

# FAQ – ART - FGA's

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**The problem with video** is off course that for every minute you record you are going to spend three minutes of editing and 5 minutes of sound editing time. This doesn't even count the machine time going into compressing and printing DVD's.

**I am no art critic**, but I know what I hate!

**I don't know anything about art!** .... Off course, that is what makes you a client, a buyer, an attentive responsive.

**How long did this take?** .... That is one of the questions that really cannot be answered. There is the development of the skill, the coming up with the idea, the trial and error periods that demand many compositional drawings. So, it comes back to my old adage: (my line, which incidentally is coming round, being quoted back to me) "Fifty years and fifteen minutes".

**So, why do art at all?** One could trivialize it as a form of self therapy, but if "a picture is worth a thousand lies" (another one of mine that's coming 'round to me), it is also a form of communication and, I might add very powerful communication, a way of leaving a moral and ethical legacy.

Doing art has the advantage of exercising total control over the end product; you decide when it's finished, you decide on context, on how you wish to present yourself to yourself, and to others. No management, no interference, it's your thing and by god you can do it your way (most refreshing that). Off course there is the need to eat..... which brings other pressures to bear, but we'll save that for another discussion. Every artwork is a search for kindred spirits, for people to resonate with. Open wide and say "ahhhhh!"

**What is your art?** My art is a **form of conceptual realism**, it is a raid on the common consciousness. It's magic in a way, so few lines can express so much, even if they are not really well done .... Magic! Hypnotic, because an illusion is being performed. Magic, because five dimensions can be squeezed into two. Yes, five dimensions! (remember you heard it here first: "Perception is the fifth dimension", another Herb'ism) The first three are easy, after all we are most conscious about length, height and width. Well, one of those is the first to go on a page, because there are only two dimensions to be had (save the thickness of the paper), so a third dimension has to be synthesized and thus has to be an illusion, one that is easily manipulated, M.C. Escher reminded us of this in many of his works. He would actually mess with our perceptions abusing you in concept and in his images and what a delightful legacy he produced! I myself try to go a bit further, you see: Every era has a particular genre, a stile, a presence that conveys a bit of the flavor of the time the artwork was produced in, this is usually reasonably obvious. Things produced during a specific era often have a very specific, often dated look and feel to them; just look at a magazine from the nineteen-fifties, it is pretty obvious when

its images were produced. Beyond that things get a bit tricky. Albert Einstein left off at the fourth dimension: Time. I submit to you that there is another everyday dimension that we contend with and it has to do with our subconscious; from the detection of pheromones to the subconscious interpretation of body language ..... it is perception. Perception is our fifth dimension; it rides on our interpretive skills, be they conscious or unconscious (most likely a mix of both). I believe this is the next frontier; if it hasn't been that all along; but it needs to be tackled head on, consciously, if there is to be real progress. No longer is a particular style at issue, not a recognizable stroke, not a regional identity, all these have gone to the wayside with the new processes and materials. Today anything is possible in art; any style, any flavor, synthetic or real it's all at our fingertips. The new frontier must thus deal with the underlying or surmounting ideas in the images and how these ideas are communicated; regardless of the rendition, what I termed: **"Conceptual Realism"**.

**Conceptualizing:** I think this term warrants some defining. Conceptualizing is to form a concept, whereby a concept is an abstract or generic idea generalized from particular instances. A concept is an idea and is thus energy and information. Allow me to illustrate: We all dream occasionally, mind you I do not mean the day dreams, I mean the dreams that come at night often as a result of some undigested "rare bit" as Winsor Mackay used to put it. This is a time when your mind subconsciously does the conceptualizing for you. Experiences impacting you in the daytime return to you in concept, in principal at night. A severed relationship may result in a dream about cutting off a branch from a tree. So, you see the action is conceptually congruent, only the imagery differs. Such images depend on the content of a myriad of impressions you picked up subconsciously while going about your daily routines. The ancient Egyptians would do this quite consciously; they would for example turn the ears of the statue of a god outward, towards you, to make it clear to you that the god is listening to your prayers; a conceptual maneuver.

**Realism:** Is the truth about all that is known, it finds itself partly in what is depicted. It resides in the content, which is to say that the portrayed items are reasonably accurate, perhaps hyper accurate, in their appearance and the concept that is being dealt with. Usually this is an issue that concerns the artist and he/she addresses an aspect of an issue by visually communicating about it. I am usually hoping that the issues that I have chosen to depict will interest my audience and stimulate further thought. My subjects vary from simple observations to deep psychology and include wordplay and satire. All of which should serve to promote dialog and to raise consciousness, or at least to amuse (in the true sense of the word.) You might ask what qualifies me to take on such a task? My life experience, and my experience as an artist. I see and notice things that other people do not necessarily pay attention to, it is my discipline.

**If I had to give some advice to a young artist entering the field:** I would say start young and develop your skills early. Have the courage to fail and toss out lesser pieces. Network with other people. Try to become objective to all that's about you. Don't

presume to lecture your audience. Try to be constructive, avoid the gross and don't fall for the corrupting bullshit that is all about in abundance. Distinguish between art, art history and what the art merchants try to sell you. See if you can find yourself (this may take a few decades). Dazzle them with your skill and bowl them over with your ideas. Avoid art historians. Listen with patience to all, but act upon your understanding. Don't become what you hate the most ..... don't hate. In the end and above all try to be born rich!

**Remember:** What you think you experienced with my art is probably not exactly what I had in mind. We are cooperatively in concert, you and I, we must reach some form of resonance. No matter which side of the spectrum we experience, when resonance or antiresonance is reached we are fully communicating, without it all is "vanilla", that is not to say vanilla is bad; but it is just that, no more no less. Just "Tuna", not at all "White Albacore".

**Herb Ranharter, 2020**