

GUGGENHEIM BILBAO

Slow Gazing

[Script for slow, mindful looking at the works of art in the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao]

Below you will find a number of steps for mindful looking at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao works of art. The whole experience will take you 15 minutes, but you can make it longer or shorter, as you wish.

If you feel uncomfortable standing, there are benches in many of the Museum's galleries. You can also ask for a portable folding stool at the coatroom.

GETTING READY

1. Pick a work of art. You do not need to know the artist or the title. Just choose a work with which you feel a connection or about which you feel curious. If you are familiar with it already, use this experience to observe it in a different way.
2. Find a place to stand (sit) near the work of art you have picked. We suggest looking at it from a distance, standing out of other visitors' way.
3. Find a comfortable, upright position (standing or sitting), so that you can stay like that for a while.

4. Slow down, turn off your autopilot and switch to the "being mode" for a mindful experience with art.
5. If you get distracted by thoughts, footsteps, or voices, kindly return to the work of art. Take a long, slow, and careful look to continue discovering it.

MINDFUL OBSERVATION

6. Close or half-close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to transition from what you were just doing to the Slow Gazing experience. Let the air fill your body as you focus on how you inhale and exhale.
7. Open your eyes and look at the work of art you have picked, from the edges to the center. Feel its size, whether large or small. Feel its dimensions and yours.

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What do you feel? Vastness, hugeness, constriction, tightness...? All emotions are okay. How would it feel to make a work of art this size?

8. Now move on to the work as a whole: shape, colors, materials, figures represented (if any)... Close your eyes for a moment, picture this vision in your mind, and take a few deep breaths.
9. Open your eyes or keep them close. Connect to the aspects of the work of art you find most salient. How do you feel about color? And the materials used by the artist? You may feel happy or restless, perhaps warm or cold... You may experience a sense of calm or agitation; you may feel impulsive or serene...
10. Take a few more breaths and take your time to explore the work of art. Do it slowly, carefully, mindfully. This is not about identifying the more detail, but rather letting your eyes wander and stopping where you feel a connection. You may come another day and see something different.
11. Here are a few more questions to help you with your Slow Gazing: What does the piece convey to you? What do you think the piece is about? What is the artist trying to say? If you had to think of a title, what would it be? Can you connect this work of art to something in your life or something you are interested in?
12. We are almost done. Close or half-close your eyes for a moment and focus on your body and mind. How do you feel? How does your body feel? What are you thinking about? Maybe you feel more focused, more connected, more attentive, lighter, softer...
13. Now open your eyes and take a look at the rest of the gallery, other visitors, and so on. How would you describe your Slow Gazing experience. Do you think this way of looking at things could be helpful in other circumstances?

BEFORE LEAVING

We hope you have enjoyed your Slow Gazing experience. You can stay in the same gallery, looking at the same work of art for as long as you want, or you can head for a different room. If you are planning to stay in the Museum, we suggest you try to maintain this calm state, taking time to breathe and transforming your visit to the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao into a mindful art experience.