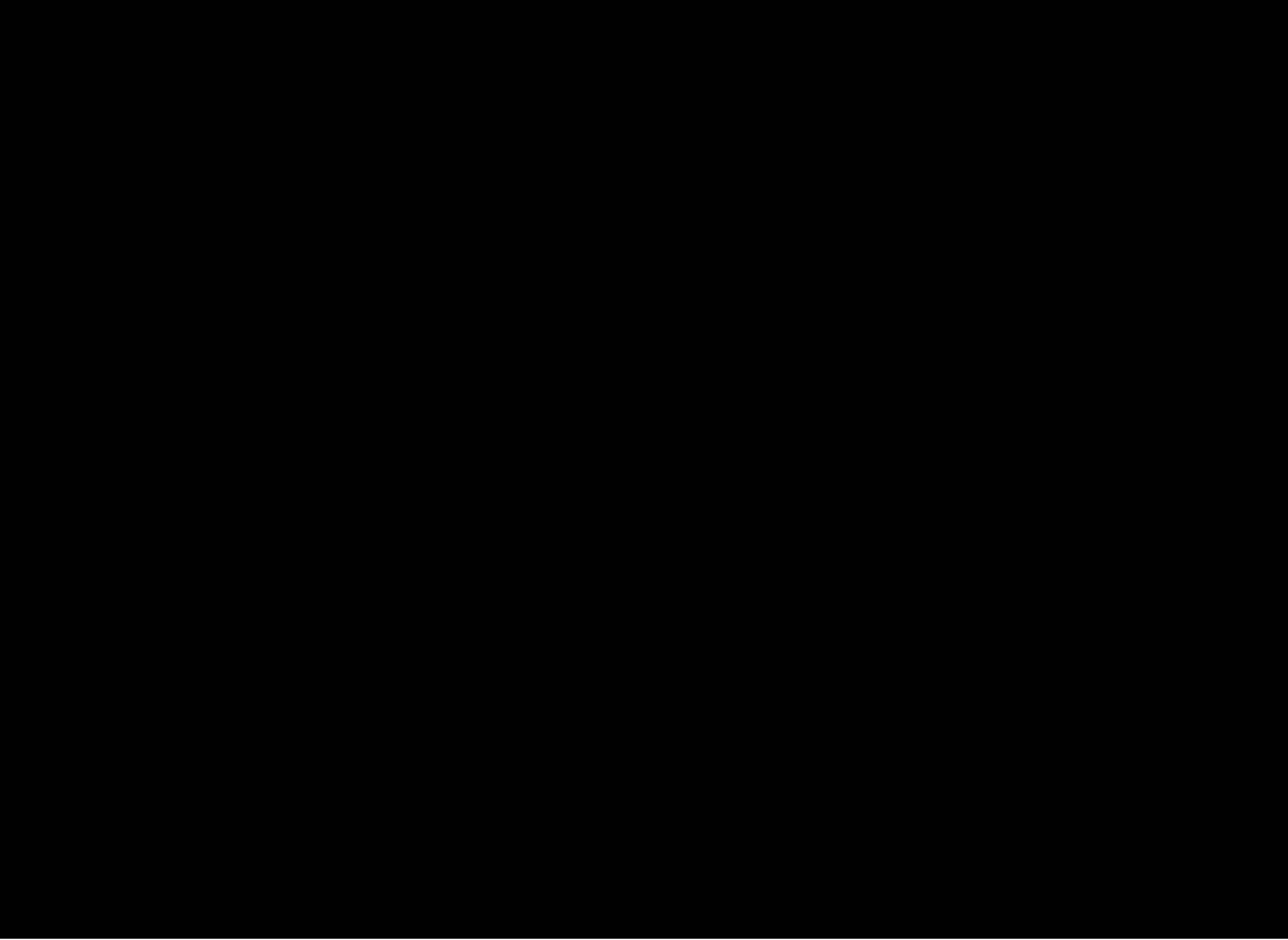


o: artevelde

hogeschool





Speaker notes

We have three agreements for today :-)

Agreement 1

For the rest of the day, we will no longer attempt to use the words "just" or "obvious."

Why? We live in a complex world; nothing is simple or self-evident. So today, we will put those words away nicely.

So, do not say, "That's just the color red, or that's just a button," or "We are dealing with X here." Instead, say, "It seems to me to be a case of X because we are dealing with Y and Z."

Agreement 2

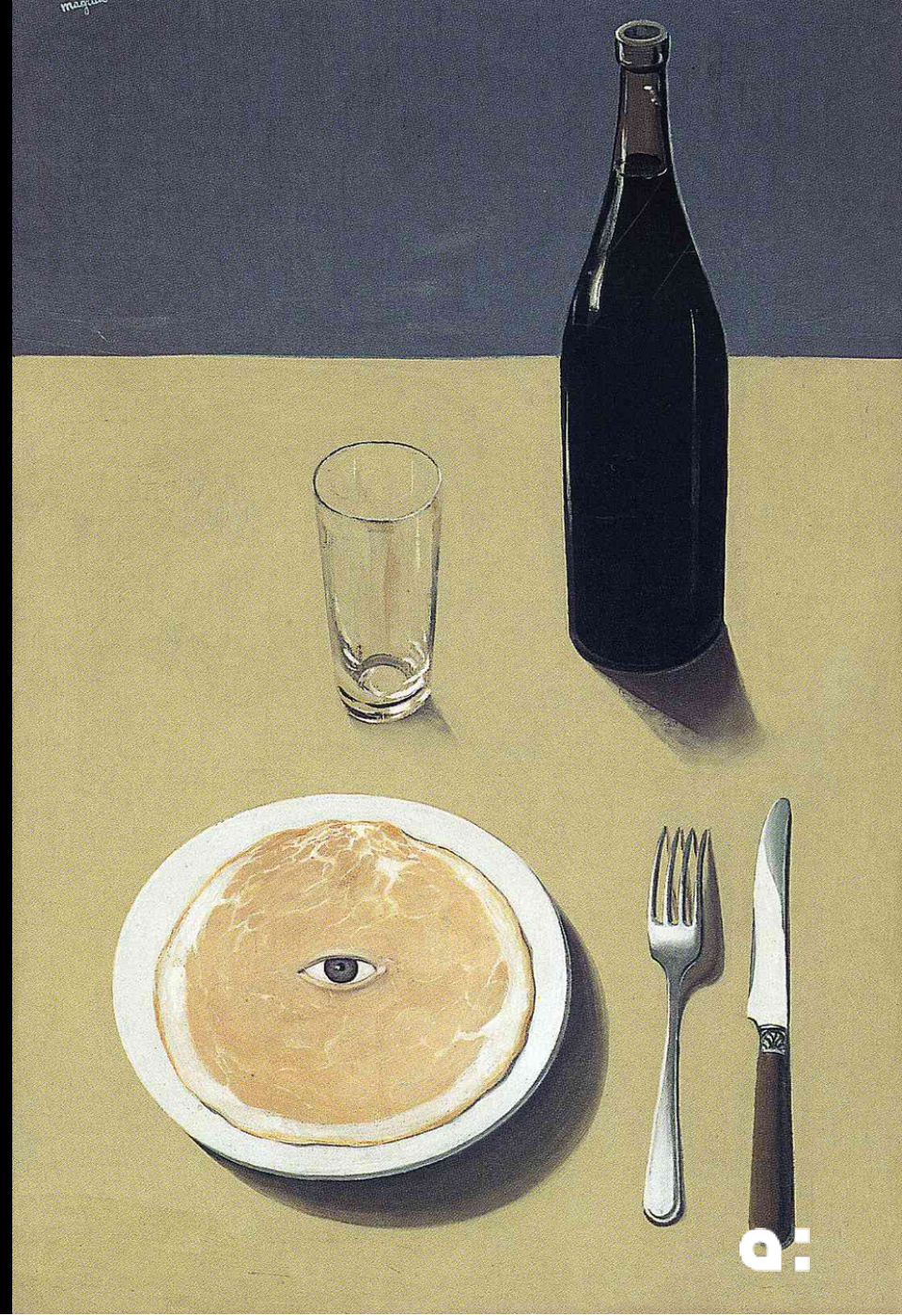
Today, we will try to be open to everything. Everything is possible, with respect for the rules we have established within a healthy society.

Agreement 3

We will collaborate and observe together. During the upcoming slides, you will need a partner. Choose one now, and have your pencil and paper ready.

Is everyone ready?

The art of observation
Visual Intelligence



Speaker notes

Today, we are going to talk about The Art of Observation, also known as visual intelligence.

This lesson is based on the method and lectures of Amy Herman, an art historian and lawyer.

She wrote a book...

VISUAL INTELLIGENCE



Sharpen Your
Perception,
Change Your Life

AMY E. HERMAN

Close your eyes. Imagine this:

You're at a **huge rave party**. The bass is pulsing through your chest, the lights are flashing—blue, red, purple, white—flickering to the beat of the music. The DJ is dropping absolute bangers, and you feel the energy of the crowd around you, jumping, dancing, lost in the moment. Your heart is racing, your feet are moving, and for a while, **nothing else matters**.

But then... oh no. **You need to go to the toilet. Urgently.**

At first, you try to ignore it, pushing the thought away as you lose yourself in the rhythm. But with every thump of the bass, the urgency grows stronger, creeping into your mind until it's impossible to ignore. You have no choice. You push your way through the sweaty crowd, dodging flailing arms, squeezing past people who don't want to move. "Sorry—excuse me—coming through!" The music is pounding in your ears as you **fight your way toward salvation**.

Finally, you spot the toilets! But—oh no. **A massive line.**

You sigh. Of course. But you have no choice. You join the back of the line, shifting from foot to foot, hoping it moves fast. You check your surroundings—people chatting, some checking their phones, a couple of friends holding onto each other, laughing at who-knows-what. The smell of sweat, cheap perfume, and energy drinks fills the air.

And then—**the line moves!** Faster than expected! The closer you get, the more relieved you feel. Five people left. Three. Two. **YES! FINALLY, IT'S YOUR TURN!**

You rush into the stall, lock the door, sit down, and at last... **relief.**

Now, comfortably seated, you take a deep breath, feeling the tension melt away. The music outside is muffled, distant, almost hypnotic. In this brief, stolen moment of solitude, your hand instinctively reaches into your pocket. Without thinking, almost as if programmed, **you grab your phone**. You open the screen, scanning your apps. And that's when your eyes land on **one familiar icon**—the Instagram logo. You've seen it **a thousand times**, every day, probably even today.

Now, **open your eyes**.

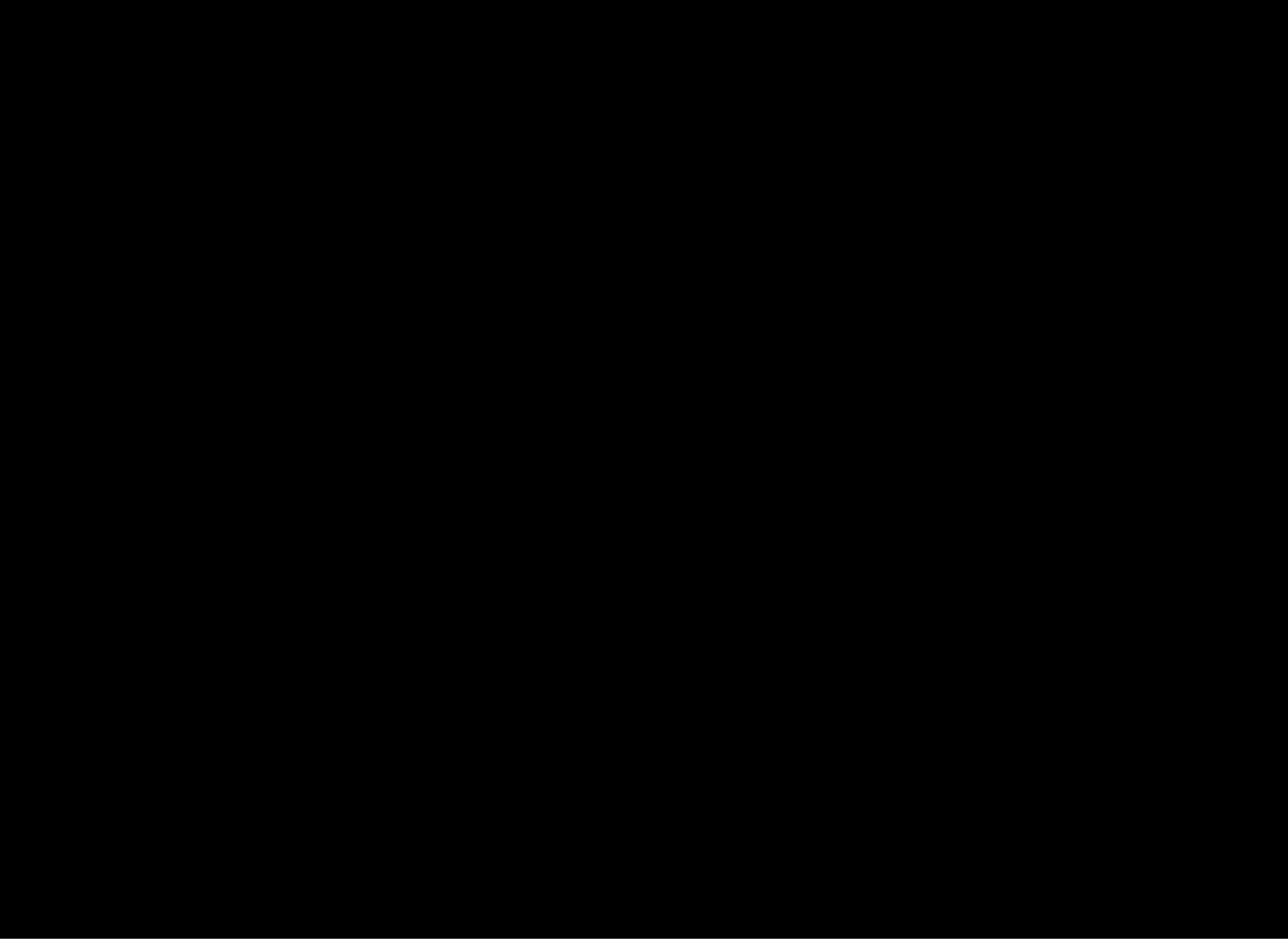
Everyone, please take a sheet of paper and a pencil. **You have sixty seconds to draw the Instagram logo as accurately as possible. Remember, you are not allowed to use your phone!**

Speaker notes

Everyone, please take a sheet of paper and a pencil.

You have sixty seconds to draw the Instagram logo as accurately as possible. Remember, you are not allowed to use your phone ;-)

Start.



?

Speaker notes

Moving on to Ian Spalter from Instagram.

He was tasked with redesigning the Instagram logo. This is how he went about it.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/mbGDS-Ja3W4?enablejsapi=1>

Osbservation exercise #1

Speaker notes

You have 60 seconds to describe the image I'm about to show to your colleague. Focus entirely on what you hear. Decide whose eyes will be closed and whose eyes will be open.



Speaker notes

"La Durée Poignardée" / René Magritte / 1938

Raise your hand.

Who said there's a train coming out of a fireplace?

How many people mentioned smoke or steam?

Who said there are no tracks under the train?

Some people.

Who said there's no fire in the fireplace?

Who mentioned the wooden floor?

Who described the wooden structure at the bottom of the wall?

Who named the marble fireplace?

Who named the candlesticks?

Who said there are no candles in the candlesticks?

What time is it in the painting?

Trying to say what is not there.

There is a train, but there are also no tracks or fire in the fireplace.

Why would you say what is not there?

I might draw the fireplace with wooden blocks and fire OR candles in the candlesticks.

It gives us a way to look more broadly at something that is there.

When someone comes to a hospital and they go off symptoms, they must be able to name what is not there to make an accurate diagnosis. You make a quick judgment, but name what is not there to see what is there.

Osberivation exercise #2

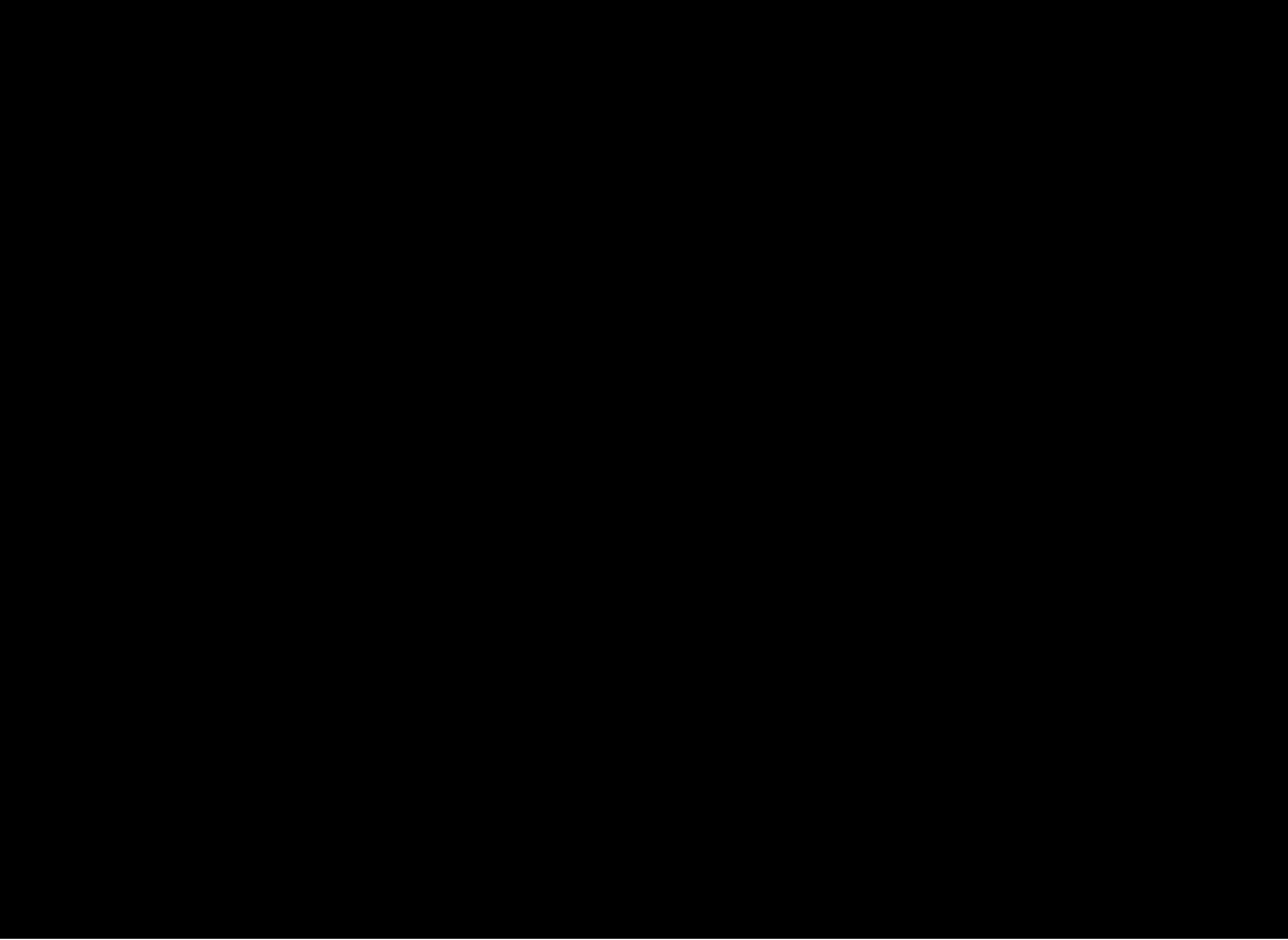


Speaker notes

"The Raft of the Medusa" / Théodore Géricault / 1818

Is too complex to explain in 45 seconds.

So, we need tools to observe something accurately, to describe it, and to assess the essence of a situation in all its complexity.



Speaker notes

THE COW

Everyone, please raise your hand.

I will show an image shortly. If you see something in it, something of significance, keep your hand up. Otherwise, lower your hand.



Speaker notes

If your hand is still up, I can tell you that there is an animal in the picture. If you see an animal, you can lower your hand.

If your hand is still up, I can tell you that the animal has four legs.

If your hand is still up, I can tell you that the animal is a cow.

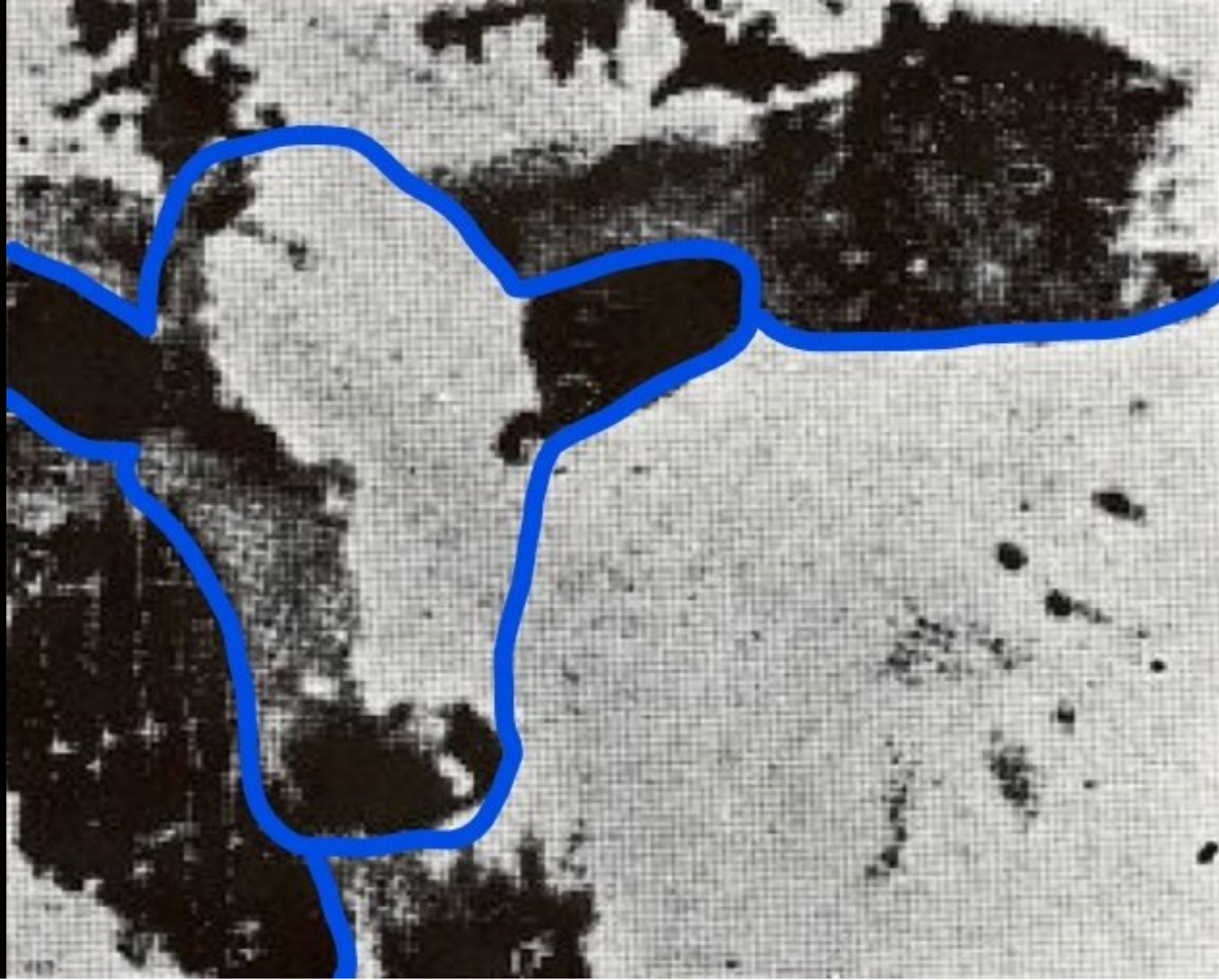
I will show you where the cow is. Please note that you will never be able to unsee the cow.

NEXT SLIDE

Developed by Samuel Renshaw to train WWII pilots to see things they might not notice immediately. Note that this is not an optical illusion. The cow has always been there; it becomes visible through observation.

Someone sitting next to Amy said, "I can't believe you don't see this..."

Conclusion: Two people can have different perceptions and see different things in the same way.





Speaker notes

This dress became an internet phenomenon in 2015. Some people see this dress as black and blue (like me), and others see it as gold and white.

Who sees what?

This photo became a significant topic in neuroscience. People have different color perceptions, leading us to conclude that two different people can see two completely different things.



Speaker notes

Here we have The Gardner by Giuseppe Arcimboldo.

When we look at his work, we see a pot filled with vegetables. But if we change our perspective, namely by turning it upside down, we immediately see something entirely different.

Change the way you look at things, and the things you look at change.

Change the way you look at things, and the things you look at change.



VICTOR MIDS & OSCAR VERPOORT

MIND*CK

NEXT LEVEL

**KOOP DIT
BOEK NIET!**

(ZIE HOOFDSTUK 13)

102 NIEUWE ILLUSIES & EXPERIMENTEN



Speaker notes

A mentalist who makes great use of this concept is Victor Mids. He illustrates it beautifully on the cover of his book.

Change the way you look at things, and the things you look at change.

102 NIEUWE ILLUSIES & EXPERIMENTEN

KOOP DIT
BOEK NIET!
(ZIE HOOPDSTUK 13)

MIND*CK NEXT LEVEL

VICTOR MIDS & OSCAR VERPOORT





Untitled (stop sign), Richard Hambleton

Speaker notes

This is a work by Richard Hambleton from 2018.

Look, visual perception is important. But before we continue, I posed three fundamental questions to myself, questions I want to share with you, and for which I also want to provide an answer.

Why do we need to
observe?

Speaker notes

Observing is something fundamental. Whether you are a lawyer, a police officer, a scientist, a doctor, or a designer, observing is a skill that you can practice and improve to perceive the world differently. How can you assess people's behavior when determining a user experience? By observing them.

Observing is not a skill tied to a specific profession or education. It's a skill tied to yourself, your surroundings, and how you interact within society.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/Cp-TAR-_pM4?enablejsapi=1



Why do we need to
learn observing via art?

Speaker notes

I graduated as a theatre director, I've had a theater education that has profoundly changed me as a person. Today, I will take you into our world by observing it through art.

Why through art?

Here, I'll let the artist Josse De Pauw speak. He discusses what art is and what it means.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/kth2Hn-Pu60?enablejsapi=1>



Speaker notes

In other words, art at its core cannot be called elitist. It is a place where you can share any and every opinion. This means that what you say here, how you observe something, is allowed.

With art, we search for a common ground, a place where everyone is equal and where everyone can express anything.

Art provides us with a space, a fresh dataset, a common ground. This lesson, or visual intelligence, is not about art analysis, about how Jackson Pollock compares to Picasso, but about visual data. It's about what we notice and see.

Why do I need to know
this as a designer?

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/qPmB3U-zaPY?enablejsapi=1>



By enhancing our visual intelligence, we will see things that we normally do not see. By practicing it, we as UI/UX designers can uncover elements that are indeed important for the accessibility of our applications.

DESIGN THINKING



Empathize

Understanding people



Define

Figuring out the problem



Test

Refining the product



Ideate

Generating your ideas



Prototype

Creation and experimentation







Speaker notes

Wellesley College.

Tony Matelli's "Sleepwalker" was very controversial here.

Hundreds of female students signed a petition asking for the removal of this statue. The petition argued that this statue was a trigger for women who had been sexually assaulted or even raped.

Later, the statue was relocated and became a popular spot for selfies in Manhattan.

So, just as in the fragment, context is highly influential in shaping perception and impact in our world.



AAAA

AAAA

Assess

Analyse

Articulate

Act

Speaker notes

We can't make everyone look again. With visual intelligence, we train four different components.

We learn

Assess

Analyze

Articulate

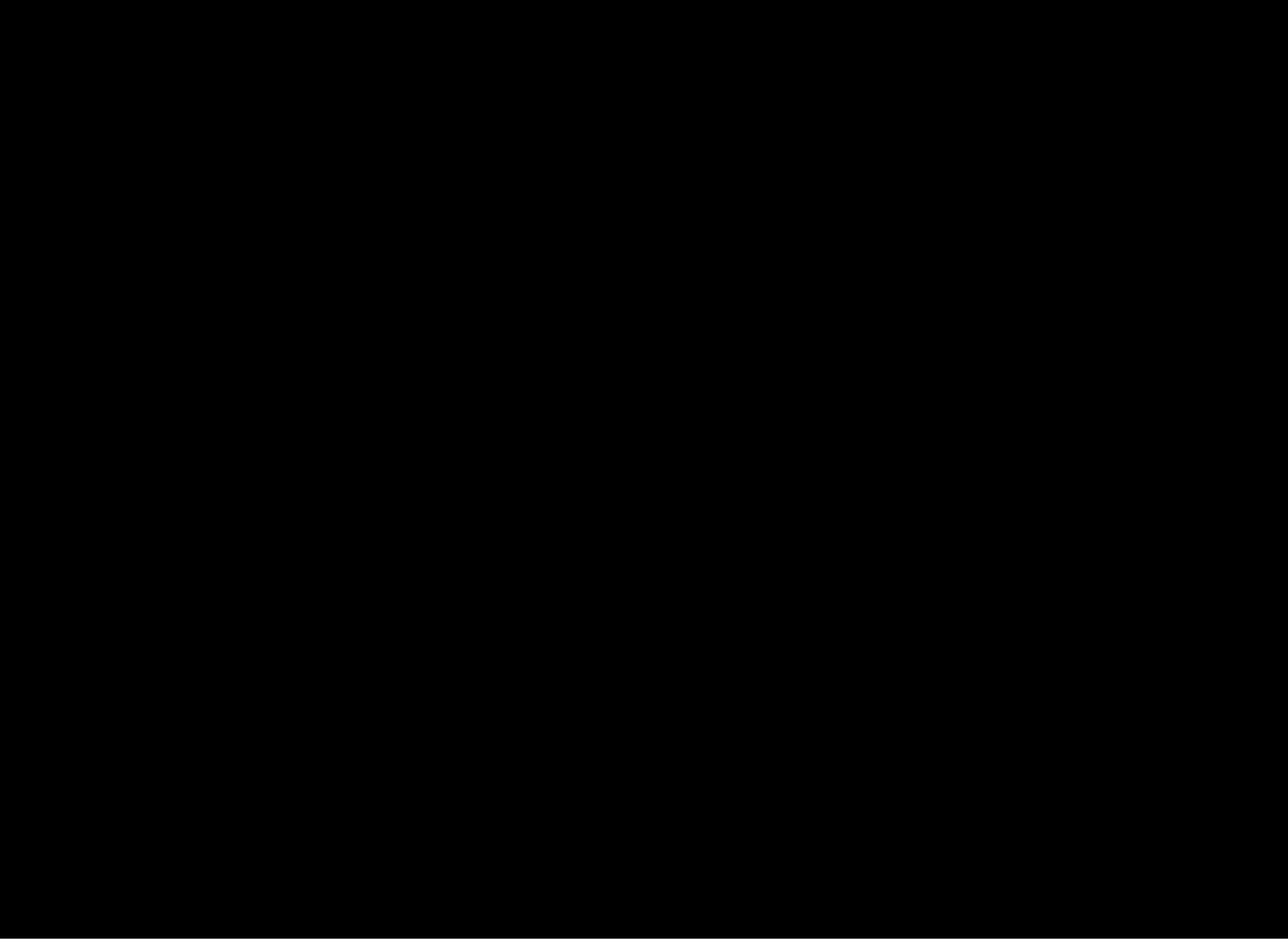
Act

Exploring the information: what do we have

Analyzing the information: what is important. Information you need, information you might need, and information you definitely don't need.

How you describe the observation (words, writing it down, expressing it). Much is often lost when putting down the observation: every word counts.

Adjusting your behavior based on your previous observation, and taking action. Why do you make a certain decision?"



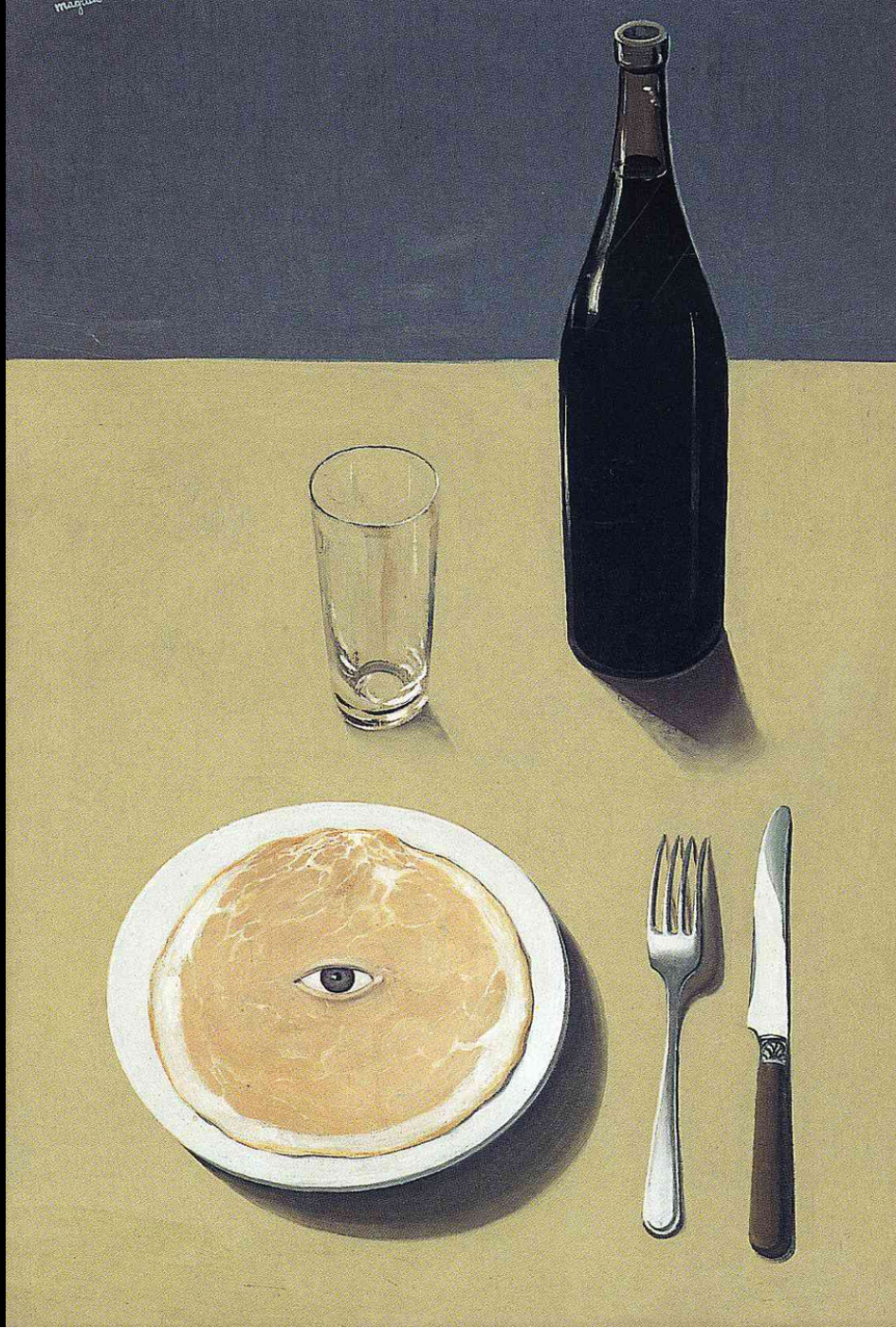
Speaker notes

At the beginning of this session, I showed a painting.

On the left, there was the text "Visual Intelligence, the Art of Observation."

Remember?

Take a sheet of paper and try to draw this painting.



Speaker notes

Take another look at the painting.

What stands out in this painting?

We can look at it for a long time. There are many subtleties.

What do we see in the painting?

On the plate, there's a piece of meat, with an eye?

A pancake?

Everyone has a different perspective.

Say what you see and be sure about what you see.

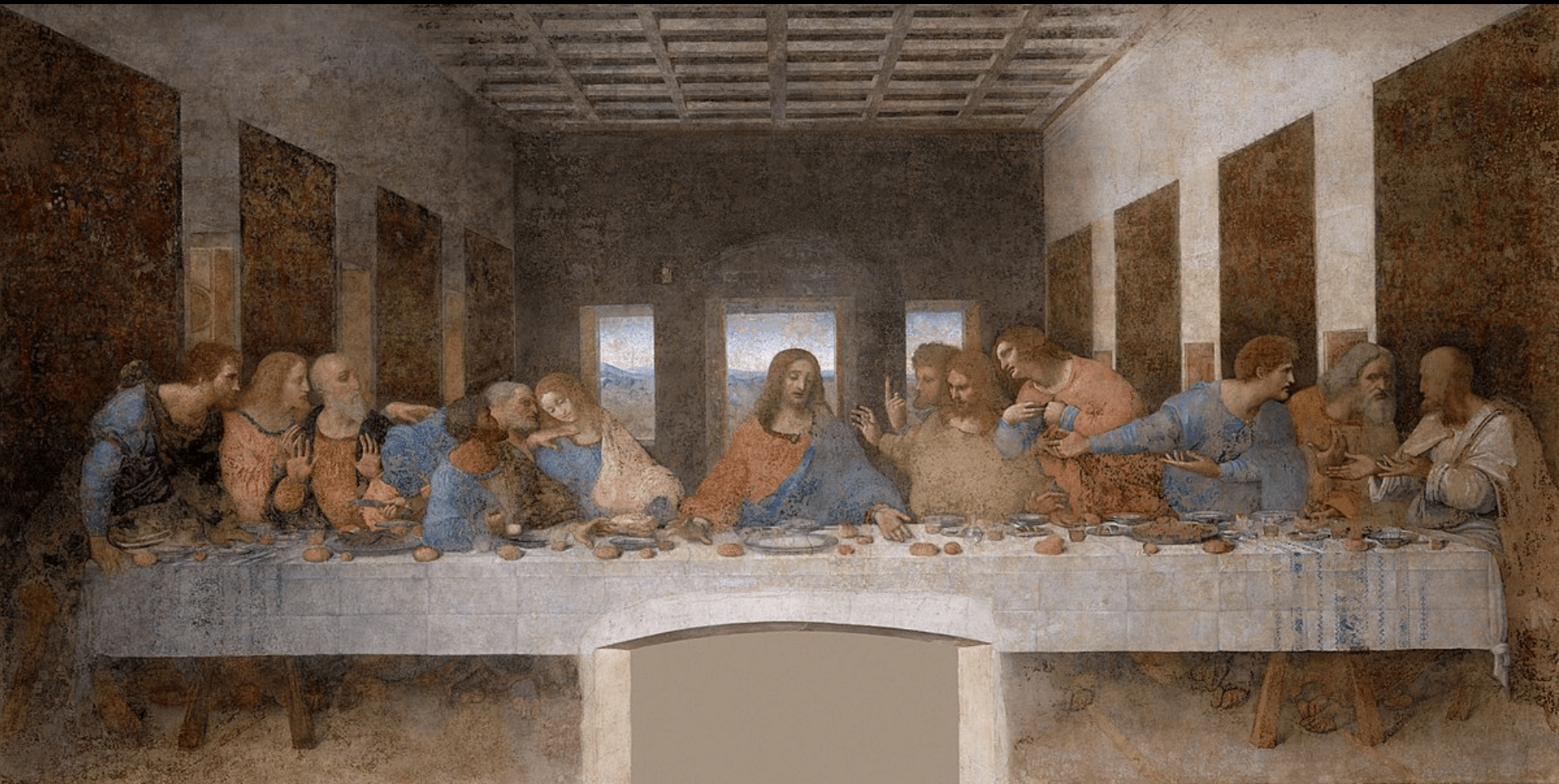
Magritte was a surrealist. He altered reality. How did he do that in this image?

Look at the glass.

The bottle is still full.

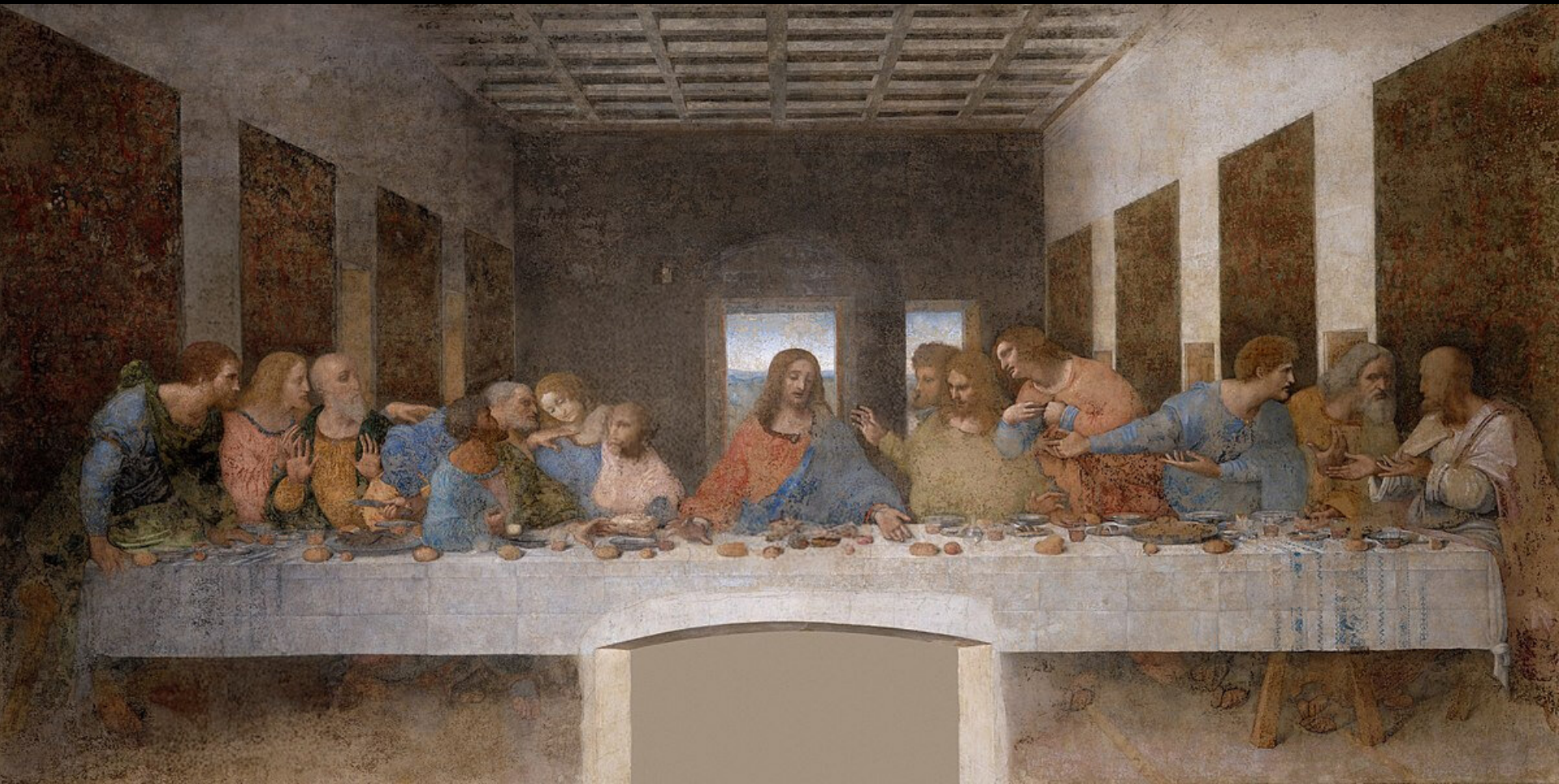
The fork is upside down with the tines facing the table.





Speaker notes

- Take a good look at this image—I'll only show it for 30 seconds. Pay close attention to every detail.
- Now, I'm going to show you a slightly different version. Can you spot what's missing?



Speaker notes

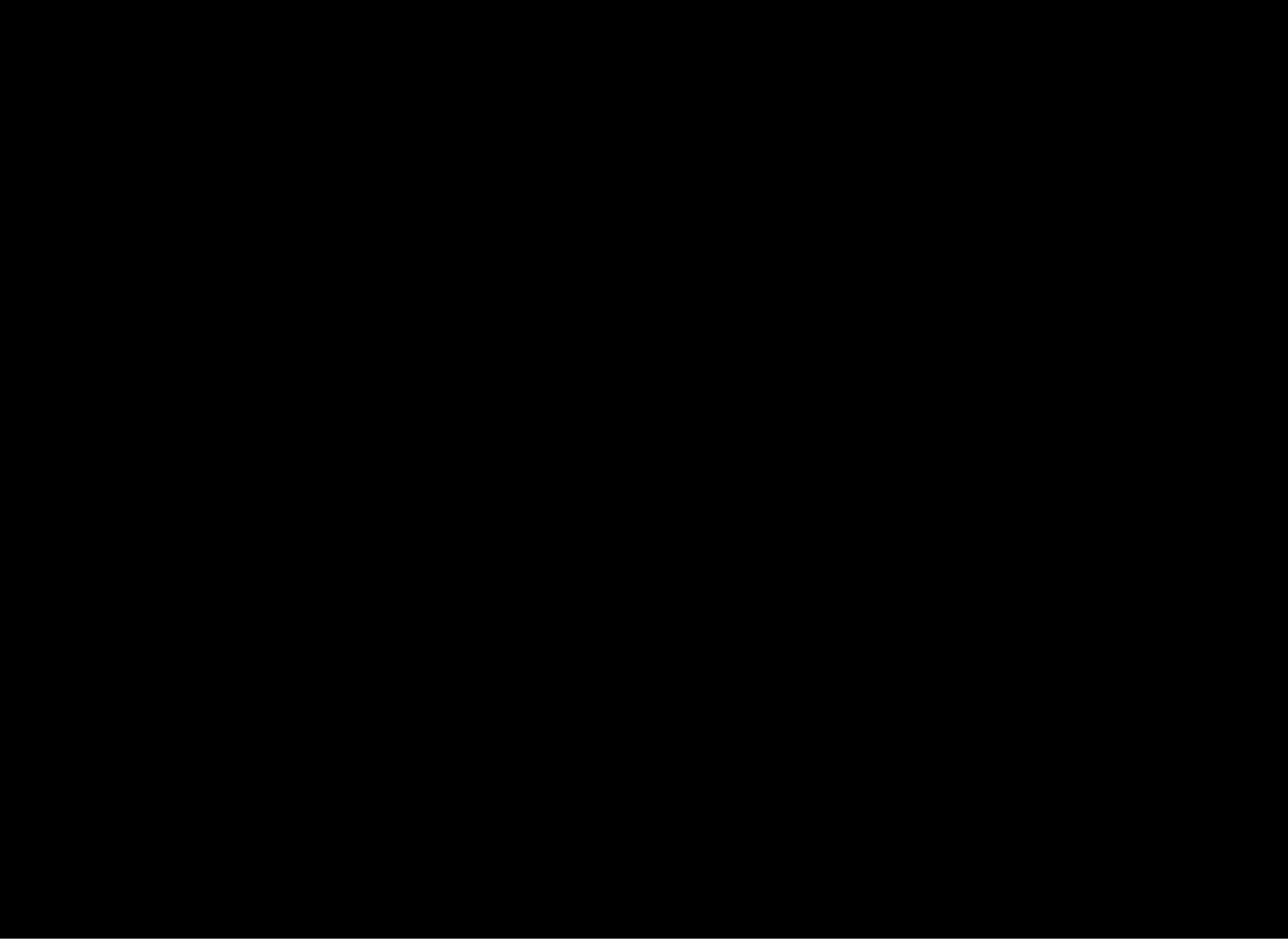
Things changed:

- Table legs
- A window in the back
- A finger next to Jesus
- Inlet on the left side
- The plate in front of Jesus



Speaker notes

- Take a good look at this image—I'll only show it for 30 seconds. Pay close attention to every detail.
- What was in the image?





Zelfportret, JR

Speaker notes

To solve a problem, you need to adjust your perspective.

JR takes photos of people and places them on large buildings. Some countries found JR's work inappropriate and even banned it. To avoid being arrested, he created a self-portrait from the perspective of a female eye. With this, he changed the perspective of what a self-portrait is, all because he didn't want to be arrested immediately.

We need to change
our perspective
regularly...

Speaker notes

We need to change our perspective regularly.

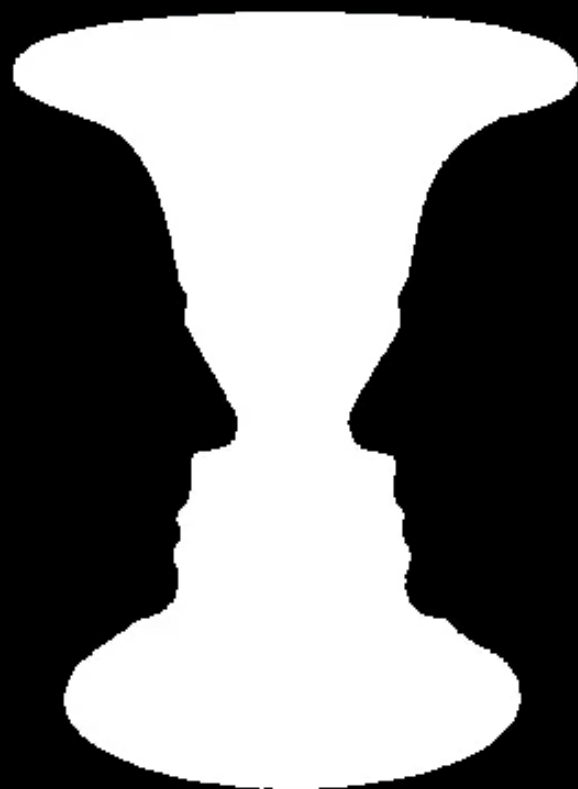
Beware of confirmation bias, as it causes us to have tunnel vision.

Changing perspective is meaningful and demands something from us.



Speaker notes

We need to change our perspective regularly because in this world, we face and must address climate change, social inequality, poverty, unacceptable behavior, gender diversity, Black Lives Matter, etc.





Speaker notes

We need to change our perspective because it forces us to be original, to see things differently.

Picasso's wife, Marie-Thérèse Walter

1930 <-> 1937

Time has passed, and we see things completely differently over time.





Speaker notes

We need to change our perspective because we no longer have a choice but to look the other way.

You can no longer look away from what you don't like. (Aylan/...)

OR...



Welcome to today's art auction! Your task is to estimate the value of this remarkable painting and bid accordingly. Its price is influenced by factors such as origin, artistic merit, and market demand. You may only call out an offer if you truly believe it is the maximum price the painting is worth.

Art pricing is unpredictable—historical significance, artist reputation, and personal perception all play a role. Will you make a strategic bid or let emotions decide?

We will begin the bidding at a predetermined price: 10.000 euros.

Let's begin the auction!



Sai Twambly

Speaker notes

You cannot look away from what you do not understand.

Painting by Sai Twambly, highly abstract, yet sold for 48 million dollars.



The terror of war, Nick Ut

Speaker notes

You cannot look away from what makes you uncomfortable because that is the world you live in.

Like this photo taken during the Vietnam War where a girl is seen running after a napalm bomb struck. This photo was taken by photographer Nick Ut, and the work is titled "The Terror of War."



Nest, Benjamin Verdonck

Speaker notes

Changing perspective to highlight what is NOT there.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/UIf1d6SXHNk?enablejsapi=1>

Speaker notes

Dries Depoorter / Following



Speaker notes

Changing perspective to learn to deal with the concept of disruption.

When something fundamental changes: GPS changes how we navigate, phones change how we communicate, social media, etc. —

Cornelia Parker and her cottage. Rethinking all the pieces. She rebuilds everything in Tate Britain.

Disruption is harmless, but we must decide which disruption is good so that it can help us do things differently.





Cold Dark Matter: An Exploded View, Cornelia Parker

Speaker notes

How do you see potential in something when others see nothing in it?



Prada Marfa, Elmgreen & Dragset

Speaker notes

Disrupting by placing a luxury boutique in a desert.



Félix González-Torres

Speaker notes

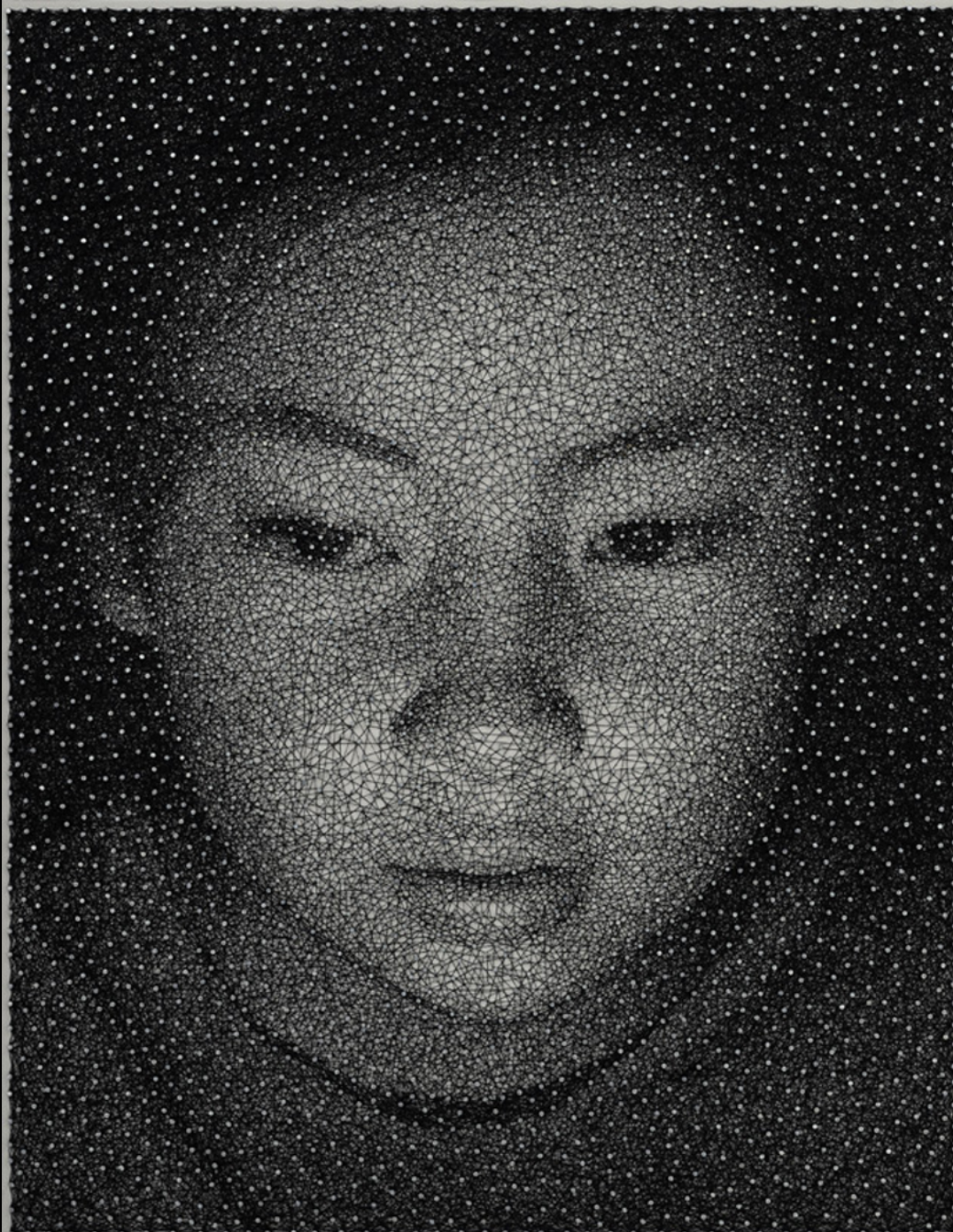
We see two clocks running perfectly in sync. These are hanging on the wall.

What can we deduce from this?

Analog clocks.

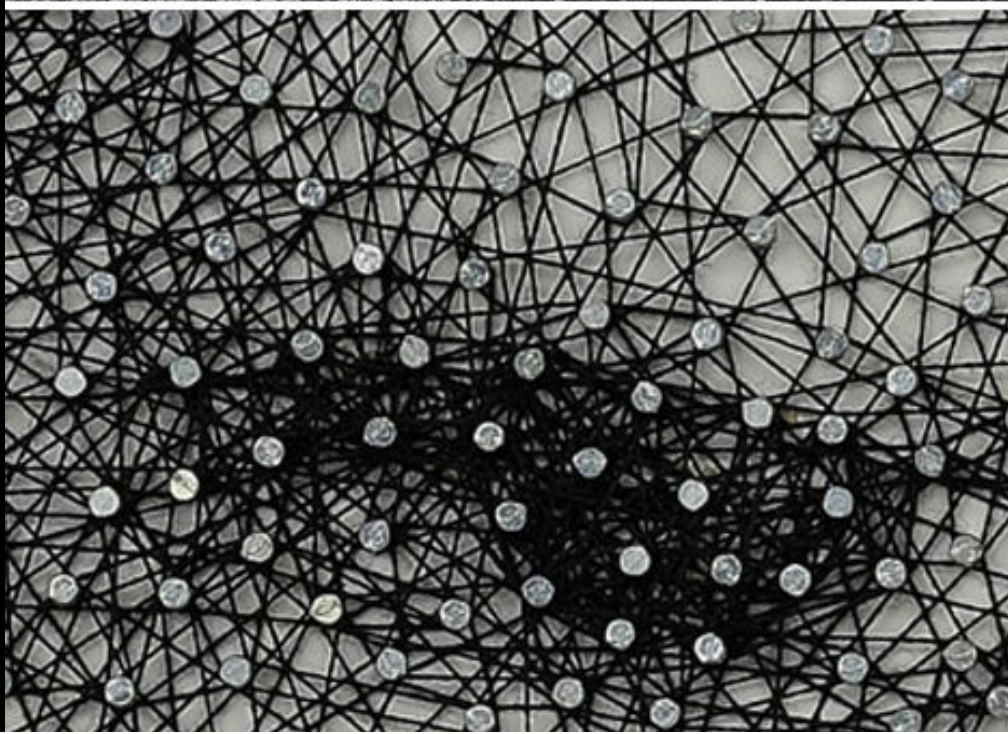
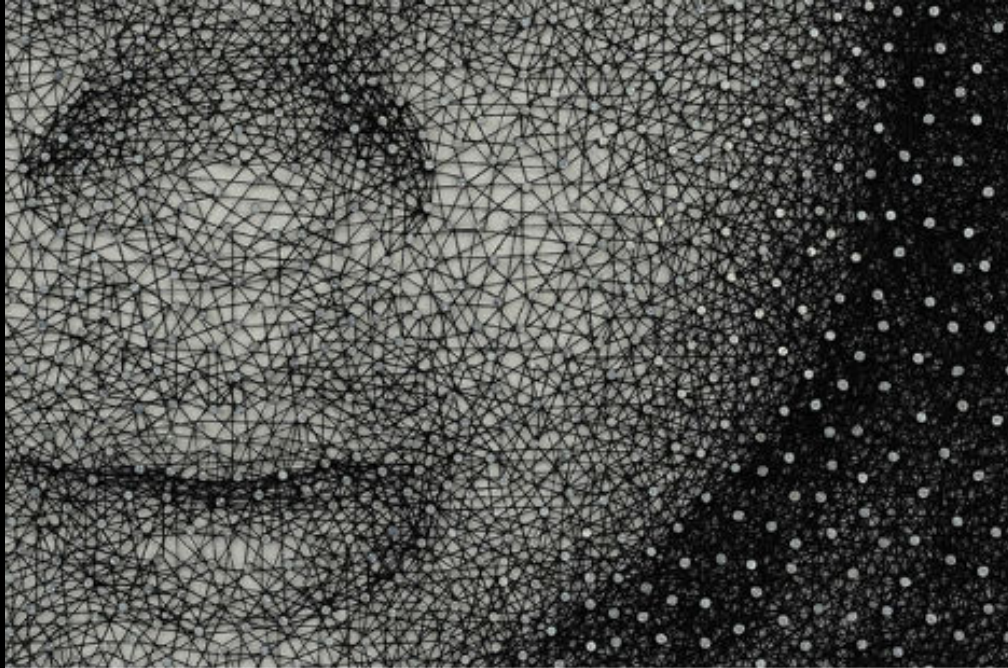
Batteries will eventually die, and one will stop.

The work is called "Perfect Lovers" by Felix Gonzales-Torrez.



Speaker notes

Work from Kumi Yamashita





Speaker notes

Similarities and differences?

Left, man and woman; Right, two men

Left, hair; Right, bald

Left, open eyes; Right, one man has closed eyes, the other has open eyes

Some people say hetero on the left, gay on the right (what do we deduce from this?)

BUT ALSO

I cannot see what you see.

Left is a painting, and Right is a photograph.

I am looking at an artwork.

There are two people in it, and they are both in profile.

Details and nuances are very important to communicate what we truly see.



Speaker notes

Mrs. John Winthrop, painted by John Singleton Copley.

What do we see in the work?

She has brown hair, naming things, etc.

More than half will not mention the table. How did I not see this?

We are out of mayonnaise. Fridge syndrome. Something seems to disappear while it's right in front of us.

When you have a complex situation: "Is there something I'm missing?" People don't see everything as you see it.





Aol.

Speaker notes

Think of one sentence to describe what you see in this photo. Ignore the letters "AOL" at the bottom right.

Raise your hand if your sentence does not contain the letter C, or if you did not see the letter C (more than 50%).

Columbia University

We are interested in doctors or users of an app where we have not seen things. For example, a doctor in a hospital.
Two different perceptions.

Tell us what you see in as much detail as possible.



Speaker notes

Two presidents, similarities and differences?

One is a painting, the other is a photograph.

Left, a painting with a rainbow. There are hundreds of paintings of Washington. Is it then important to see that rainbow? Yes, because it allows us to scale the hundreds of paintings down to just a handful of paintings to refer to.



Speaker notes

Similarities and differences?

A doctor stands up, says that one woman is obese and unhealthy. But what about the other woman? We actually know nothing about her.

The man was wrong. The way he communicates is not entirely complete. How do we know the woman is not sick? Depressed? etc.

His words were not well-chosen. Choosing words is incredibly important, in speaking and writing. Choose your words carefully.

Story of Kay Arenberg.

Verman je (Brace yourself)

Onderbemand (Understaffed)

mankracht (manpower)

op de man af (directly)

https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20211228_95575983

https://fedweb.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/folder_inclusive_writing_NL_final_v5.pdf

Art of observation

Three questions you can use:

1. What do I know by looking objectively
2. What do I not know?
3. If I were to receive more information,
what would I want to know?

Speaker notes

Three questions you can use:

What do I know by looking objectively?

What do I not know?

If I were to receive more information, what would I want to know?



Untitled, Gregory Crewdson

Speaker notes

Pas de vragen toe op volgend schilderij. Overleg 60 seconden met je partner.

Ik heb niet verteld van wie het schilderij is etc. jullie hebben de visuele data gebruikt om het te hebben over dit schilderij.

---- Dit is het oude voorbeeld ----

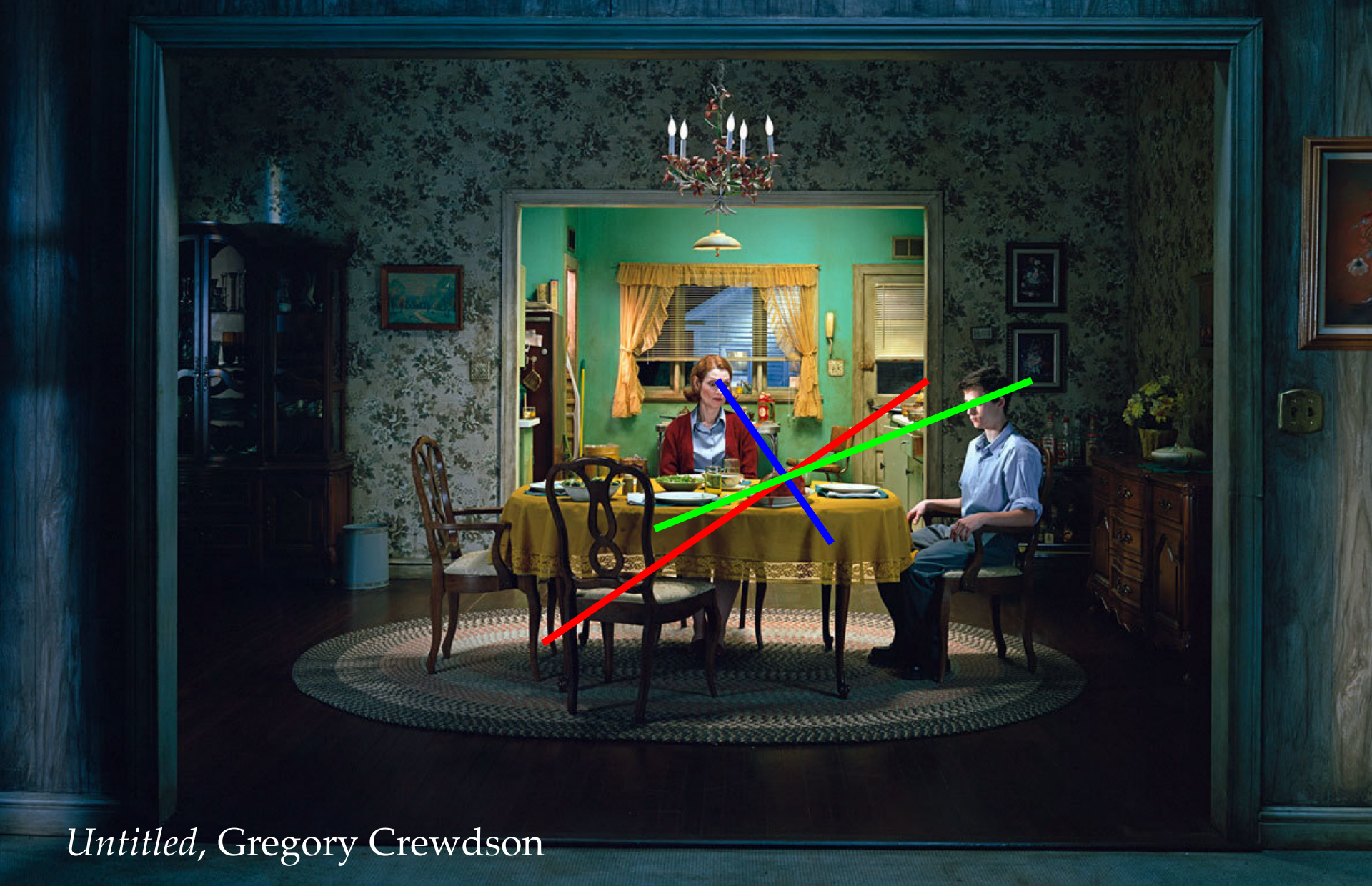
Kip schilderij (handen omhoog)

- Hoeveel mensen hebben de handtas gezien?
- Hoeveel mensen hebben het over de kip gehad?
- We hebben een voorgrond, midden en achtergrond
- Een huis, schuur, velden in het midden en twee figuren die het onderwerp zijn
- Ze dragen allebei een hoofddekse
- Bontjas, een transactie is aan de hand
- De persoon links is anders gekleed
- Ze houdt de kip vast in een bezitterige manier
- Wat wil je weten?
 - Wat is de relatie tussen die twee?
 - Wat is de transactie?
 - Van wie is de boerderij?
- Ze praten over dit en dat... maar hun mond is niet geopend

---- Dit is het oude voorbeeld ----

Lift, twee mensen die een ruzie hebben gehad. Lichaamstaal. We gebruiken visuele informatie.

We gebruiken visuele informatie om te analyseren, en om problemen op te lossen.



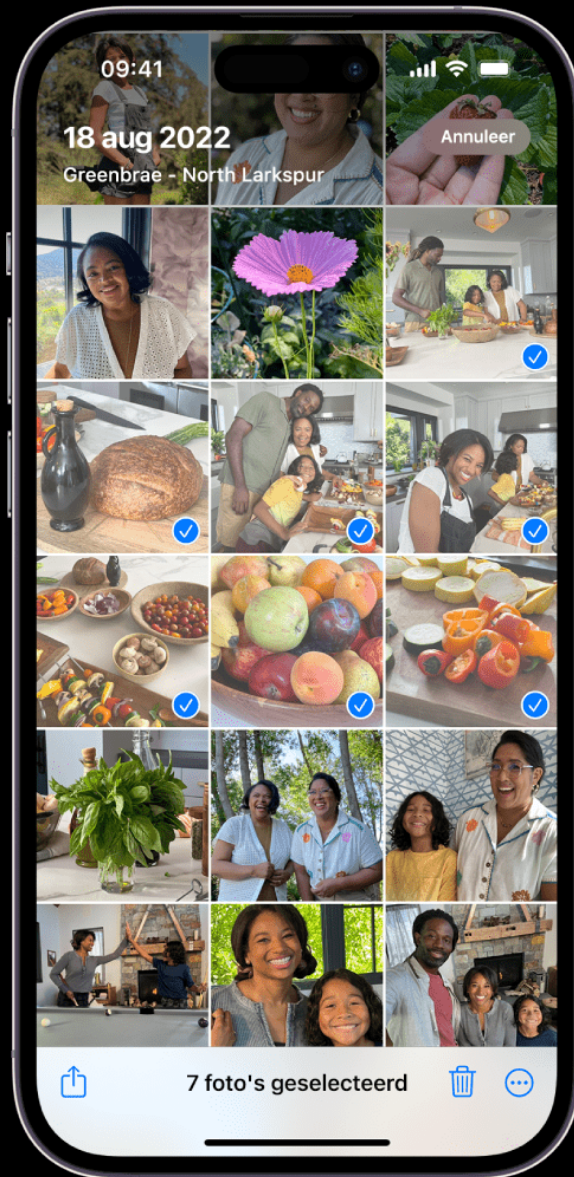
Untitled, Gregory Crewdson



Twilight, Gregory Crewdson

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/bfhsDvveVLc?enablejsapi=1>





Speaker notes

Ask the students to spend 5 minutes silently looking at their photos and select one that they believe contains many elements to create a story—in other words, they should find an image themselves.

Next, they show their chosen photo to a classmate, and together, they create a story based on it.

The group is then asked who has created the most compelling story. The photo of that person is displayed, and the story is recreated collectively in class, following three key points:

The student now examines their photos much more attentively (observation skill).

The other students observe, shifting perspectives.

The difference between various perspectives can be immense.

Design is problem solving

User experience design is
about solving problems.
But before you can solve a
problem effectively it must
be properly understood
and defined.



Speaker notes

Steven Young Lee incorporates what is broken. So, we are going to emphasize and elevate what is broken to something beautiful. They have their beauty; even brokenness can be something beautiful. Make what is broken part of the solution.



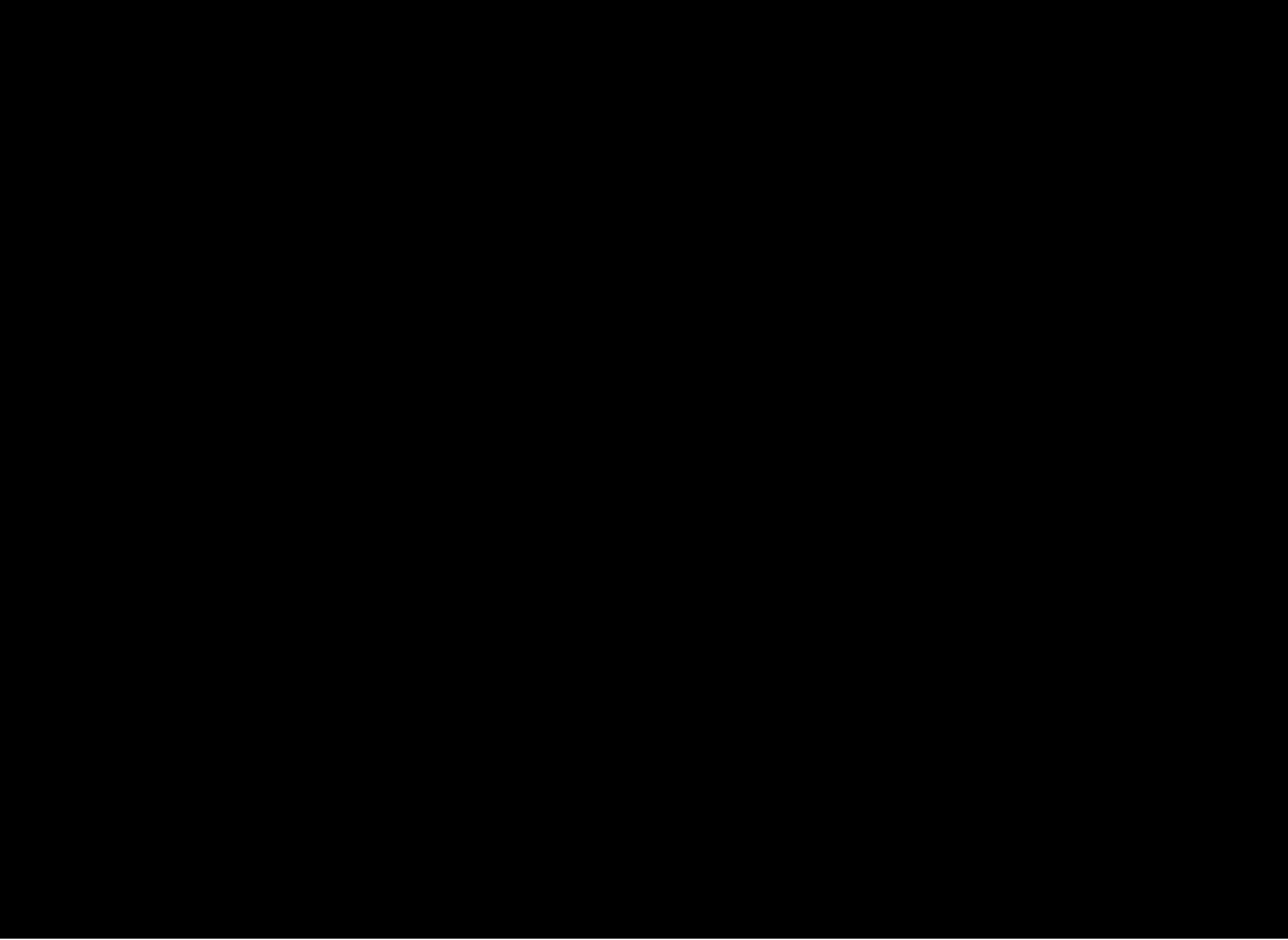
Speaker notes

Kintsugi is a process where they take vases, etc., that are broken and fill them with gold, silver, etc., making them more valuable than when they were perfect. Emphasize what is broken.

If you have a problem, make it worse.

What can you do with what you already have?





Speaker notes

We have seen several techniques already.
Let's practice.

Divide into listener and describer.

(After this slide comes the work of Monet)



Speaker notes

Show a painting by Monet (with a white border) - 45 seconds

Ask a question only to the listeners. Which painting did I show?



Speaker notes

Painting by Monet? :-)

This may seem silly, why should I think about this white line? Because it's a game-changer.

Let's do the exercise again. Please note that the image is coming up next!





Speaker notes

The paintings are by Cézanne.

The paintings have similarities.

It's about what you hear and what you don't hear. If you haven't heard that something specific (wallpaper, etc.) is in the picture, you can't deduce which image it is. It's not just about what you have heard but also what you haven't heard.

Visual Intelligence Tips



1

Take a different
perspective

Speaker notes

Neem een ander perspectief in

2

Look again. What you
see the first time will be
different the second
time.

Speaker notes

Kijk een tweede keer. Wat je de eerste keer ziet, zal een tweede keer anders zijn.

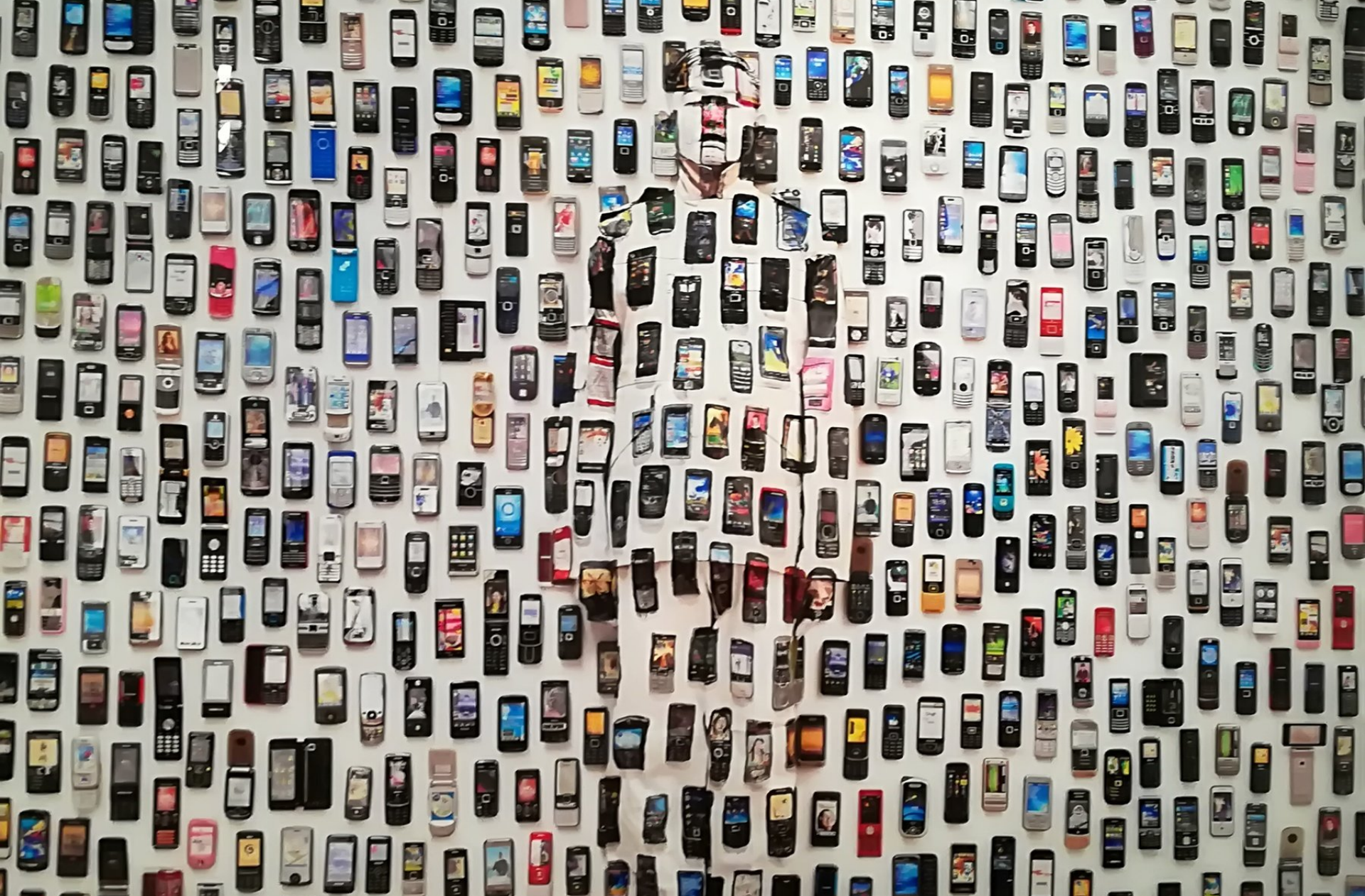


Nomadland, Chloe Zhao

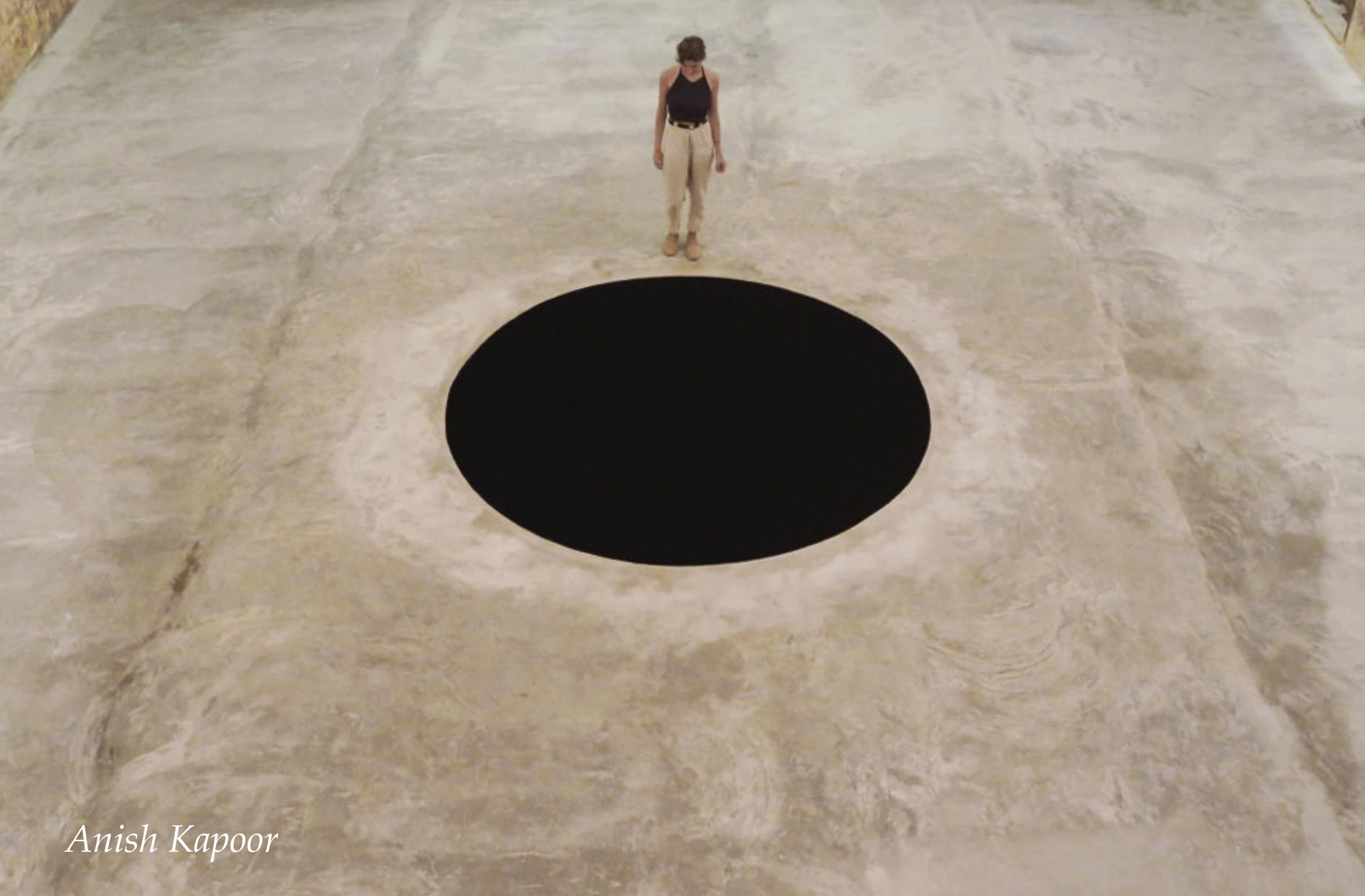
Speaker notes

Liu Bolin

Denk na over wat je ziet







Anish Kapoor



Speaker notes

Where is the cat?

Fridge syndrome.

Seeing what we want to see = cognitive bias, wishful seeing, or tunnel vision. This can lead us to collect selective information.

Frequency illusion: when we first hear about something or become involved with it, we suddenly see it everywhere.

3

Big images, small
details

Speaker notes

Grote afbeeldingen, kleine detail.



Speaker notes

Bar des folies van Manet

4

Be a good
listener



Speaker notes

Be a good listener.

Notice small hesitations, etc.

Keep communication open; if someone has a question, ask a question in return.

See directing education.

5

Creating something
from something is easy,
but creating something
from nothing is very
difficult.

Speaker notes

Maak iets van iets, iets maken van niets is heel erg moeilijk

6

Evaluate what
you have done
and what you
haven't.



Speaker notes

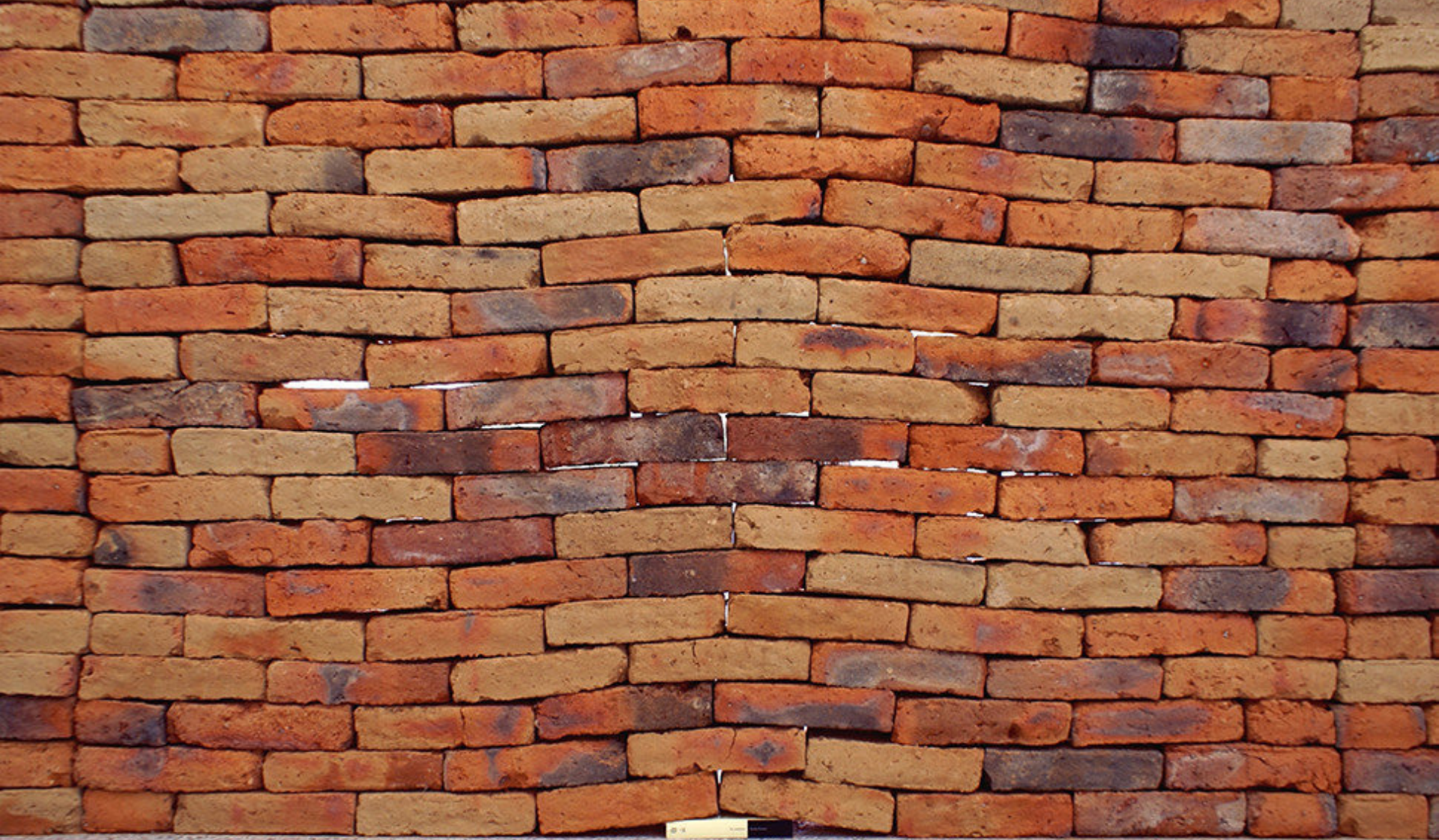
6. Evalueer, wat heb ik goed gedaan, wat niet (Magritte)

Je moet weten wat je goed kan doen en wat je fout kan doen

Let op vooroordelen

7

Don't let perfection be
the enemy of good.



El castillo, Jorge Mendez Blake

Speaker notes

jorge mendez blake / el castillo

8

Look for a common
ground.

Speaker notes

Net zoals kunst

Observation shapes
your perception. Try to
see something you
hadn't seen the day
before. Train your
brain.

In the museum

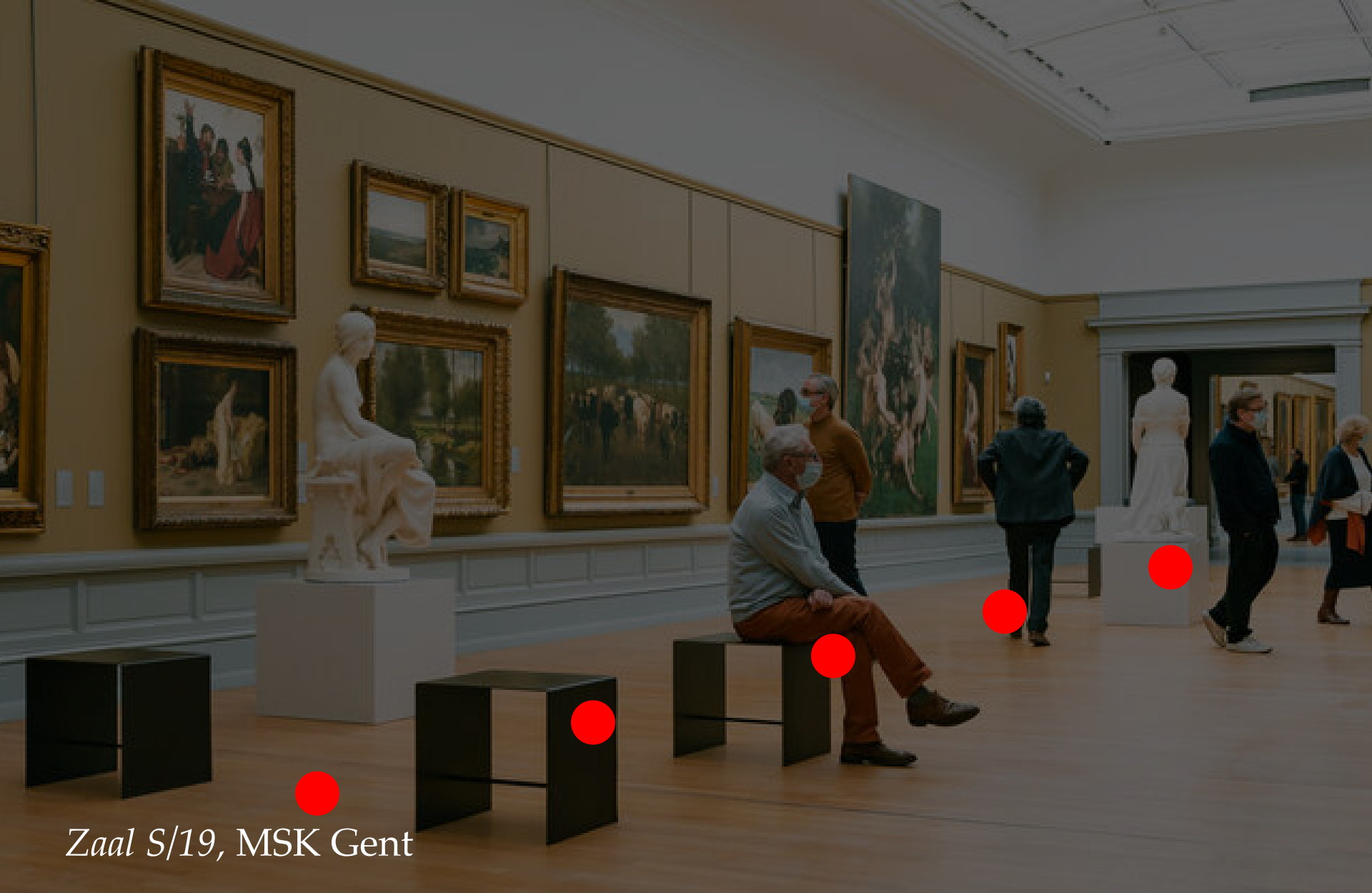
Drie observation exercises



Zaal S/19, MSK Gent

Speaker notes

We gaan drie oefeningen doen. We doen een gezamenlijke oefening, en twee oefeningen in groepjes van 4



Zaal S/19, MSK Gent

Exercise 1

For the group exercise, we will soon move to Hall S. There, we will enter in pairs, keeping approximately one and a half meters of distance between two people. We will enter with our gaze forward and stand in a line, one behind the other. When we turn, we will close our eyes. I will give a signal, after which you will observe the artwork in front of you for **seven minutes**. You may take notes.

Next, you will turn sideways, away from the paintings, and describe what you have seen. Until this point, you have not yet fully seen the painting. Now, you will switch places and observe each other's work again for **seven minutes**. Afterward, you will discuss the differences, what stood out to you, etc.

Exercise 2

Divide yourselves into groups of **four students** and appoint one **group leader**.

In the museum, select **three to four paintings**, spending approximately **fifteen minutes** at each painting. The group leader will **time the observation**.

1. Observe a painting **in silence for seven minutes**, focusing intently. Take notes.
2. Discuss your observations—**describe what you see** and share your insights with each other.
3. Imagine what **might have happened** in the painting. In other words, create a story about what is going on.
4. Consider if any **information is missing**. What don't you know?

Use these three questions as your guide.

Exercise 3

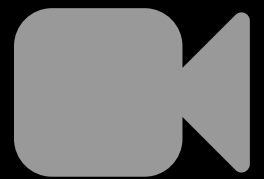
This exercise **can/may** be done individually. Walk around the museum alone, but instead of observing the paintings, **observe something or someone in the museum itself**. Do this for **10 minutes** and take notes.

We will meet again at... **Bring your final notes to the auditorium.**

Art of observation

Three questions you can use:

1. What do I know by looking objectively
2. What do I not know?
3. If I were to receive more information,
what would I want to know?



References

"A brilliant new documentary about the work of one of
America's greatest living photographers."

— Rush Magazine [UK]



Gregory Crewdson Brief Encounters

a film by Ben Shapiro

a BEN SHAPIRO film featuring GREGORY CREWDSON with RUSSELL BANKS, RICK MOODY, LAURIE SIMMONS, MELISSA HARRIS, RICHARD SANDS
original music by DANA KARNOFF additional music LITTLE SILVER additional camera ALEX KRAPOPOFF COSTANZA TRICOLU BRASCHI, DIETRICH POST
edited by TOM PATTERSON NANCY KENNEDY associate producer ANNE BERMAN producer, director & cinematographer BEN SHAPIRO a ZEITGEIST FILMS release
With support from IFF in co-production with ARRO TELEVISION/The Netherlands and in association with SVT Sweden

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