

****First Question First** Guide Sheet**

Before you look at an artwork, prepare. Have your journal open, your favorite pen ready, your cup of tea or coffee next to you. And have this ****First Question First**** guide in reach. Read it over to help set your focus.

Open to an artwork and . . .

- 1) Write down your first thoughts, your immediate reactions to this image. Keep writing as long as you can. Ask yourself what may be behind your reaction.
- 2) **If you get stuck**, consider the following:
 - Do you immediately feel attracted or interested in this work? Fascinated?
 - Do you feel repulsed or angered? Apathetic or intrigued?
 - What is it about this work that spurs this reaction?
 - What specific feelings, experiences, places, or people does this work bring up for you?
 - Does it evoke possibilities, dreams, or private desires?
 - How does it reflect *you* to *you*?
- 3) Use your “Emotions” sheet whenever necessary.
- 4) Pay attention to how your body is responding. Do you tighten anywhere, relax anywhere? Do you feel tears welling up or a smile emerging? Write about this.
- 5) Remember, this journal is a place where your feelings, your experience with loss and grief take precedence. No one but you will read this. This is your refuge. It is only up to you to respect your own reality, to write to yourself and for yourself as honestly as you can. To release what’s inside yearning to be acknowledged and wholly felt.