

# Reading Images

Photographs are a visual form of communication  
Here are a few tips for 'reading' photographs

## Describe the photograph:

- Is it a photograph, video or new media? Describe what you can see and where is it within the image/film. Is it one piece of art of a series or a whole show?
- What is the image of? Can you describe what you see? Is the image taken inside or outside? How does this affect your reading of the image? Is there anything that is not shown?
- Composition – where are things placed within the image? Can you describe the light in the image? Is it natural or artificial? Describe the colour in the photograph. Is it light or dark? What kind of feeling, atmosphere or mood does it create?
- Think about the position of the photographer when taking the photo - how close are they to the subject? Near or far away? Why might the artist have chosen to make the work in this way? What effect does this have?
- Describe the size of the work. How is the work presented? Is it framed, hung on the wall? Does this affect what you think of the work? What if it was bigger or smaller?
- Does the work have sound? How does the sound add to or change your reading of the work? Is the sound an integral part of or an addition to the visual artwork?

## The artists' idea - you might want to read the description of the work first:

- What is the artist trying to say? Is the work titled? Does the title affect the meaning of the work? Are they addressing a subject or issue? Have they succeeded in communicating their idea?
- Is the artist presented one piece, a series or a whole exhibition
- What do you think about their idea? What does it make you think about, how does it make you feel?
- Do you like the work? Why? Do you dislike the work? Why?