

Vocabulary Terms

1. Actual texture - A surface that *can be experienced* through the sense of touch (as opposed to a surface visually stimulated by the artist).
2. Aesthetic – Used to describe something as visually-based, beautiful, or pleasing in appearance and to the senses. Aesthetics is a term developed by philosophers during the 18th and 19th centuries and is also the academic study of beauty and taste in art.
3. Allegory - An image or story that refers to a related or overarching concept such as good or evil.
4. Appropriation - The act of borrowing imagery or forms to create something new.
5. Atmospheric perspective - The illusion of depth produced in graphic works by lightening values, softening details and textures, reducing value contrasts, and neutralizing colors in objects as they recede.
6. Balance - A sense of equilibrium achieved through implied weight, attention, or attraction, by manipulating the visual elements within an artwork.
7. Cast shadow - The dark area that occurs on a surface as a result of something being placed between that surface and a light source.
8. Chromatic value - The relative degree of lightness or darkness demonstrated by a given color.
9. Collaboration - A working arrangement between an artist and another person, group, or institution. Present throughout art history, collaborations are considered unusual today when artists tend to be valued for their individual voice and contribution to society. Some artists even form long-term working partnerships with other artists—these are seen as distinct from collaborations, which are often temporary.
10. Collage - A technique of picture making in which real materials possessing actual textures are attached on the picture plane surface, often combining them with painted or drawn passages.
11. Concept - A comprehensive idea or generalization. An idea that brings diverse elements into a basic relationship.
12. Context - The location, information, or time-frame that informs how a work of art is viewed and what it means. Works of art often respond to a particular space or cultural climate. If the context for a work of art is changed or recontextualized, the way in which the work is understood may change as well.

13. Contour - The line that defines the outermost limits of an object or a drawn or painted shape. It is sometimes considered to be synonymous with “outline”; it indicates an edge that also may be defined by the extremities of darks, lights, textures, or colors.
14. Craftsmanship – Aptitude, skill, or quality workmanship in the use of tools and materials.
15. Elements of art - Line, shape, value, texture, color – the basic ingredients the artist uses to produce imagery. Their use produces the visual language of art.
16. Expression - The manifestation through artistic form of a thought, emotion, or quality of meaning; synonymous with the term content.
17. Form - The arrangement of elements in an artwork according to the principles that foster unity. The total appearance or organization.
18. Genre – A means of categorizing works of art based on style, form, and subject matter. History painting and landscape are genres of painting; horror and romantic comedy are genres of film; detective and science fiction are genres of literature.
19. Hue - Designates the common name of a color and indicates its position in the spectrum or on the color wheel. This name is determined by the specific wavelength of the color in a ray of light.
20. Identity - How one views oneself, how others perceive you, and how a society as a whole defines groups of people. Important to one's identity are ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, and class, as well as education, childhood, and life experience. For many, being an artist is not just an occupation but also an ethical responsibility. Much art today deals with what it means to be an artist in today's rapidly changing world.
21. Illusion - A visually misleading or perceptually altered space or object.
22. Implied lines - Lines that dim, fade, stop, and/or disappear. The missing portion of the line is completed in the viewers mind.
23. Juxtaposition - The state or position of being placed close together or side by side, so as to permit comparison or contrast.
24. Local color- The color as seen in the objective world (green grass, blue sky, red barn, and the like).
25. Metaphor - A relationship between disparate visual or verbal sources where one kind of object, idea, or image is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them. Artists use metaphor to bridge differences between seemingly dissimilar images and ideas.
26. Monochromatic color - A color that has only one hue but has the complete range of value of that color from white to black.

27. Narrative - The representation in art, by form and content, of an event or story. Whether a literal story, event, or subject matter—or a more abstract relationship between colors, forms and materials—narrative in visual art applies as much to the work as it does to the viewer's "story" of what they see and experience.
28. Nonrepresentational Art - Artwork encompassing non-recognizable imagery, ranging from pure abstraction (non-recognizable but derived from a recognizable object) to nonobjective art (not a product of abstraction, but derived from the artist's mind).
29. Objective - That which is based, as nearly as possible, on physical actuality or optical perception. Such art tends to look natural or real.
30. Perspective - A visual formula that creates the illusion of depth and volume on a two-dimensional surface. Perspective also infers a particular vantage point or view.
31. Picture plane - The actual flat surface on which the artist executes a pictorial image. In some cases, this acts merely as a transparent plane of reference to establish the illusion of forms existing in a three-dimensional space.
32. Plastic value - Value (lights and darks) used to create the illusion of volume and space.
33. Principles of organization - Seven principles that guide the use of the elements of art in achieving unity: harmony, variety, balance, proportion, dominance, movement, and economy.
34. Process - An artist's investigation, or the steps the artist takes to make a work of art, processes differ widely from artist to artist.
35. Proportion - The comparative size relationship between the parts of a whole. For example, the size of the Statue of Liberty's hand relates to the size of her head.
36. Realism - The realistic and natural representation of people, places, and/or things in a
37. Representational - Works of art that depict recognizable people, places or things—often figures, landscapes, and still life.
38. Scale - The comparative size of a thing in relation to another like thing or its 'normal' or 'expected size.' Scale can refer to an entire work of art or to elements within it.
39. Silhouette - An outline drawing of a shape. Originally a silhouette presented a profile portrait filled in with a solid color.
40. Stylized - Used to describe works of art which conform to imagined or invented visual rules. Work that is stylized tends to be less spontaneous or visually responsive to changes in subject matter.
41. Subjective - That which is derived from the mind reflecting a personal viewpoint, bias, or emotion. This type of color tends to be inventive or creative.

42. Tactile - A quality that refers to the *sense of touch*.
43. Technique - The manner and skill with which artists use their tools and materials *to achieve an expressive effect*.
44. Two-dimensional - Possessing the dimensions of height and width, especially when considering the flat surface or picture plane.
45. Value pattern - The arrangement or organization of values that control compositional movement and create a unifying effect throughout a work of art.
46. Vantage Point - A point of view, or a place from which subject matter is viewed.
47. Volume - A measurable area of defined or occupied space.

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