

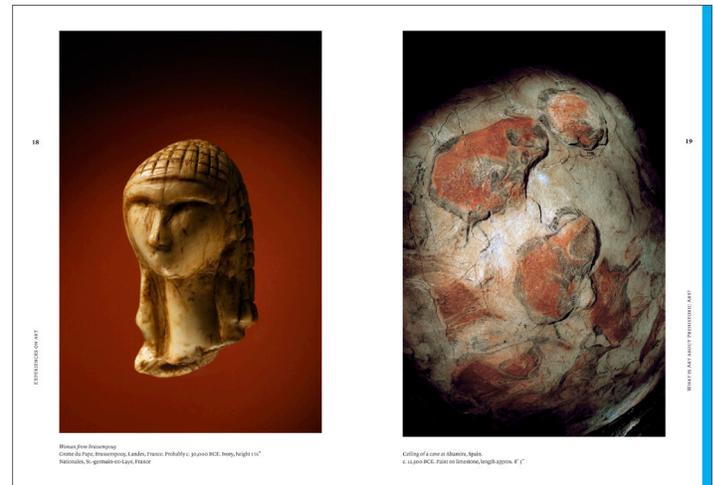
## Experiences of Art

### *Reflections on Masterpieces*

By Hilda Werschkul

*Experiences of Art: Reflections on Masterpieces* explores famous works of art through the collaborative insights of a professor with her students. The book examines these masterpieces through themes ranging from the origins of creativity in prehistoric art; the meaning and significance of classicism in art history since antiquity; the visual expression of concepts of style in Renaissance art theory; a philosophical investigation of the 18th century as both a period of rationalism and anti-rationalism; to the dialectic of autonomous self-expression and worldly, critical engagement in modern art reaching back to van Gogh.

*Experiences of Art: Reflections on Masterpieces* is the creative brainchild of an experiment in online learning. From 2008 to 2010, Hilda Werschkul



created and taught a two-semester online course for the introduction to the history of art (Perspectives in World Art and Design), to be run as a pilot project at Parsons School of Design at The New School University in New York. She wrote each of the online lecturettes, which were drawn from Stokstad's *Art History* textbook (3rd edition). Discussion board sessions, from which these student quotations were taken, were held each week, designed around a theme for each period outlined in the lecturettes. The outcome of the discussion board sessions proved to be overwhelmingly fruitful, providing fresh and thoughtful insights. After assessing the course outcome, Werschkul's first decision was to write her own textbook, but further reflection led her to consider creating a book that would narrate selected themes in the history of art, designed around her students' quotes.

#### Author

**Hilda Werschkul** holds a doctorate in art history from Columbia University. Her areas of specialization lie in drawing theory since the Renaissance as well as Post-War American art. *Experiences of Art: Reflections on Masterpieces* draws upon over ten years of teaching experience devoted to the introductory survey course.