

## KBCC Art Term Glossary

**Abstract art** – Artwork that does not attempt to represent an accurate depiction of visual reality but instead uses shapes, colors, forms, and gestural marks to achieve its effect. (See also: *non-representational art*, *non-objective art*, *Abstract expressionism*)

**Abstract expressionism** – Term applied to new forms of abstract art developed by American painters in 1940s and 1950s, often characterized by gestural brush-strokes or mark-making, and the impression of spontaneity.

**abstraction** – process of reduction or simplification of an object to basic forms, or exaggeration of certain forms.

**academy** – an institution established for the training of artists.

**achromatic** – a color (such as black or white) that has no hue.

**Action painting** – Using broad gestures to drip or pour paint onto a pictorial surface. Associated with mid-twentieth century American Abstract Expressionists, such as Jackson Pollack.

**additive method** – (drawing): the technique of drawing by adding media to the surface or ground. (sculpture): see also *modeling*. A process of working directly with a plastic medium by hand to build up form and shape it. (ex: clay and wax) Opposed to *subtractive method*.

**additive mixing** – refers to a mixing of light of distinct wavelength or color

**additive primaries** – (or light primaries) red-orange light, blue-violet light and green light

**afterimage** – The visual impression that remains after the initial stimulus is removed. Typically, the afterimage appears as a likeness of the initial image, except that each of its colors is the complement to those in the initial image.

**allegory** – Allegory in art is when the subject of the artwork, or the various elements that form the composition, is used to symbolize a deeper moral or spiritual meaning

**allover painting** – Painting that treats the whole surface of the canvas in a uniform manner, in contrast to suggesting a compositional center or main focal point. The term is often applied to the work of Jackson Pollock and the Color Field painters.

**alterpiece** – A painted or carved panel or ensemble of panels placed at the back of or behind and above an altar. Contains religious imagery, often specific to the place of worship for which it was made, that viewers can look at during liturgical ceremonies or private devotions.

**analogous colors** – Any two or more colors that are next to each other on the *color wheel* and are closely related, sometimes called adjacent colors. (Ex: blue, blue-green, and green all share the common color blue)

**appropriation** – Term used to describe the practice of some artists of adopting images in their entirety from other works of art or from visual culture for use in their own art. The act of recontextualizing the appropriated image allows the artist to critique both it and the time and place in which it was created.

**arch** – In architecture, a curved structural element that spans an open space. Built from wedge-shaped stone blocks called voussoirs, which, when placed together and held at the top by a trapezoidal keystone.

**armature** – a skeleton or framework to give rigid internal support to a sculpture. Often made with armature wire.

**artifact** – An object, made by humans for a practical purpose, remaining from a particular period.

**assemblage** – An artwork created by gathering and manipulating two- and/or three-dimensional found objects.

**asymmetry** – when one side of the composition does not reflect the design of the other. Opposite of *symmetry*. Asymmetrical *balance* organizes the composition into unequal sides while retaining *harmony*.

**atmospheric perspective** - A *perspective* device based on the observation that as objects recede in space, light fades, colors dull, and details become obscured.

**automatism** – A technique in which artists abandon the usual intellectual control over their work. It can be mechanical, random, or by unconscious free association.

**avant-garde** – A term derived from the French military word meaning “before the group,” or “vanguard.” Avant-garde denotes those artists or concepts of a strikingly new, experimental, or radical nature for the time.

**axis** – an implied line which runs through a work, usually the center, to which other elements in the work refer; an implied division of space producing *balance* and movement of pictorial elements

**background** – The more recessive portions of a pictorial *composition* within which objects in the *foreground* are placed.

**balance** – A principle of design, balance refers to the character of the visual and/or actual equilibrium found in an artwork. Implied balance refers to the illusion of balance, while actual balance refers to the relation to gravity.

**biomorphic** – resembling or suggesting the forms of living organisms or shapes found in nature. Often opposed to *geometric* forms. See *organic*.

**blend** - to apply media uniformly, with imperceptible tonal transitions.

**blind contour (drawing)** – describing in a slow, careful manner the outer *contour* of the subject without looking at the drawing surface.

**blind gesture (drawing)** – Describing in rapid and energetic fashion the gestural movement and thrust of a pose without looking at the drawing surface.

**blocking in** – Laying down the initial statement of a picture by a broad indication of line, color, or tone.

**broken outline** – An outline of form that consists of a series of non-continuous, separate line phrases rather than an uninterrupted, continuous line. See also *implied line*.

**burnished** – to make shiny or lustrous especially by rubbing. To rub with a tool (a burnisher) to make smooth or for turning an edge.

**cartoon** – 1. a full-scale drawing of a design that will be executed in another medium, such as wall painting, tapestry, or stained glass. 2. A simplified or exaggerated drawing, often satirical. 3. Drawings that tell a story in a series, frames, or panels.

**cast (sculpture)** - to form (molten metal, liquid plaster, etc.) into a 3D shape by pouring into a mold. (Ex: lost-wax casting)

**cast shadow** – The tonal *value* created when an object blocks light; a dark area cast upon a surface by a body intercepting the light from its source.

**Central visual ray** - (relating to perspective) This is your center line of sight – it points to what you are looking at. The central visual ray is always perpendicular to the picture plane

**characteristics** – The visual and/or physical properties or nature inherent in a given shape, form, line, color, etc.; may also refer to an emotional and/or psychological aspect.

**chiaroscuro** – An Italian word designating the *contrast* of dark and light in a painting, drawing, or print. Chiaroscuro creates spatial depth and *volumetric* forms through gradations in the intensity of light and shadow.

**chromatic** – Relating to or having *color*. (Contrast with *achromatic*)

**Classicism** – Art that makes reference to ancient Greek or Roman style

**collage** – The technique of creating a pictorial composition in two dimensions or very low relief by gluing paper, fabrics, or any natural or manufactured materials to a canvas or panel.

**color** – The visual perception of the quality of light reflected from the surface of objects. Pigmented colors absorb certain light wavelengths while reflecting those that define their *hues*.

**color wheel** – A circular diagram of colors in which *primary*, *secondary*, and sometimes *intermediate colors*, are displayed as an aid to color identification, choosing, and mixing.

**complimentary color** – One of a pair of colors usually considered to be in extreme contrast to one another. The colors lying opposite each other on the *color wheel*.

**composition** – the plan, placement, or arrangement of elements within an artwork.

**concept** – an underlying idea, thought, or understanding

**Conceptual Art** – artworks for which the concept (or idea) behind the artwork, and the means of producing it, are more important than the finished work itself. Often refers to artworks from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s.

**Cone of vision** – The circular area (roughly 45 to 60 degree angle) where you can see things clearly. Drawing objects outside the cone of vision may result in distortions.

**construction** – the way in which something is put together

**conte' crayon** – drawing media originally made in a limited range of earth tones from pigment and gum binder compressed into small rectangular drawing sticks.

**content** – When discussing a work of art, the term can include all of the following: its subject matter; the ideas contained in the work; the artist's intention; or its meaning for the beholder.

**context** – The interrelated conditions in which something exists or occurs.

**continuous line** – A line that expresses the subject matter in a long, unbroken line.

**contrapposto** – the *classical convention* of representing standing human figures with opposing alternations of tension and relaxation on each side of a central axis.

**contour line** – a line that describes the boundaries of a *form*.

**contrast** – (synonym: conflict, opposition, tension) occurs when there is a visual difference between things or qualities being compared; degrees of dynamic imbalance between elements of a composition which draw the eye and demand resolution (*dominance*) to establish *unity* and overall *balance* in the design as a whole.

**convention** – an established or traditional practice, technique, or device

**converge** – to meet in a point or line; incline toward each other, as lines that are not parallel.

**cross-contour line** – Line that describes an object's surface topography, emphasizing the *volumetric* shape of an object.

**cross hatching** – A technique by which *value* areas are created by building up areas of crossing linear strokes known as *hatch marks*.

**curvilinear** – consisting of, or contained by, a curved line or lines

**diagonal recession** - objects are arranged at an *oblique angle* to the *picture plane* so as to appear to recede into *pictorial space*

**diagrammatic** – a drawing having primarily a utilitarian and informative function, devoid of embellishment or extraneous elements

**diminution** – objects will appear smaller the further away they are from the viewer

**diptych** – two panels of equal size, usually decorated with paintings or *reliefs*, and hinged together

**dome** – A rounded vault, usually over a circular space.

**dominance** – occurs when certain elements have a greater visual strength than others in a *composition*. As a design principle, dominance resolves *contrast* or tension and integrates a work into a unified whole.

**dynamic** – opposite of static, a condition of movement and energy

**earthenware** – a low-fired, opaque ceramic ware, employing humble clays that are naturally heat-resistant and remain porous after firing unless glazed.

**economy of means** – A way of stating the idea efficiently by simplifying form and reducing distracting excess. “Less is more”

**elements of design** – the basic devices available to the artist for composing a work of art including: *line, value, space, form, texture, pattern, color, etc.*

**emphasis** – An artist’s way of stressing or bringing attention to a part of an artwork. Creating emphasis is to make something stand out from the other elements around it. Also can be referred to as a focal point.

**encaustic** – A painting medium using pigments mixed with hot wax

**engraving** – An *intaglio* printmaking process of inscribing an image, design, or letters onto a metal or wood surface from which a print is made. An engraving is usually drawn with a sharp implement directly onto the surface of the plate. Also: the print made from this process.

**etching** – an *intaglio* printmaking process in which a metal plate is coated with acid-resistant resin and then inscribed with a stylus in a design, revealing the plate below. The plate is then immersed in acid, and the exposed metal of the design is eaten away by the acid. The resin is removed, leaving the design etched permanently into the metal and the plate ready to be inked, wiped, and printed.

**Expressionism** – an approach to art that emphasizes extreme subjectivism and self-exploration on the part of the artist. This process necessitates a breakdown of formalist conventions.

**expressive** – dealing with feelings and emotions and the artist’s inner vision, as opposed to objective observation or external phenomena.

**Extended gesture** – a drawing that begins with a quick gesture sketch but that is expanded upon over an extended period of time.

**eye-level** – the distance from the ground to the artist’s eye. Your eye level changes when you sit or stand and therefore changes your perspective.

**façade** – the face or front wall of a building

**figure-ground** – the relationship of the positive object or form within its *background* or surrounding space.

**figurative** – Art that represents the human figure or other recognizable objects as visual symbols in contrast with *abstract* or *non-representational art*.

**focal point** – a center of activity, attraction or attention; a point of concentration on a picture plane or object.

**foreground** – a position of prominence; the part of a scene or representation nearest to the viewer; usually correlating to the lower portion of a pictorial representation. Opposing the *background*.

**foreshortening** – a form that is viewed in such a way that its normal proportions visually appear shortened or compressed; also said to be seen in *perspective*.

**form** – 1. One of the *elements of design*. The overall 3D volume and structure of an object, the complete configuration of its mass. 2. The manner in which the artist presents his/her idea, i.e. a product of organization, design, composition, and manipulation of materials and techniques. 3. To form: to make, mold, construct, or formulate as in an idea.

**formalism** – An approach to art that stresses certain rules of composition and order regardless of the degree of representation; a rational, intellectual attitude is emphasized often in an attempt to define the ideal. It is often an attempt to express the universal rather than the personal.

**format** – the working area or space of a composition

**found object** – A natural or man-made object (or fragment) found or bought by an artist and kept because of some intrinsic interest the artist sees in it.

**fresco** – a mural painting technique that involves painting with water-based paint directly onto wet plaster so that the paint becomes an integral part of the plaster

**frontality** – 1. Sculpture: a schematic composition of the front view that is complete without lateral movement. 2. Painting: the depiction of an object, figure, or scene in a plane parallel to the picture plane.

**function** – an activity for which an object is specifically designed.

**genre** – A category of artistic, musical or literary composition characterized by a particular style, form, or content.

**genre painting** – A term used to loosely categorize paintings depicting scenes of everyday life, including (among others) domestic interiors, parties, inn scenes, and street scenes.

**geometric (shape or line)** – Based on straight lines, angles, and g designed curves. Created by using rulers, compasses, and triangles. Geometric forms have the appearance of being designed by humans even if they can be found in nature.

**gesso** – A preparatory coating that can be applied to the surface of a drawing support such as paper, wood panel, or canvas.

**gesture drawing** - A quick, energetic drawing that attempts to capture the essential gesture or element of a model's pose.

**glazing** – In ceramics, an outermost layer of vitreous liquid (glaze) that, upon firing, renders the ware waterproof and forms a decorative surface. In painting, a technique used with oil media in which a transparent layer of paint (glaze) is laid over another, usually lighter, painted or glazed area. In architecture, the process of filling openings in a building with windows of clear or stained glass.

**ground** – The surface on which the artist works; often a preparatory coating applied prior to drawing, which would be referred to as a “prepared ground.”

**grayscale** – A sequential, evenly stepped series of tones from white to black.

**Happening** – An art form developed by Allan Kaprow in the 1960's, incorporating performance, theater, and visual images. A Happening was organized without a specific narrative or intent; with audience participation, the event proceeded according to chance and individual improvisation.

**harmony** – a principle of design, harmony is a consistent or orderly arrangement of the visual elements of a composition creating a pleasingly unified whole. Harmony is traditionally unity, balanced proportion, and pleasing order.

**hatching** – building areas of *value* using adjacent, parallel linear strokes known as hatch marks.

**hieratic** – highly stylized, severe, and detached, often in relation to a strict religious tradition

**hieroglyph** – Picture writing; words and ideas rendered in the form of pictorial symbols.

**highlight** – The lightest spots of areas in a drawing or painting; the areas receiving the most illumination; the application of light-colored media over a darker medium or *ground*.

**horizon line** – An imaginary line in the distance where earth and sky appear to meet and toward which receding forms appear to diminish in size. Also considered the vanishing line.



**hue** – The name of any color as found in its pure state in the spectrum or rainbow, or that aspect of any color.

**icon** – 1. An image: representation; a simile or symbol 2. An image representing a sacred figure or event in the Byzantine (later the Orthodox) Church. Icons are venerated by the faithful, who believe their prayers are transmitted through them to God.

**Iconoclasm** – The banning and/or destruction of images, especially *icons* and religious art.

**Iconography** – 1. The imagery within an artwork. 2. Identifying and studying the subject matter and *conventional* symbols in works of art.

**Illumination** – A painting on paper or parchment used as an illustration and/or decoration in a manuscript or album. Usually richly colored, often supplemented by gold and other precious materials. Also: the technique of decorating manuscripts with such paintings.

**Illusionistic space** – The pictorial representation of three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface.

**Implied line** – A suggested or invisible line. A line whose direction or vector continues beyond where the line stops; line that relies on the viewer to conceptually complete the movement the line suggests.

**Impasto** - An area of thick paint, or texture, in a painting.

**Installation art** – Mixed-media constructions or assemblages usually designed for a specific place and for a temporary period of time.

**Intaglio** – Any form of printmaking in which the image is produced by incising into the printing plate and where it is the incised line of area that holds the ink to create the image.

**Intensity** – (synonym: chroma, purity, brightness, saturation). The relative degree of the purity of a color. A fully intense color is called a *hue*, i.e. it is 100% pure with nothing added to degrade or change it.

**Intermediary color** – A color is located between a primary and a secondary color on the color wheel.

**kiln** – An oven designed to produce enough heat for the baking, or firing, of clay, for the melting of glass used in enamel work, and for the fixing of vitreous paint on stained glass.

**kinetic art** – Art that depends on motion for its effects.

**kitsch** - German word for trash, used in English to describe particularly cheap, vulgar, and sentimental forms of popular and commercial culture.

**line** – A mark made by a tool as it moves across a surface or *ground*; distinguished from its background because of a shift in *value*. (See also: *contour line*, *cross-contour line*, *implied line*, *outline*).

**linear perspective** – A drawing system based on the premise that all parallel lines appear to converge as they recede in space.

**local color** – The true color of an object or a surface as seen in typical daylight, rather than its color as seen through atmosphere or interpreted by the taste or imagination of the artist. (ex: the local color of a lemon is yellow)

**luminous** – Refers to emitting or reflecting a steady, or glowing light.

**maquette** - a 3D sketch or model

**mark making** – refers to the lines and other marks use to make a drawing such as: *hatching*, *cross-hatching*, erasure marks, etc.

**mass** – a 3D form that occupies a volume of space. In drawing the artist, can create the illusion of mass by using heavy shading and large scale.

**Medium (pl. media)** – In works of art, the medium is the physical material used to make the artwork. (ex: graphite, charcoal, and ink are different kinds of media.)

**memento mori** – An artwork designed to remind the viewer of their mortality and of the shortness and fragility of human life.

**metamorphosis** – The action or process of changing in form or substance. The modification of organs or structure in form or function.

**Metaphor** – A figure of speech in which a word or a phrase that ordinarily designates on thing is used to designate another, inviting comparison. One thing conceived as representing another.

**Minimalism** – Extreme form of abstract art developed in the USA in the second half of the 1960's and typified by artworks made in very simple *geometric* shapes, often based on the square and rectangle.

**mixed media** – Mixed media is used to describe artworks made from a combination of different *media* or materials.

**model** – **1.** A preliminary construction from which something is copied or made. **2.** A person who poses for an artist.

**modeling** – **1.** A sculpture technique in which a 3D form is manipulated in a soft material such as clay. **2.** In drawing, the use of value to create the illusion of 3D form and space.

**modular** - Something constructed with (often repeated) standardized units or dimensions for flexibility and variety in use; based on a module.

**mold** – A hollow form for *casting* a fluid or plastic medium, such as clay, plaster, plastic, or molten metal.

**monochrome** – Monochrome means one color, so in relation to art, a monochrome artwork is one that includes only one color.

**mood** – An overall feeling or emotion which characterizes a work of art.

**monumentality** – relating to a monument; massive; highly significant; outstanding; very great.

**movement** – **1.** The use of deliberate visual pathways to help direct the viewer's attention to areas of particular interest. **2.** An art movement is an artistic trend or tendency seen in the intentions or works of a number of artists.

**multiple** – A series of identical art objects, usually a signed limited edition made specifically for selling.

**naturalism** – An approach to art that stresses careful observation in an analytic depiction of the real world.

**narrative image** – A picture that recounts an event drawn from a story, either factual or fictional.

**nave** – The central space of a church, two or three stories high and usually flanked by aisles.

**negative space** – The space surrounding a positive shape or solid; that which is not occupied or filled with an object.

**neutral** – A color which is neither warm nor cool. A chromatic neutral is a color of extremely low intensity, or saturation, and may appear warm or cool.

**newsprint** – An inexpensive paper made from wood pulp; used for printing newspapers and by art students for practice drawings.

**non-objective (art)** – Another way to describe *Abstract Art* or *non-representational art*.

**non-representational (art)** – Artwork that does not reference specific visual subject matter. (see *non-objective*)

**objective** – refers to a rendering of subject matter by the artist with a minimum of subjective interpretation; to see something as it is.

**oblique** – neither perpendicular nor parallel to a given line or surface; slanting, sloping.

**one-point perspective** – A form of linear perspective in which all lines (describing straight edges that go from points nearer to points farther) appear to meet at a single point on the horizon.

**opaque** – A surface that cannot be seen through.

**optical mixing** – The process by which the eyes perceive a third color by blending two bits of pure color placed next to each other in an image.

**order** – A system of proportions in Classical architecture that includes every aspect of the building's plan, elevation, and decorative system.

**organic (form)**– Based on forms found in nature, especially in the structure of plant and animal life. See also *biomorphic*.

**orthogonal** – Any line running back into the represented space of a picture perpendicular to the imagined picture plane.

**outline** – A line functioning as a tool of demarcation by tracing the outer edge of and thus enclosing shapes and separating the figure from its surrounding.

**overlapping** – referring to objects lying behind or in front of one another; useful in creating a sequence of visual objects in the depth dimension. Objects with continuous contour will be seen as lying in front, the form whose contour is interrupted will take the back position.

**painterly** – Refers to the application of paint in a 'loose' or less than controlled manner, resulting in the appearance of visible brushstrokes within the finished painting.

**palette** – A handheld or other support used by artists for the storage and mixing of paint during the process of painting. Also: the choice of a range of colors made by an artist in a particular work, or typical of his or her style.

**panorama** – A wide, unbroken view of an entire surrounding area. A picture or series of pictures representing a continuous scene either all at once or in a sequence.

**parallel lines** – Lines that never intersect are called parallel lines

**pattern** – An application of *rhythm* or *repetition*, such as the repeated motif in a wallpaper or textile design

**pedestal** – A platform or base supporting a sculpture or other monument. Also: the block found below the base of a Classical column serving to raise the entire element off the ground.

**Performance art** – Art for which the artist uses their body as the medium and performs an action or series of actions which become the artwork.

**perpendicular** – meeting a given line or surface at right angles

**perspective** – A means by which the artist suggests three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface. (Can include *linear perspective* including *one-point*, *two-point*, *etc.*, *atmospheric perspective*, intuitive perspective, and so on.)

**pieta** – A devotional subject in Christian religious art. After the Crucifixion the body of Jesus was laid across the lap of his grieving mother, Mary.

**pictorial space** – The created illusion of depth on a two-dimensional surface.

**picture plane** – **1.** The two-dimensional surface on which the artist works. **2.** Can also refer to an imaginary plane positioned between the artist and the subject.

**pigment** – The substance responsible for color in media.

**planar** – two-dimensional in quality... of, relating to, or lying in a *plane*.

**plane** – A flat, two-dimensional, continuous surface.

**plein air** – Refers to the practice of painting pictures outside.

**portrait** – A representational drawing, painting, or sculpture of an individual, focusing primarily on the face and head.

**positive space** – The figure(s) or object(s) or tangible thing(s) in a composition. That which *negative space* surrounds.

**primary colors** – The three colors from which all other colors theoretically can be mixed. The primaries of pigments are traditionally red, yellow, and blue, whereas the primaries of light are red, blue, and green.

**proportion** – The relative size of one part to the whole, or of one part to another.

**raku** – A type of ceramic made by hand, coated with a thick, dark glaze, and fired at a low heat. The resulting vessels are irregularly shaped and glazed and are highly prized for use in the Japanese tea ceremony.

**readymade** – A term used by Marcel Duchamp to describe an object from popular or material culture presented without further manipulation as an artwork.

**Realism** – Refers to a nineteenth century art movement characterized by subjects painted from everyday life in a naturalistic manner and also to artworks painted in a realistic, photographic way.

**reflected light** – Light that is not from a direct source, such as the sun or a lamp, but an indirect one, reflected from one surface onto another.

**relative value** – a value that matches a specific color or hue in lightness and/or darkness

**relic** – Venerated object or body part associated with a holy figure, such as a saint, and usually housed in a reliquary.

**relief sculpture** – Sculpture technique that involves raised forms from a *planar* surface. Includes high and low relief depending on the elevation from the *plane*.

**rendering** – The use of value to visually depict the patterns of light and shadow

**repetition** – using the same visual element over again within the same composition.

**representation** – an image, likeness, or reproduction in some manner of a thing.

**representational** – refers to a composition in which depiction of a real subject plays a prominent part; the work “represents” the subject.

**rhythm** – rhythm is the orderly repetition of visual elements or repetition in a marked pattern, which created flowing movement.

**sarcophagus** – A stone coffin. Often rectangular and decorated with *relief sculpture*.

**saturation** – The degree of purity of a color. A *hue* by definition has 100% saturation or is 100% pure. Synonyms: *intensity, chroma, brightness*

**scale** – The relative size of an object to another object or space. (includes object comparisons in representational spaces)

**sculpture-in-the-round** – Three-dimensional sculpture that to be viewed from all sides; freestanding. Opposite of *relief sculpture*.

**schematic** – a structural or procedural diagram

**secondary color** – The colors obtained by mixing equal amounts of two *primaries*, or lying halfway between two primaries on the color wheel. (*Subtractive mixing*: orange, purple, green)

**sfumato** – from the Italian word “smoke”, and refers to the softening or blurring of edges of a form within a drawing or painting.

**shading** – Using drawing tools to create a variation in tones

**shape** – The configuration of an object. As a visual element, shape usually refers to the 2D area of the figure within the picture plane, as opposed to *form*, which implies 3D *volume*, as well as surface area.

**sign** – an object, quality, or event whose presence or occurrence indicates the probable presence or concurrence of something else.

**sighting techniques** – techniques used to establish accurate proportions, angles, and the position of forms within a drawing.

**site-specific** – Refers to a work of art designed specifically for a particular location and that has an interrelationship with the location.

**sketch** – A quickly executed exploratory drawing often done as a form of notation or as a means of initiating a visual idea for later reference

**slip** – A mixture of clay and water applied to a ceramic object as a final decorative coat. Also: a solution that binds different parts of a vessel together, such as the handle and the main body.

**solid** – having or appearing to have three dimensions i.e. length, height, width.

**space** – An *element of art* that refers to the distance or area between, around, above, below, or within things. It can be described as two-dimensional or three dimensional; as flat, shallow, or deep; as open or closed; as positive or negative; and as actual, ambiguous, or illusory.

**spatial** – the aspect of an image or object having to do with space.

**spectrum** – a band of colors, as seen in a rainbow, produced by separation of the components of light by their different degrees of refraction according to wavelength.

**static** – without movement; pertaining to a fixed or still condition

**still life** – (pl. still lifes) A picture of inanimate objects, or a grouping of inanimate objects to be represented.

**stoneware** – A high-fired, vitrified, but opaque ceramic ware.

**structure** – The manner in which parts are arranged or combined to form a whole.

**structural drawing** – refers to the analysis and interpretation of complex forms in terms of basic shapes and forms such as ovals, rectangles, boxes, and cylinders.

**style** – An artist's characteristic manner of expression. Also, works of art by different artists may have certain features in common, which are said to be in a certain style. (ex: expressionism, rococo, surrealism, etc.)

**subtractive method** – In sculpture, a method of forming by removing materials from a larger mass. In drawing, a technique whereby pigment is removed from the surface or ground. (Contrast with *additive method*.)

**subtractive mixing** – refers to mixing of pigment or colored materials.

**surface** – the outer or topmost boundary or layer of an object.

**subjective** – Dealing with the opinions and artistic expression derived primarily from within the individual rather than from *objective* examination of the external world.

**support** – The backing, or foundation, on which media are applied; i.e., the paper, canvas, drawing board, etc. (see also *ground*)

**symbol** – Something representing something else by association, resemblance, or convention.

**symmetry** – The use of identical or similar compositional elements or units on either side of an axis. Ex: Mirror image.

**tactile** – relating to the sense of touch

**tapestry** - Multicolored decorative weaving to be hung on a wall or placed on furniture. Pictorial or decorative motifs are woven directly into the supporting fabric, completely concealing it.



**temperature** – One of the four color characteristics (hue, intensity, value, temperature) that refers to the relative feeling of warmth or coolness that a color evokes. Red, yellow, and orange are warm; violet, blue, and green are cool.

**temporality** – 1. The quality or state of being temporal, i.e. of or relating to time as distinguished from space. 2. Of or relating to the sequence of time or to a particular time.

**terra cotta** – A medium made from clay fired over a low heat and sometimes left unglazed. Also: the orange-brown color typical of this medium.

**tertiary color** – A color made by the mixture of one primary color with one secondary color. Also known as *intermediary* colors. (Ex: yellow-orange, red-orange, etc.)

**texture** – The *tactile* quality of a surface. The texture may be actual/physical or implied as in a photograph or collage.

**three-dimensional** - Having three dimensions; height, width, and depth. In a drawing, giving the illusion of depth.

**three-quarter view** – Observing or presenting a subject in a position between frontal and profile.

**thumbnail sketches** – To save time, energy, and materials, artists will work out compositions with small sketches before they start a project. Thumbnail refers to the sketch being small like a thumbnail, but is usually not drawn that small. Three/four inches are the usual size of a thumbnail sketch.

**time** – The period between two events or during which something exists or occurs.

**tint** – A hue or color mixed with white.

**tonality** – The feeling or mood that a specific organization of values in a work produces.

**tone** – The many value gradations in the value scale between black and white.

**tooth** - The physical texture of the drawing surface. The paper is said to have a coarse, medium, or fine-grain tooth.

**translucent** – allowing light, but not detailed images, to pass through; semitransparent. Cloudy.

**transparent** – having the property of being clear or allowing light to pass through it completely so that something behind it, or beyond it can be seen in detail.

**triptych** – An artwork made up of three panels. Traditionally, the panels may be hinged together in such a way that the side segments (wings) fold over the central area.

**trompe l'oeil** – A manner of representation in which artists faithfully describe the appearance of natural space and forms with the express intention of fooling the eye of the viewer, who may be convinced momentarily that the subject actually exists as three-dimensional reality.

**two-dimensional** – Having only two dimensions.

**unity** – a wholeness of a design. The degree of agreement existing among the elements of a design. Unity is the sense that all the parts of the work seem to belong together as one complete expression.

**undercut** – An overhang or protrusion of a relatively smooth plane that hinders removal of the mold. Undercuts must be worked around when mold making and casting.

**underdrawing** – A preliminary drawing used to establish the primary structural and proportional relationships over which progressive finishing layers of refinement are added.

**value** – The range of tones from light to dark or from white to black; all the shades of gray in between.

**value contrast** – The apparent visual influence of one value in close proximity to another, i.e. a light gray looks lighter next to a dark gray.

**value scale** – The graduated steps in tonal range from white through gray to black.

**vanishing point** – In perspective drawing, the imaginary point toward which parallel lines of a form appear to converge or vanish.

**variety** – variety is achieved through diversity or difference in size, number, color, position, form, texture, value or other aspects of the components in a work of art. Using a variety of forms adds vitality and intrigue to works of art.

**visual flow** – Implied movements within and through a composition. By using implied lines, shapes, repeating forms and values, the artist can create directional flow that moves throughout the picture.

**visual metaphor** – The use of graphic or pictorial symbols to convey ideas or concepts beyond their mere physical appearance.

**volume** – A quantity of space occupying three dimensions.

**volumetric** – of, relating to, or involving the measurement of volume.

**wash** – A pigmented solution that can be applied to create tonal gradations.

**weight** – Either the actual (physical) or the apparent (visual or compositional) heaviness of an object or element.

**woodcut** – A print made by cutting a design in a block of wood, also called a woodblock print. The ink is transferred from the raised surfaces to paper.

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