as a technique used by many ad agencies when they use women in certain communication and advertisement campaigns.



Venus, Cupid, Folly and Time (oil on wood)

Agnolo Bronzino/ 1540-1545

Italian Mannerism

146 x 116 cm

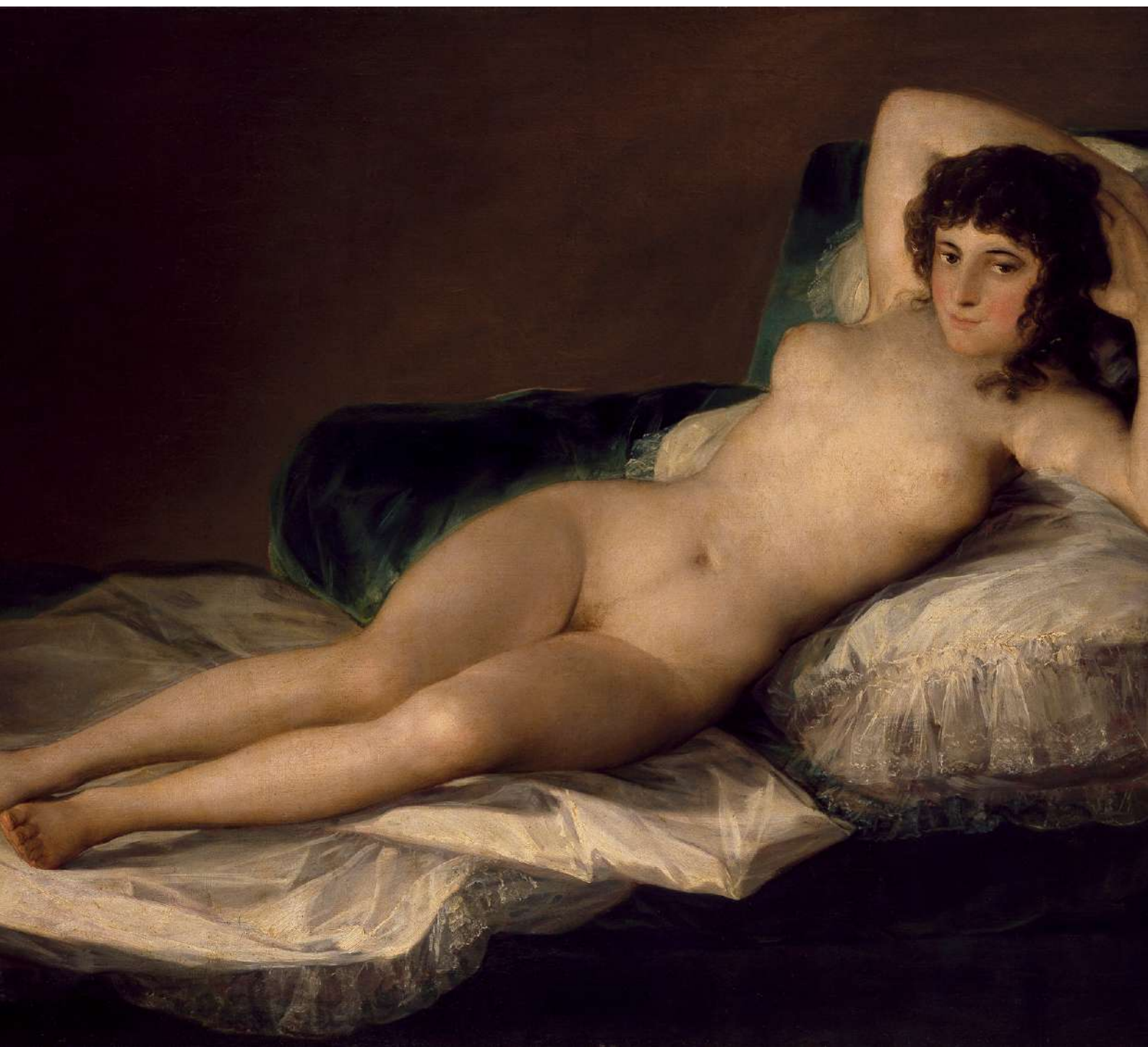
London National Gallery

Venus of Urbino (oil on canvas)
Titian/ 1532-1534
IVenetian School
119 x 165cm
Galleria Uffizi

The eroticism of the painting depicts a nude young woman which reminds marital obligations of what she would have to fulfill to her husband. The young woman was identified as the goddess Venus, reclining on a couch or bed in surroundings of a renaissance palace. Titian brings out her eroticism through the light and warm color of her body which is in contrast to the dark background. In this picture, Venus stares straight at the viewer making eye-contact. She is unconcerned with her nudity. She holds roses whilst in her right hand while she laid her other hand over her genitals.



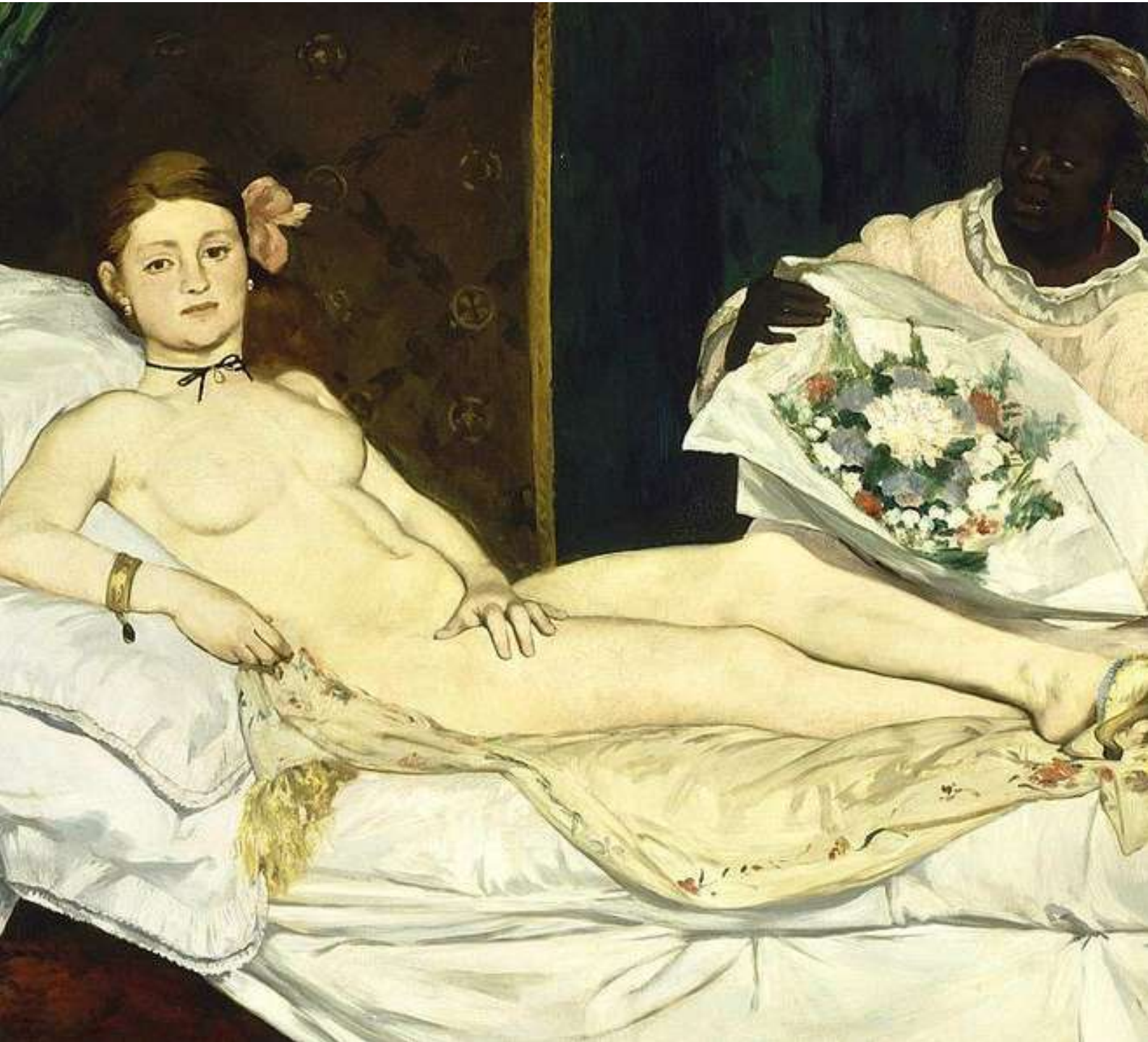
The Nude Maja (La Maja Desnuda) was one of the first paintings Goya made for Prime Minister Manuel de Godoy, one of his primary patrons. The painting features an unknown model, believed to be either Godoy's mistress Pepita Tudó, or the Duchess of Alba, who was Goya's supposed lover. The nude woman is shown reclining on a green velvet chaise with her arms crossed behind her head. Her voluptuous body is angled toward the viewer, and she gazes seductively at the viewer with rosy cheeks that suggest post-coital flush. Goya broke with conventions of the nude in depicting a real woman (not a goddess or allegorical figure) with pubic hair, and having her look directly at the viewer; these daring details would influence later modern artists like Manet, whose Olympia certainly owes a debt to the nude Maja.



Maja desnuda (oil on canvas)
Francisco de Goya / 1790-1800
Neoclassicism
97.3 x 190.6cm
Museo del Prado

Art historians and scholars believe the two previous paintings we have discussed served as inspiration for the next one. Edouard Manet's *Olympia*. Although *The Gaze* is still present, the subject is different. Manet's introduced impressionism along with other artists as a truly innovative art movement based on the radical rejection of traditional academic routine.

Olympia shook her society and made a huge impact on the upcoming generations of artists. This highly controversial composition was painted in 1863 and was exposed to the public for the first time two years later at the Paris Salon. It represents a nude woman in a leisure pose with a servant bringing flowers; *Olympia* was embodied by Victorine Meurent (who later became an accomplished painter), while art model Laure posed as her servant. The daring look of a shameless woman caused quite a stir and the public considered this painting indecent since it displayed a sex worker in her boudoir. In relation with that is the fact that the very name *Olympia* was associated with sex workers in 1860s Paris. Interestingly so, despite all the fuss the painting provoked in 1890, the French government acquired *Olympia* after a public subscription led by Claude Monet.



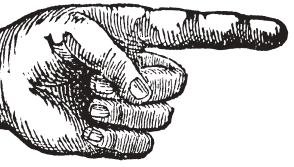
Olympia
Edouard Manet / 1863
Impressionism
130 x 190cm
Musée d'Orsay

Les demoiselles d'Avignon/ Oil on canvas
Pablo Picasso/1907
Cubism
243 x 233
Museum of Modern Art, NYC



In 1907, the Titanic had yet to sink, cinema was a flickering newsreel of the Boer war, Scott of the Antarctic was still alive and the Wright brothers travelled to Europe to publicise their invention of powered flight and, San Francisco was still shattered by the previous year's earthquake and in Spain Cánovas, Sagasta and the first tournaments between Real Madrid, Barcelona and Vizcaya were held before King Alfonso XIII. In a crowded, dilapidated warren of artists' and writers' studios on the Parisian hill of Montmartre, home to anarchy and cabaret, a 25-year-old Spanish immigrant named Pablo Ruiz Picasso was creating the first, and greatest, masterpiece of modern art.

For many scholars and critics this painting changed the concept and understanding of art like no other painting did ever before. It is widely accepted as the epitome of cubism and modern era representation. Following our argument of objectification, this time it will be you who deciphers what's going on in this painting on the next activity.



Seeing questions to understand art, your turn to use your thinking muscle...

What can I see just by looking at this art work?

How was this art work actually made?

When was it made, and what was happening in art and broader history at that time?

Why did the artist create this work and what gave meaning to him, then, and to us now?

How and where can we see the impact of these paintings in our day and time?

In this painting who is performing the gaze?

The wide spread of liberalism and industrialization in the turn of the 19th century gave rise to a growing supply and demand market economy embodied in most democratic states around the world and particularly in the western world. One of its consequences was the increase in communication outlets. New and massive forms of communication saw the socialization of radio, newspapers, magazines and later on, of course television. A new universe of media platforms was deployed giving access to new forms of beholding power as well. Propaganda, as a form of massive communication to an ever growing number of people came into our eyes.

Has Art as a representation of beauty and values changed through time? What happened with the rising of new media? How was the "male gaze" shifted? Some images will give you a clue...spot any contradictions here...have a look...

04

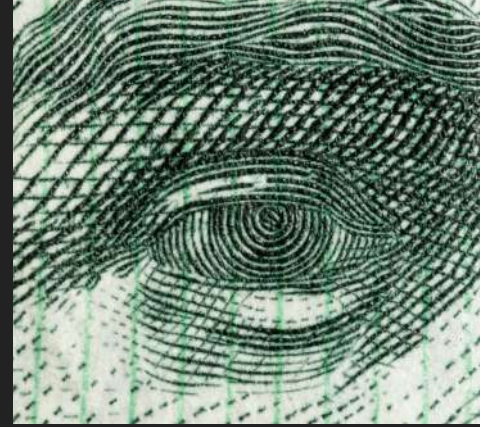
Images after ART: Hello Media



The earliest known use of sex in advertising is by the Pearl Tobacco brand in 1871, which featured a naked maiden on the package cover. In 1885, W. Duke & Sons inserted trading cards into cigarette packs that featured sexually provocative starlets. The brand grew to become the leading American cigarette brand by 1890. (Porter, 1971). Other early forms of sex appeal in advertising include woodcuts and illustrations of attractive women (often unclothed from the waist up) adorning posters, signs, and ads for saloons, tonics, and tobacco. In several notable cases, sex in advertising has been claimed as the reason for increased consumer interest and sales. A woman's beauty bar, was almost discontinued in 1911. The soap's sales decline was reversed, however, with ads containing images of romantic couples and promises of love and intimacy for those using the brand. [Account histories 1926]



Activity 4



We have collected a few images from advertisements covering the last century, mostly deployed on print media. For many business owners and agency managers these messages have been tuned with their audiences. Grasping what the feeling and perception of the market is, is part of the science behind propaganda and marketing. Make believe what the brands determine as important is done through a combination of visuals and text delivered when and where the customer wants it.

Look through the images in this link (copy and paste this URL in your browser:

<http://bit.ly/2MICRD8>

After that answer these questions?

How does the gaze has condition modern imagery about men and women's roles in society?

How is objectification depicted in advertising imaginary

Does physical attractiveness enhances power in the workplace for women striving to consolidate professionally?

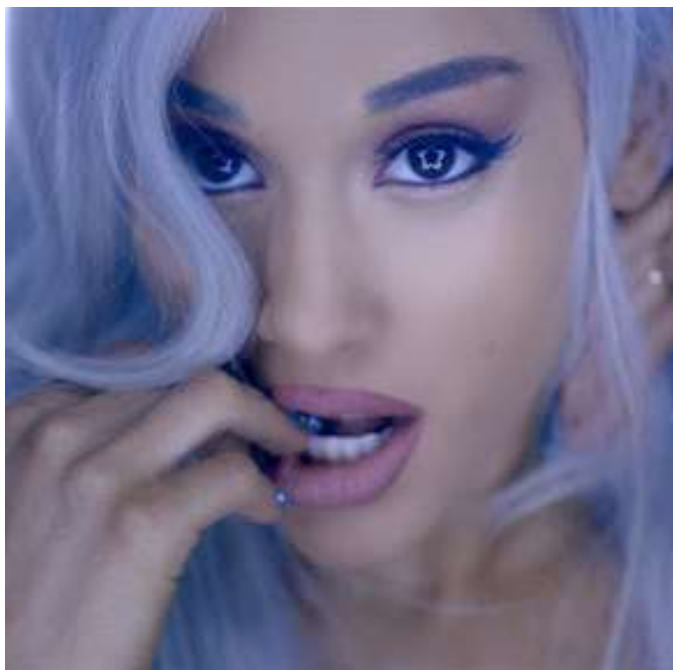
Does physical attractiveness enhances social acceptance?

Does enticing a womens' desirability becomes a conditionant for sexual objectification under the perspective of the male gaze?

Empowerment: let's hear Ari's case



IS THAT A
GAZE ARI?





“You get to a point when you’re like hey, ok so I could either do this thing that to me seems really dope and genuine and awesome and important makes me feel empowered and great and take whatever comes with it because I’m just being honest.”

“Or I could be safe and be like boring and not feel as passionate when I’m on stage about what I’m singing.”

As for her special connection with fans, Ari stated: “Well I would much rather be singing songs that mean so much more to me for an audience of people that f*** with me energetically and are all on the same page as me emotionally and as a human being, than perform for an audience that like, you know what I mean? Wouldn’t necessarily be friends with me in high school.” “I really like that people are being like ‘oh ok, yes or no’ you know what I mean? Take it or leave it because it’s who I am, it’s fine and if you don’t like that’s ok, that’s so ok”

Ariana Grande

<https://www.girlfriend.com.au/ariana-grande-chats-with-smallzy-about-sweetener>

Empowerment again...

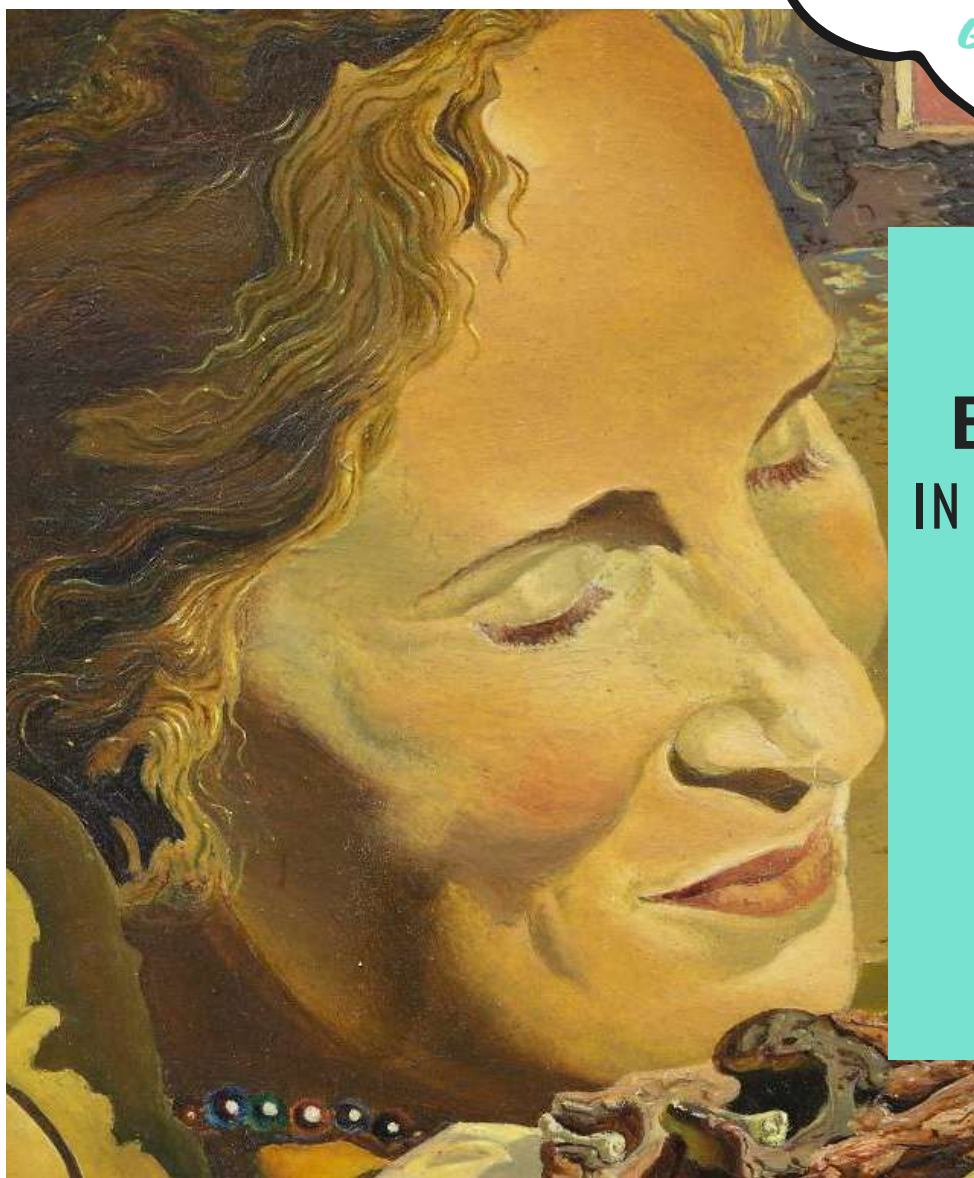
Following the Ariana and her Arianator tribe line of thought, being a women, concretely an objectified women leads to empowerment. Art is an expression with multiple facets, and wheather we may sympathize with certain thoughts an ideas, our main focus is to train our critical thinking skills. So, let’s have a look into Ari’s empowerment idea.

FIND OUT ABOUT THIS
POWER GIRL NAMED
GALA



05 EMPOWERMENT IN EVERY DAY WOMEN

"Women have served all these centuries as looking glasses, possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size."
— Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*



Where to look a definition about just anything?
Wikipedia. Searching for a widespread and acceptable definition of empowerment we settle for wiki's own:

"Empowerment refers to measures designed to increase the degree of autonomy and self-determination in people and in communities in order to enable them to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way, acting on their own authority.

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empowerment>

This workbook and our art history class purpose is to understand how Art helps us understand how ideas big and small are spreaded as a mean to communicate to a wider audiences different purposes. The artist in a way, is someone technically gifted who is able to represent with his/her craft those ideas. Power as a concept can be expressed in many artistic ways. Having a glimpse at different expressions of power in art helps us understand the whole concept of power.

Our next images will help you do exactly that. History has recorded the power of many women before us. Art has been a mean to express power in many ways, thus serving those who held and represent power.

Looking into the **Art of Power** helps us understand where does power lies and how societies depict it.

True goddesses that overcoming their individuality have been able to lead, leave their mark for history not because of herself, but rather by transcending their communities.

As religious leaders, governesses, military strategists, adeventurers and scientists, women have made their marks throughout the span of history. Fair enough to say that has happened without great struggle and at a high social and personal price. These women have been remarkable, without them being rememebered as objects of desire.

Is objectification a condition for power? Dig a little bit of research into any of these remarkable women honored by history. You will be surprised why they are remembered...



The Art of Power in women



Queen

Hatshepsut



Cleopatra- Ptolemaic coin



Empress Theodora



Borte Ujin



Urraca Reina de Asturias

All of these women succeeded in being women beyond the hardships of their day and age. Politics, religion, science, art, literature, motherhood, all different forms of being women.

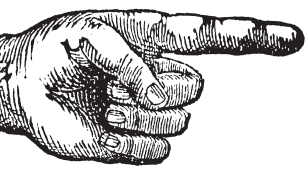
How was their power deployed?

Did being women refrained them from fulfilling their potential?

Where did their power came from?

Did they use their power for themselves?

Choose any of these remarkable women in history, do some research and find out when, where and how did they became a symbol of power for their societies



The Art of Power in women

Elizabeth 1st.



Grace O'Malley



Joan of Arc

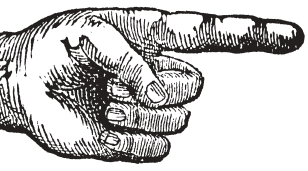


La Malinche



Jane Austen/ Mary Shelley





The Art of Power in women

Catherine The Great



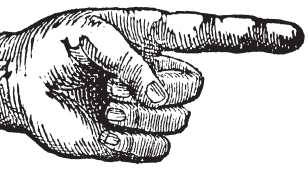
Nur Jahan



Empress Dowager Cixi



Queen Victoria



Marie Curie



Virginia Woolf



Amelia Earhart



Indira Gandhi



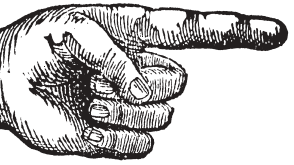
Margaret Thatcher



Wangari Maathai



Jane Goodall



For individual and group discussion, ideas change when more than a pair of eyes see the same object...

What do all these images have in common?

What is their main theme?

How is power expressed in these images?

How has art helped the characters who are portrayed in these images make their statement?

What is the message each one of these have?

Where does power lie?

What kind of power does a woman have as an individual or as a collective ?

CONTEXT to Understand ART

Question WHERE do things come from

Women portrayed in art have been generally painted by men, with a man's view of the woman's experience. Men tend to see women always in relation to themselves, a kind of aura women give off that they then relate to. And unfortunately women have tended to succumb to this view and play into it. A man's presence is dependant on the power he appears to have. It suggests what he is capable of doing to or for you. And it is this presence that defines men as men. A woman however gives off a sense of what can be done to or for her. Throughout western society women have been habituated to care how they appear to men. And that is how men portray women in art, as someone relating to them. However a woman artist portrays her own experience of the world as a woman, regardless of the men around her...it is a true and real experience, whereas what the men paint when they paint women is often a clouded vision of their imagination...

Statistics say that men artists are shown almost 90% more often than women artists still in museums and galleries, so therefore we can assume that the way women are seen in our society is still through the lenses of men and not how they really are. Just until the late 19 and 20th century we have seen a strong shift mainly because of an unstoppable movement: Feminism.

The perception of gender differences between men and women has evolved substantially over the centuries. To keep it short and simple, as well as to connect art with the context of our time, we strain our definition to what is known as Third Wave Feminism. In this evolved perspective of feminism is understood that equality drives through and across layers of gender, race and class.

As feminists came online in the late 1990s and early 2000s and reached a global audience with blogs and e-zines, they broadened their goals, focusing on abolishing gender-role stereotypes and expanding feminism to include women with diverse racial and cultural identities.

During the early 1990s female rock and punk bands in the continental US gave birth to what became known as the Riot grrrl culture. Focusing less on laws and the political process and more on individual identity, the movement of third-wave feminism is said to have arisen out of the realization that women are of many colors, ethnicities, nationalities, religions and cultural backgrounds. The riot grrrl movement allowed women their own space to create music and make political statements about the issues they were facing in the punk rock community and in society. They used their music and publications to express their views on issues such as patriarchy, double standards against women, rape, domestic abuse, sexuality, and female empowerment.

CONTEXT to Understand ART

Question WHERE do things come from

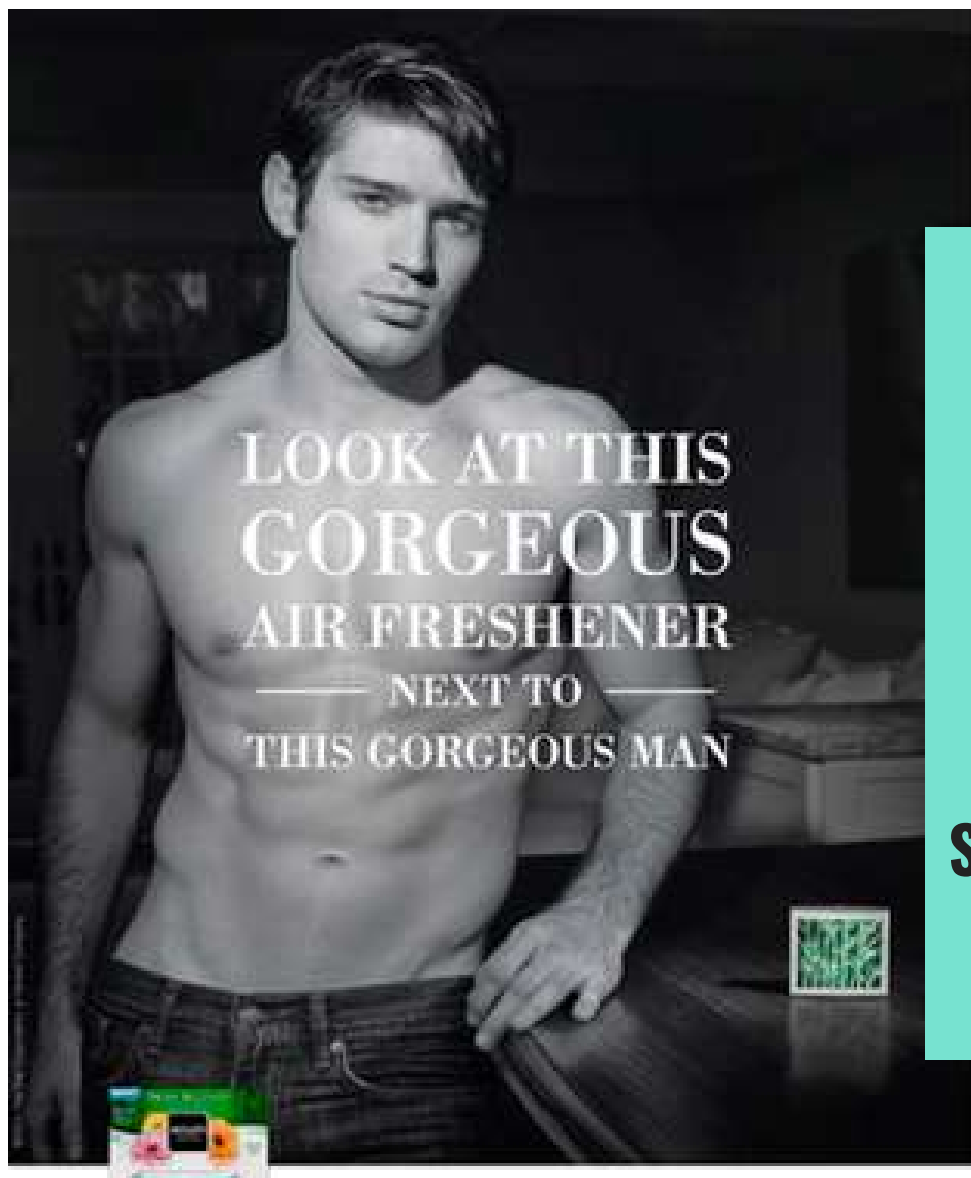
As the word “feminist” can be misperceived as insensitive to the delicate problem of gender, some third-wave feminists prefer to steer away from it, refusing the label or challenging universal definitions of femininity. In her book, *To Be Real: Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism*, third-wave feminism symbol Rebecca Walker affirms: “Whether the young women who refuse the feminist label realize it or not, on some level, they recognize that an ideal woman born of prevalent notions of how empowered women look, act, or think is simply another impossible contrivance of perfect womanhood, another scripted role to perform in the name of biology and virtue”.

From all that we have seen before we can center our thoughts answering this question:

Whether or not women’s sexuality can be empowering, not only on an individual level, but on a greater scale as well.

Can women’s sexuality be empowering beyond an individual level in benefit of a cause greater than the individual itself?

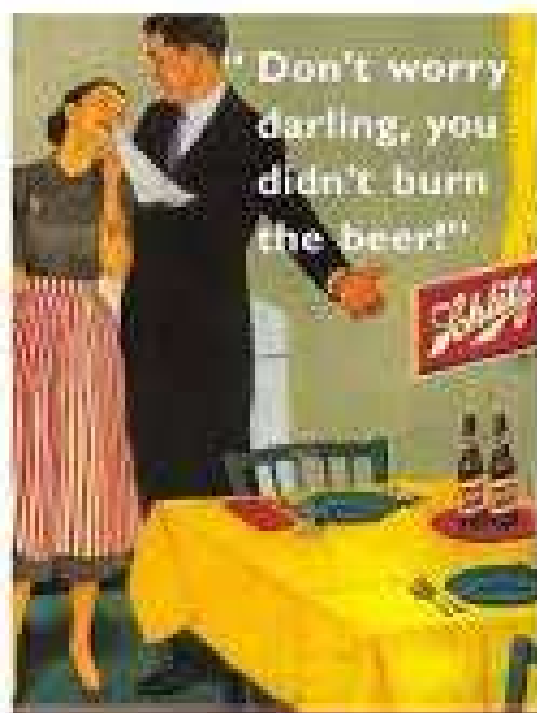
As Meghan Murphy, freelancewriter and journalist, contemporary feminist who believes that objectification is inherently sexist and harmful to women, regardless of who it is created by. She maintains that “any individual can feel ‘empowered’ in any given situation, but that changes nothing in terms of the overall structures and systems and it changes nothing in terms of women’s collective liberation from said system.” *The thought erotic*, 2015. Pg 20.



06 SHIFTING VIEWS WHAT IF....

What if we replaced the female poses and depictions we have become so used to using men instead. Weird, out of place, uncommon, are but a few of the many adjectives we could find to express how objectification pointing to the male feels. But what's happening with men, propaganda and media? Lets have a look.

Weird enough, but what if superheroes used the same body language as women do...The Hawkeye Initiative is an art movement in which artists replace female super hero characters shown in impossible body positions with the male Marvel superhero Hawkeye, one of The Avengers.





WHAT
DO
YOU
THINK



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Links to further your thoughts:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YecfV3ubP8>

<https://youtu.be/kMS4VJKekW8>

Want to spin your head a little more?

This one will do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwfjymPx8kM>



We hope you have enjoyed thinking ART differently. We have had loads of fun pulling all this material together. We had to stop somewhere, which is here, for now. But this is only a full stop to this workbook, not your journey.

Art can be many things as we have seen throughout this workbook. As an expression of beauty, and truth it is to be honored, but let your critical and vigilant mindset guide you as much as possible to search the what, when, where and how of everything. Don't take any concept for granted, not even the ideas we have left here.

The freedom to think critically is a gift we enjoy, given to us by all women and men who before us have made sure today we are able to think, discern and mostly choose the fate of our lives. Thinking critically honors our condition of responsible citizens.

With much love,

Bibiana Vargas & Manel Trenchs