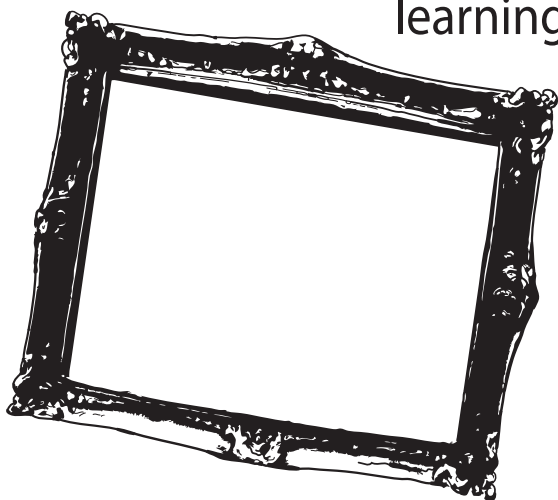


smART  
space



**VISUAL  
ARTS**  
**Interpretive**  
**TOOLKIT**  
for High School  
learning



NEWCASTLE REGION ART GALLERY

This toolkit is adapted from the current NSW Board of Studies curriculum including all relevant terminology.

Keywords and a brief explanation relating to each frame have been included as a starting point for writing about, interpreting and discussing art.

Produced by the Public Programs at Newcastle Region Art Gallery to assist students to explore the works on display in this year's ARTEXPRESS exhibition.

personal

experiential

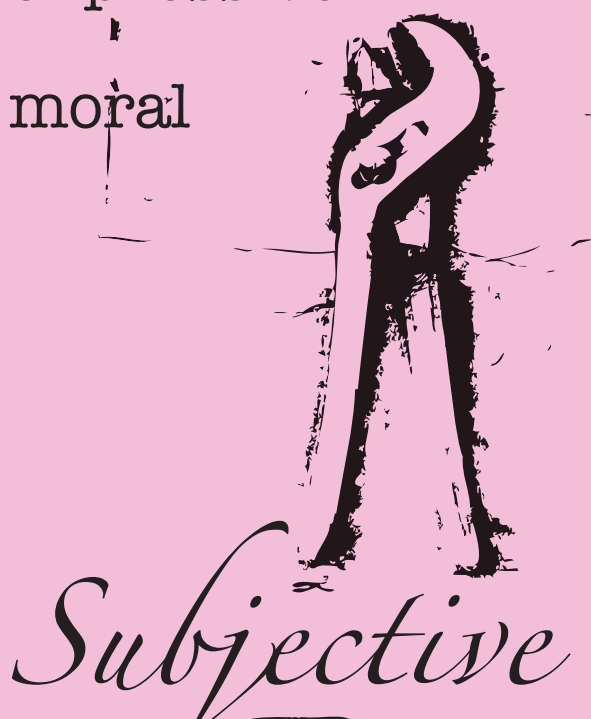
psychological

intuitive

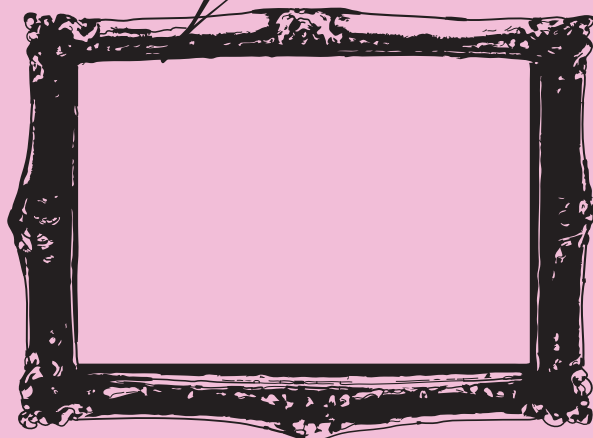
immediate

expressive

moral



*Subjective*



• **the subjective frame — personal and psychological experience.** Through this frame, art may be thought to be about and represent deeply felt and sensory experience, human consciousness, intuition, imagination, originality, creative expression, and the aesthetic response. Meaning is understood in relation to the intersubjective experiences afforded to the maker and viewer.

This frame allows you to develop personal responses to artists and artworks that are highly significant to your own experience and emotions. It provides the scaffolding to explore artworks as expressive and unique objects, developing notions of individual styles, and interpreting the work and the influence of those artists who are of great personal interest to you.

signs

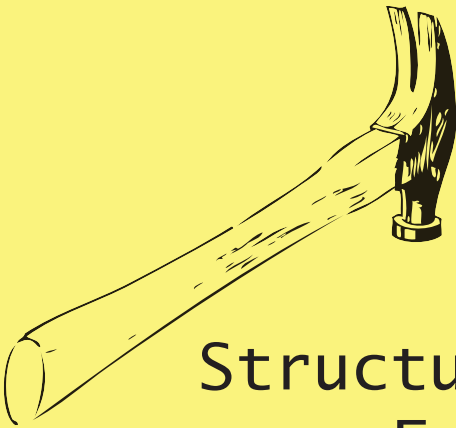
symbols

visual codes

formal qualities

visual conventions

media



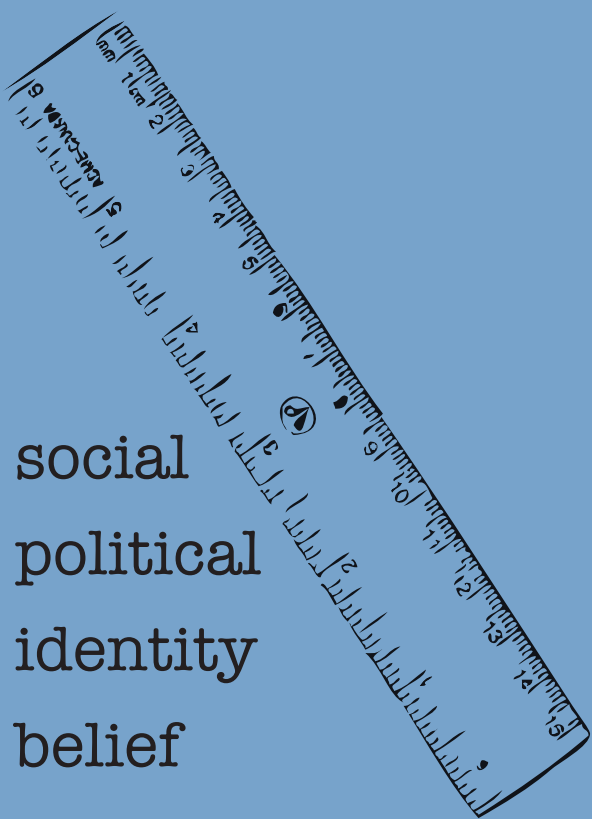
Structural  
Frame



## **the structural frame — communication and the systems of signs.**

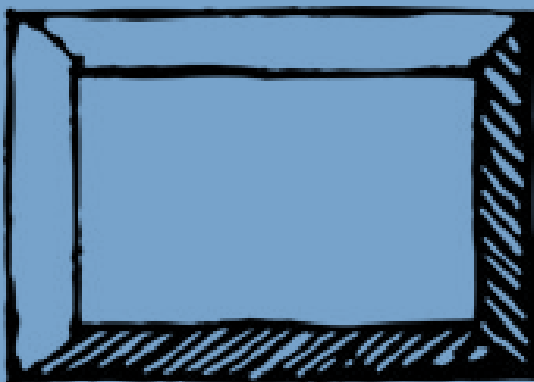
Through this frame, art may be thought to be about and represent a visual language as a symbolic system: a system of relationships between signs and symbols that are read and understood by artists and audiences who are able to decode texts. From this view, meaning is understood in terms of the relationships of symbols that are used to refer to the world. Through this system ideas are circulated and exchanged.

This frame asks you to consider how codes and symbols are read by themselves and audiences, as well as how particular expressive forms convey certain meanings. It may lead you to pay close attention to the formal organisation and placement of parts within an artwork. You can consider how artworks can be read and their meaning understood in terms of how specific symbols refer to the world. You can explore how visual information is transmitted in artworks, how the formal and organisational relationships in a work mean certain things and how the visual arts can operate as a visual language at a certain time and over time.



social  
political  
identity  
belief  
race  
class  
gender

# Cultural FRAME



# the cultural frame

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## **cultural and social meaning.**

Through this frame art may be thought to be about and represent the collective interests of cultural groups, ideology, class, politics, gender, and the celebration of spiritual and secular beliefs, events and objects. From this view, meaning is understood in relation to the social perspective of the community from which it grows.

With this frame you can explore cultural values and social meanings. This may influence how interpret the represented subject matter of a broad social significance and lead you to explore the cultural meanings of the expressive forms the artist has worked in. Use this frame to consider how notions of cultural identity can inform the production of artworks. Concepts of social and cultural identity (eg gender, Indigenous, regional, national, modern, contemporary etc) expressed by an artist can be interpreted using this tool.



parody

irony

anti tradition

quotation

recontextualise

appropriation



pluralism

pastiche



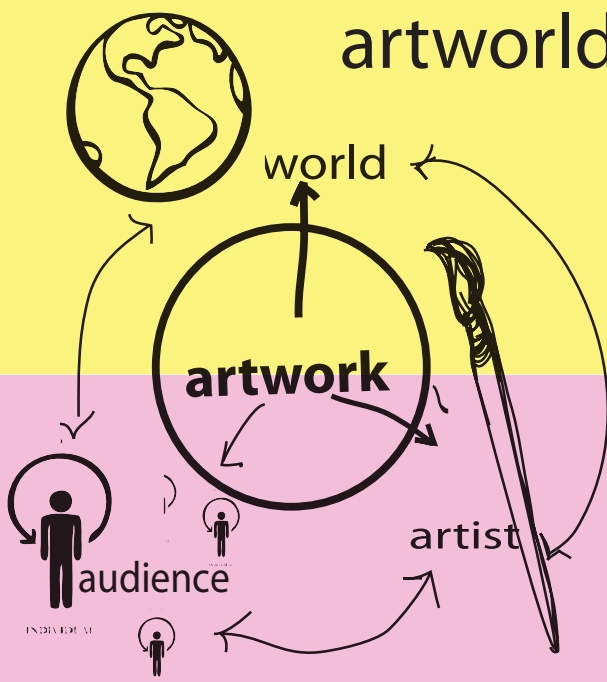
- **the postmodern frame — ideas which challenge mainstream values of histories and ideas.** Through this frame, art may be thought to be about and represent 'texts' that reconfigure and question previous texts and current narratives. These are woven together through such things as irony, parody, quotation. From this view, meaning is attained through critique that exposes the patterns of authority and the assumptions of mainstream values in the visual arts to reveal inconsistencies, uncertainties and ironies.

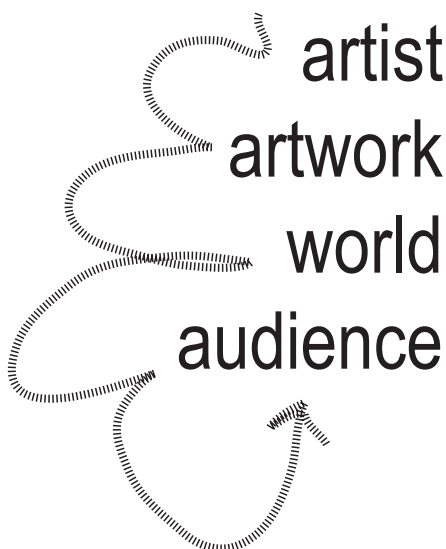
You may investigate the potential of newer technologies where challenges are made to the unique, singular, precious object as art. This frame allows you to question traditional practice in art and the generally accepted classifications of artists, artworks, movements and styles. It provides a platform to interpret artist works that recontextualise artworks and critique definitions of what art is through their artwork.

# Conceptual Framework:



Agencies in the  
artworld





## Through the conceptual framework we explore:

- **the role of the artist** — the who, what, how, and why. The ‘artist’ encompasses practitioners such as artists, craftspeople, designers and architects. The artist can be thought of as an individual or as a group, school, movement, etc.

- **the role and value of the audience** as a body of critical consumers. The concept of the audience includes art critics and art historians as well as teachers, students, entrepreneurs, patrons and other members of the public. Audiences for works change over time and bring different meanings to artworks, artists and interpretations of the world.

- **artworks as real objects**, as material, physical and virtual objects. The concept of artworks includes art, craft and design as two- and three-dimensional works (including architecture), and four-dimensional and time-based works. Artworks also exist as representations of ideas that reflect such things as personal responses, cultural views, symbolic interpretations and critical reinterpretations of other ideas.