

Visual Art–VOCABULARY

ABSTRACT	art that does not attempt to represent the appearance of objects, real or imaginary. The artist takes an image or object and changes its appearance by leaving out details, simplifying or rearranging its parts to express his or her idea or feeling. Abstraction can occur in varying degrees, perhaps to the extent where you may not recognize the subject in the final product. Abstract work with no recognizable subject matter is called non-objective art.
CANVAS	a strong cloth which, since the Renaissance, many artists have used as a surface for painting.
COLLAGE	a work of art created by arranging and gluing assorted materials onto a flat surface.
COLORS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complementary - colors which fall directly opposite each other on the color wheel. Example: blue/orange.• Primary - Blue, yellow, red. Colors from which all other colors are derived. Primary colors can not be mixed from other colors• Secondary colors - colors made by mixing equal proportions of any two primary colors. Example: red + blue = violet• Cool - blues, greens.• Warm - reds, yellows.
COMMISSION	the hiring of one or more artists to create a work of art.
COMPOSITION	the placement of forms, shapes, colors, and light and dark areas in a work of art. Artists use composition to direct the viewer's eye to the most important elements of a work of art.
CONTOUR LINES	outside and inside lines defining an image or shape.
DEPTH	the illusion of space in a picture plane.
ELEMENTS OF ART	the visual "tools" artists use to create art. The categories include line, color, shape, space, light and texture.
FOCAL POINT	an area of an artwork that first attracts and usually sustains the viewer's attention.
FOREGROUND	in a scene or artwork, the part that seems closest to the viewer.
GEOMETRIC	shapes and forms related to mathematical principles. Geometric shapes include circles, squares, rectangles, triangles and ellipses. Geometric forms include cones, cubes, cylinders, slabs, pyramids and spheres.
GENRE	subjects and scenes depicting everyday life.
GESTURE	the implication of motion in a shape.

HUE	refers to the common name of the color such as red or green.
HORIZON LINE	a level line where water or land seems to end and the sky begins. It is usually on the eye level of the observer. If the horizon cannot be seen, its placement may be imagined based on the placement of trees, grasses, mountains and the like.
ILLUSTRATION	work of art created to accompany a story or other literary work in print. Illustrations usually appear in reproduced form in books, magazines and newspapers.
IMPASTO	thick, opaque paint applied with a brush, knife or fingers, creating various textural features on the surface of the painting.
IMPRESSIONISM	a style of painting that seeks to represent the momentary effects of sunlight on color. The main interest was in depicting contemporary life in a new objective manner by rendering an "impression" of what the eye sees in one particular moment rather than what the mind knows to be there.
LANDSCAPE	the scenery of an inland area, a painting or drawing of the land or natural environment.
LITHOGRAPH	a print made by drawing on a flat, porous limestone with greasy material, then applying greasy ink which adheres only to the drawn lines. Dampened paper is applied to the stone and is rubbed over with a special press to make the final print.
LUMINISM	1850-1870 style of painting characterized by emphasizing light and transparent veils of colored atmosphere in landscapes and seascapes. (Associated with Hudson River School artists)
MEDIUM	the material used to make a work of art. Examples include oil, watercolor, pencil, pen and ink, tempera, and pastel.
MURAL	a large painting or artwork, generally designed for and created on the wall or ceiling of a public building.
MUSEUM	A place where collections of objects, artifacts, and art are on display and are protected.
NEGATIVE SPACE	the area surrounding a shape, often seen as a void.
OPAQUE	ability of paint to cover over a surface. Not seen through.
ORGANIC	having a quality that resembles living things, also referred to as biomorphic, free flowing, non-geometric.
PALETTE	a tray or board on which colors of paint are mixed. Also, the set of colors used by an artist in a painting.

PERSPECTIVE	a technique for creating the illusion of depth on a 2-D surface.
PLEIN AIR	French for "in the open air," in art, it means sketching and/or painting out-of-doors.
PORTRAIT	a picture of a person or images that portray a person
PROPORTION	the relationship of one object to another in size, shape, number or degree.
REALISM	(1850-1900) a style in which an artists try to create an image that resembles the natural world.
SEASCAPE	artwork that shows a scene of the sea, ocean, large lake or coastline.
SHAPE	the outline of a figure or form. Shapes can be geometric (rectangles, triangles, and circles, etc.) or organic (irregular).
STILL LIFE	an arrangement of fruit, flowers, food or assorted objects.
STUDY	a drawing that may be used to try out an idea or plan out another work.
SYMBOL	something that stands for something else; especially a letter, figure or sign that represents a real object or idea.
TEMPERA	a type of paint made from a mixture of powdered pigments (colors), egg yolk, and distilled water. Tempera paintings are usually done on wooden boards.
TEXTURE	the way something feels to the touch. Texture can be real, as in the smoothness of a bronze sculpture, or the bumpiness of thick oil paint on a canvas. Texture can also be implied or imagined, as in painted illusions of the softness of a kitten's fur, or the prickly quality of hay.
THEME	the main idea underlying the subject in a work of art.
TRANSPARENT	see through.
TROMPE L'OEIL	French phrase meaning, " fool the eye." Trompe l'oeil artists paint images designed to trick people into thinking that they are real.
VALUE	the measurement of light and darkness in a work of art.
WATERCOLOR	a type of paint made from a mixture of powdered pigments (colors) with a binder and water. Watercolor painting usually transparent, meaning that you can see through it to the surface beneath. Opaque paints (paints that you cannot see through) that are mixed with water are called gouache .