

UNIT

6

# IT'S A MASTERPIECE!



Scan for Audio

## WHAT YOU WILL DO IN THIS UNIT

- A Reading** Read a critical review
- B Listening** Listen to a debate about art
- C Speaking** Give polite criticism
- D Writing** Write a critique of some artwork
- E Project** Give a presentation about a work of art



### Look at the photo and answer the questions.

1. What is happening in the picture?
2. What do you think she is taking a photo of?
3. What kind of artwork most interests you? Why?
4. Why do you think art is important?

# A

## Reading

**Aim** Read a critical review

### Vocabulary

1 Listen and number.



6-01



4

striking



1

visual



7

critic



6

portrait



5

(mass) media



8

scene



3

classic



2

controversial

**2 Match the words with the definitions.**

- |                  |   |  |
|------------------|---|--|
| 1. visual        | • | a. attracting attention because it is very attractive, unusual, or extreme |
| 2. (mass) media  | • | b. everything connected with a type of art or way of life                  |
| 3. scene         | • | c. old but high-quality and well-known                                     |
| 4. classic       | • | d. likely to cause disagreement and discussion                             |
| 5. controversial | • | e. related to seeing or sight  |
| 6. critic        | • | f. a painting or drawing of a person                                       |
| 7. portrait      | • | g. newspapers, magazines, TV, and radio that reach many people             |
| 8. striking      | • | h. someone who reviews art, music, or literature                           |
-

## Pre-reading

③ Match the words to the pictures. How could these words apply to art? Talk with a partner.

1. paper shredder

2. art auction

3. hoax

4. remote control



4 Read the article. Then find five examples of passive voice and underline them.

Track 6-02



## CREATIVE DESTRUCTION

Some have called it great performance art, some have called it a protest against the art world itself, and some have even called it a hoax. [a] Whatever your view, there is no doubt that Banksy is once again the most talked about and controversial artist of our times. His painting *Girl with Balloon* was sold to an unnamed buyer at auction last week for \$1.4 million. However, as soon as it was sold, the painting began to destroy itself: a small paper shredder (operated by remote control) had been secretly installed in the lower part of the frame. A video of the incident shows the shocked faces of those in the room. Fortunately for the new owner, the painting was not completely destroyed. The shredder stopped halfway through. Even more fortunately, the half-destroyed work, now renamed *Love is in the Bin*, is said to have actually increased in value! It is currently being displayed at a gallery in Stuttgart, Germany. [b]

While this painting has already become famous, whether or not it is great art is another question. Many critics, such as Paulo Aldous, have argued that Banksy's work is too simplistic and obvious. "I think some of his earlier work was interesting and striking, but now his paintings always carry a very direct message which doesn't challenge the viewer. And this is just his latest stunt, or perhaps a hoax, which he's done in order to get attention." Other critics, such as Marion Weber are more positive. "I've always loved Banksy's work, right back to his early days as part of the underground graffiti scene in Bristol. [c] This new work, in particular, is fascinating. I think it can be viewed as a continuation or update of an older tradition, known as the 'Auto-Destructive Art' movement. This movement was started in the 1960s by Gustav Metzger, and often involved performances in which he violently destroyed the art which he had created. For him, the destruction was an integral part of the creative process. Clearly, Banksy has been inspired by Metzger here."

So, visual art masterpiece or media stunt? People will disagree on this. But most will probably agree that, while he's certainly controversial, no other visual artist can get the media's attention in the way Banksy can. Because of him, a lot of young people are talking about art again. [d] For that, at the very least, he ought to be admired.

### NOTE

A hoax is a trick to make people believe something is true.

## Comprehension

### 5 Circle the answers.

1. What is the main purpose of the article?
  - a. to explain how disliked Banksy is
  - b. to examine what Banksy has accomplished
  - c. to debate what art is
  - d. to discuss different types of art
2. Why did they change the name of the painting?
  - a. The new owner disliked the name.
  - c. The message had changed.
  - b. The painting got more expensive.
  - d. The shredder stopped halfway.
3. What does the critic mean when they say the artwork "doesn't challenge the viewer"?
  - a. The pictures Banksy draws are simple.
  - d. The work is easy to understand.
  - b. The work is easy to look at.
  - c. Banksy's work has gotten worse.
4. What is NOT true about Gustav Metzger?
  - a. He was part of the Bristol scene.
  - b. He was part of the art scene.
  - c. Banksy's art resembles his.
  - d. His work began a movement.
5. Where is the best place to insert the following sentence?  
*His work at that time was so vibrant and dynamic.*
  - a. [a]
  - b. [b]
  - c. [c]
  - d. [d]
6. What can be inferred about Banksy?
  - a. He has changed over time.
  - b. His work will not be remembered.
  - c. He does not make money from his art.
  - d. His fans are mostly older people.



**6 Discuss with a partner.**

1. What do you think about the artwork being destroyed?
2. How can artists get the media's attention?

# B

## Listening

**Aim** Listen to a debate about art

### Vocabulary

1 Listen and number.



6-03



8

observation



5

novelist



3

script



1

commercial



2

abstract



6

release



4

violent



7

dialogue

**2** Fill in the blanks with the best vocabulary words.

1. I'm not a big fan of the pop music genre. The music is too commercial.
2. The book makes a striking observation about the life of Picasso.
3. I won't let my children watch that scary movie. The violent scenes would give them nightmares.
4. I always wrote stories when I was in school. That's why I became a(n) novelist.
5. I wrote a(n) script for the school's spring play. Would you like to read it?
6. Do you know what the release date is for the new James Bond movie?
7. The older I get, the better I understand abstract artwork, such as Jackson Pollock's paintings.
8. It's a good action movie, but the dialogue is so unnatural.

## Authentic Conversation

### 3 Talk with a partner.



Welcome, Max. You're a unique artist. Let's talk about that.

Certainly. I'm a screenwriter and a novelist. I write movie scripts, and I'm currently writing a book about how violence is used in storytelling.

Interesting. I wanted to ask you what your observations are on commercial films, such as superhero movies.

Actually, I really enjoy superhero movies. I think a lot of them have great messages, acting, and dialogue.

Really?

Yes. In fact, the first script I ever wrote was about a superhero. It was called *To the Max!*

#### NOTE

*Blockbuster* movies usually focus on popular genres such as action and thriller movies, and they are usually made by big film studios. *Indie* movies are not supported by big studios and usually focus on niche topics and themes.

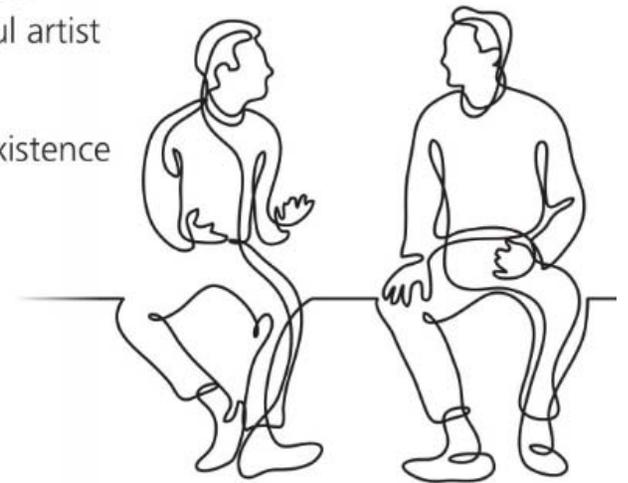
### 4 Discuss with a partner.

1. What was the last movie you watched? Was it a blockbuster or an indie film?
2. Do you think indie films have more artistic value than blockbusters? Why?

## Listen Up

### 5 Listen and circle the answers. 6-04

- The main topic of the listening is \_\_\_\_.
  - how to be a good artist
  - how to define good art
  - how to tell if art is good
  - how to be a successful artist
- What does "human condition" mean?
  - how humans make art
  - different aspects of existence
  - other's experiences
  - life, death, and love
- The speakers are debating whether or not \_\_\_\_.
  - good art can be created for commercial reasons
  - artists should talk about the human condition
  - artists ought to be recognized for their artistry
  - a great work of art is about the human condition
- What can be inferred from the following statement?  
"If they also happen to make some money, that's not a bad thing, right?"
  - Artists shouldn't make art to make money.
  - Most artists won't make money doing art.
  - Artists shouldn't be afraid to make money.
  - It's a bad thing when artists make money.



6 Listen again. Circle true or false. 

1. Asma thinks most people can agree on what makes great art.
2. For Asma, great artwork discusses the human condition.
3. Picasso's *The Weeping Woman* is more popular now than it used to be.
4. Commercial art and great artistry often go together.

true

false

true

false

true

false

true

false

# Grammar

## 7 Look at the table.

**NOTE**

We use passive voice to shift the focus of the sentence from the subject to the object.

Passive Voice and Active Voice	
Active Voice: the subject does the action <b>form:</b> subject + verb + object	Passive Voice: the subject receives the action <b>form:</b> <i>be</i> + past participle
Picasso painted <i>The Weeping Woman</i> in 1937.	<i>The Weeping Woman</i> was painted in 1937.
The novelist will finish writing at seven o'clock.	The writing will be finished at seven o'clock.
Passive verb phrases can also use modals such as <i>may, must, can, could, ought to, should, and, have to.</i> <b>form:</b> object + modal + <i>be</i> + past participle	
Active: The owner ought to close this art gallery.	Passive: This art gallery ought to be closed.

## 8 Rewrite the following sentences in the passive voice.

1. A Spanish novelist won this year's Nobel Prize in Literature.

**This year's Nobel Prize in literature was won by a Spanish novelist.**

2. We could have beaten the other team.

**The other team could have been beaten.**

3. I might finish the project before tomorrow's deadline.

**The project might be finished before tomorrow's deadline.**

4. Jay Reid should have written the script.

**The script should have been written by Jay Reid.**

# C

## Speaking

**Aim** Give polite criticism

### Vocabulary

1 Listen and number.  6-05 



3

bizarre



7

rhythm



2

feelings



1

unfashionable



4

contemporary



5

context



6

tone



8

lyrics

**2 Match the words with the definitions.**

- |                  |   |   |   |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| 1. bizarre       | • | • | a. the quality, sound, and strength when someone speaks |
| 2. rhythm        | • | • | b. confusing or strange                                 |
| 3. feelings      | • | • | c. the words of a song                                  |
| 4. unfashionable | • | • | d. one's beliefs or emotions                            |
| 5. contemporary  | • | • | e. a repeated pattern of sound                          |
| 6. context       | • | • | f. outdated; not stylish                                |
| 7. tone          | • | • | g. modern; related to the present                       |
| 8. lyrics        | • | • | h. the setting or background of something               |
-

## Authentic Conversation

3 Listen and fill in the blanks with the words you hear.  6-06 



Jada

So, did you like my recording?

To be honest, I thought it was 1. **bizarre**. The 2. **rhythm** was odd, and the 3. **lyrics** didn't make any sense.

That kind of hurts my 4. **feelings**, Dan. It's 5. **contemporary** music; it's supposed to be unique.

Sorry, I didn't mean to be rude. That sort of music isn't really something I know much about.

No, I think you might be right. Maybe the song could use some work.

If it helps, I thought your 6. **tone** was pretty good. And maybe I just didn't understand the 7. **context** of the story the song was trying to tell.



Dan

4 Listen again. Circle true or false.



1. Dan was impressed by Jada's song.
2. Jada seemed offended about what Dan said to her at first.
3. Jada is considering Dan's feedback.
4. Dan thought the song told a boring story.

true  
true  
true  
true

false  
false  
false  
false

# Expressions

## Phrases for giving constructive criticism

### 5 Look at the table.

Strong	Soft
I hate this kind of music.	This kind of music isn't really my cup of tea.
You are wrong because...	That's an interesting point, but...
The colors are too bright.	Isn't it a little bright?
Your song is too long.	If you made it a bit shorter, it would be even better!
Your design is outdated and unfashionable.	It's good, but how could you make it more contemporary?
The style of your painting is really bizarre.	The style is very unique.

### 6 Rewrite the criticisms to make them less strong.

1. Is that a new dress? It looks very strange. Your style is totally bizarre!

**Is that a new dress? It's very unique.**

2. This is your essay? It's way too short. You'll probably get an F if you turn this in.

**This is your essay? If you make it a bit longer, you'll get a better grade on it.**

3. Your picture is weird. It's colors are all mixed oddly. I hate abstract paintings.

**Your picture is very unique, but abstract paintings aren't my cup of tea.**

4. No, you're wrong. The best artists these days are living in Mexico.

**That's an interesting point, but I think the best artists are living in Mexico these days.**

# Speak Up

⑦ Follow the steps. Then work with a partner.

**STEP 1** Research online or look at the pictures below to find some artwork you dislike.



**STEP 2** Write down 3-4 reasons why you don't like the artwork, using strong comments.

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**STEP 3** Talk with a partner.

**STEP 4** Discuss how you can soften your comments.

# D

## Writing

**Aim** Write a critique of some artwork

### Vocabulary

1 Listen and number.



6-07



2

glance



4

compromise



1

absorbed  
(in something)



3

solo



8

soul



7

terrifying



5

colorful



6

tale

**2** Fill in the blank with the best vocabulary words.

1. My music teacher says my music lacks soul. He says I need to look deeper to play beautifully.
2. I don't think artists should compromise their artistic vision just to make money.
3. This book tells the tale of a beautiful princess and her white horse.
4. At a(n) glance, it looks normal. But, if you study it in detail, it becomes more unusual.
5. I went into the room, but he didn't notice me. He was totally absorbed in his work.
6. I just saw the latest horror movie. It was terrifying! I'm still shaking.
7. I used to play in a band, but these days I work mainly as a(n) solo artist.
8. Her paintings are so colorful. I really like the ones with rainbows.

## Grammar

### 3 Look at the table.

#### NOTE

When converting *It is said that* and *It is believed that* into active voice, start the sentence with *People*.

**Ex.** *People say you shouldn't trust a thin chef.*

Personal & Impersonal Passive	
Personal Passive: the sentence has a stated or implied actor, or "doer," the agent of the verb. signal words: <i>with, by</i>	Impersonal Passive: the sentence does not have a stated or implied actor signal phrases: <i>it is said that, it is believed that</i>
The artist's work is sometimes attacked by critics. (agent is stated)	It's said that you shouldn't trust a thin chef.
The artist's work is sometimes attacked in the review pages. (agent is implied)	It is believed that he drew it in 1989.



### 4 Read. Write **P** if it is personal passive, and **I** if it is impersonal passive.

1. It is thought that there are several undiscovered Picasso masterpieces hidden in people's houses.   I
2. Picasso's self-portrait was sold for a record \$4 million at Christie's Auction house last July.   P
3. Monet's *Woman with a Parasol* is widely considered to be one of the finest examples of Impressionism.   P
4. It can be said of *Middlemarch* that it is the greatest English novel though not the greatest novel in English.   I

## Writing Guide

### ⑤ Look at the table.

Structure of a Critique Essay	
Introduction	Clearly describe the subject of your critique and give a brief overview of the aspects about it that you will cover.
Description	Describe the subject you're critiquing in detail.
Evaluation	Form ideas about the value and / or assess the subject. Give your opinion.
Counter-Critiques	Address arguments you predict people may make about your critique.
Conclusion	Summarize your critique. Present your overall impression of the subject.

**6** Read. Put the essay in the correct order (1-5) and label each paragraph's purpose. Then listen and check.  6-08 

Overall, this was a strong performance from an artist who has just started doing solo work. If he can strengthen his lyrics, there's a good chance he could become as successful as he was with his former band.

**5** conclusion

The performance is part of Adamson's first solo tour. He's promoting his new album, *Human Conditions*. The 32-year-old is an experienced rock star and has sold millions of records with his former band. But this tour is the first time his fans get to see him alone on stage.

**2** description

Perhaps the biggest weakness for Adamson is his lyrics. While he did sing with lots of feeling, most of the words to his songs were simplistic, predictable, and boring. The lack of depth was by far the most disappointing aspect of his work.

**4** counter critiques

As for his solo skills, there is no doubt Adamson is extremely charismatic and energetic. He sings his songs with real passion, and there is a certain honesty to his performance that the fans adore.

**3** evaluation

Deray Adamson stands on the stage. Thousands of fans scream his name. He seems not to notice, completely absorbed in the sounds coming from his guitar. This scene looks as though it has been taken from the 1960s, the golden age of rock 'n' roll. But actually, it was last Thursday, at The Hope and Anchor: a top-billing music venue.

**1** introduction

# Writing

## 7 Follow the steps to write a review.

**STEP 1** Research online OR choose a work of art (a painting, film, book, or poem) that you are familiar with.

**STEP 2** Write a review on a separate piece of paper.  
Follow the Writing Guide to structure your review.  
Use soft language and give constructive criticism.

**STEP 3** Use the checklist to check your work.

**STEP 4** Share your review with a partner. Discuss.

Checklist	
1. I chose a work of art.	
2. I described the art.	
3. I evaluated the art.	
4. I used constructive criticism.	
5. I addressed counter-critiques.	
6. I summarized my review.	



# E

## Project

**Aim** Give a presentation about a work of art

### Video

- 1 Look at the pictures. What do you think the video will be about? On a separate piece of paper, write a short summary of what you think will happen. Then talk with a partner.
- 2 Watch the video. Number the pictures in order.

Video  
6



**3 Watch again. Circle the words you hear.**

Video  
6

striking	classic	glance	terrifying
contemporary	lyrics	controversial	media

**4 Watch again. Circle the answers.**

Video  
6

1. Why is the art piece called "Consumerisn't"?  
a. It's Canadian.      b. It creates stuff.       c. It destroys consumer items.      d. It's contemporary art.
2. What does Trisha think Consumerisn't means?  
a. That we are all consumers.       b. That we shouldn't be defined by our things.  
c. That everyone is able to be an artist.      d. That charities are helpful to artists.
3. What is the reason they return to the gallery?  
a. to find Ryan's stuff      b. to open an art exhibit  
c. to meet the artist       d. to be interviewed
4. What did Ryan mean when he said, "Wow, you really suffer for your art."  
a. The art isn't created with much feeling.      b. Miles makes commercial art.  
 c. The art really impacts Miles.      d. Miles only makes destructive art.

5 Watch again. Fill in the blanks with the words you hear.



1. And here we have a classic abstract work. This was painted in 1952 by...

2. People say "You are what you eat."

3. He's supposed to be destroying his possessions for a contemporary art thing.



4. Listen, guys, I have a favor to ask. I think I can guess what you're going to say.



# Century Skills

## This is Art

Critical Thinking

Creativity

**6** Talk with a partner. Choose a famous painting, movie, or song. Fill in the table.

Title	
Creator(s)	
Creation Date	
Reason(s) it's popular	
Interesting facts	
Why people like it	
Why people dislike it	

7 Write a presentation about the artwork you chose in 6. Write two things you liked and two things you disliked.

Ex.

### It's a Wonderful Life (1946)

**Directed by** Frank Capra

**Written by** Frances Goodrich, Albert Hackett, and Frank Capra

**Starring** James Stewart and Donna Reed

**Trivia** It's based on a short story by Philip Van Doren Stern.



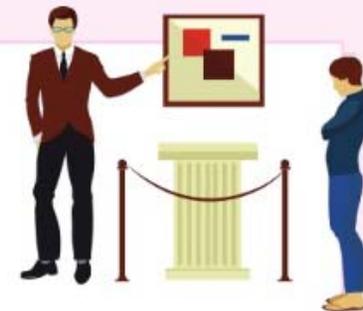
This classic Christmas film is a feel-good movie with an amazing script and cast. I love the film and watch it with my friends every year.

Some critics have found the work to be overly long, and some say it's edited poorly. In fact, when the film was first released, it failed to

turn a profit. Even after five Oscar nominations and one win, the film couldn't make any money—causing the film production studio to go bankrupt.

Luckily, money doesn't determine the value of great art.

### MY CRITIQUE



8 Share your presentation with your class.