

## Class Meeting **5**

March 1

Theme: **ZAAMM Part IV**

**MFA Field Trip Follow-up: Evaluating the Experience  
What (if anything "of Value") Did You "Find" or "Learn"?**

### CLASS NOTES:

And what did we find there? What is quality in the realm of the fine arts? The first part of our search at the MFA proceeded in a roughly chronological way through a number of genres and styles and cross-cultural contexts. In the second part, you were asked to return to something previously encountered that you found moving or which evoked in you something at least vaguely approaching an "emotional response" (This might be among the initially assigned objects or something else noted briefly in passing.

Sharing the contents of your reaction paper with your groupmates in advance of the class discussion will enable you to participate constructively in it. The aim of the discussion is to highlight BOTH the diversity of our affective responses to various artworks (encounters with other objects, individuals, situations, etc.) and the unity (consistency) of response to certain kinds of images.

The discussion during our class meeting will try to attain some clarity on your feelings about the fieldtrip and the objects encountered. A class presentation will be prepared with images including some or all of the objects singled out by fieldtrip participants in their reaction forms.

What will we be able to learn about "quality" or "feelings" or "aesthetic values" by discussing the fieldtrip experience? How was the fieldtrip experience as a whole? What was your attitude in approaching it? How did you feel when you boarded the bus? What was your impression of the mood in which others were approaching the fieldtrip? What were your "first impressions" as you entered and began to explore the museum?

What is your position on the question of where beauty "resides"? Is it localizable? If so, where? In "things of beauty?" In "beholders' eyes"? Elsewhere (in between? in relations between objects and observers?) Does your experience admit of any alternative formulation?

What (if anything) has the fieldtrip experience taught you about human cross-cultural particulars and universals (e.g. about specifically and generically human cognitive, affective and expressive aspects of art)? about our own currently prevailing (aka western; North American; Bostonian; Eurocentric) worldviews, valuesystems and lifestyles, and the aesthetic values of people belonging to entirely different ages, communities or cultures?