

## VISUAL ARTS VOCABULARY

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| <b>Abstract</b>             | Artwork in which the subject matter is stated in a brief, simplified manner; little or no attempt is made to represent images realistically, and objects are often simplified or distorted. |
| <b>Acrylics</b>             | Quick drying, plastic polymer pigment used with water.  |
| <b>Additive</b>             | The process of adding or joining parts and/or visual elements together to create a painting, collage or sculpture (as opposed to subtractive).  |
| <b>Analogous</b>            | Closely related colors; a color scheme that combines several hues next to each other on the color wheel.  |
| <b>Art criticism</b>        | An organized system for looking at the visual arts; a process of appraising what we want students to know and be able to do.  |
| <b>Assemblage</b>           | A three-dimensional composition in which a collection of objects is unified in a sculptural work.   |
| <b>Asymmetry</b>            | A lack of equality or equivalence between parts or aspects of something.  |
| <b>Background</b>           | The part of the picture plane that seems to be farthest from the viewer.  |
| <b>Balance</b>              | The way in which the elements in visual arts are arranged to create a feeling of equilibrium in an artwork. The three types of balance are symmetry, asymmetry, and radial.                 |
| <b>Collage</b>              | An artistic composition made of various materials (e.g., paper, cloth, or wood) glued on a surface.   |
| <b>Color</b>                | The visual sensation dependent on the reflection or absorption of light from a given surface. The three characteristics of colors are hue, intensity, and value.                            |
| <b>Color relationships</b>  | Also called <i>color schemes or harmonies</i> . The relationships of colors on the color wheel. Basic color schemes include monochromatic, analogous, and complementary.                    |
| <b>Color wheel</b>          | A circular diagram of the spectrum used to show the relationships between the colors  |
| <b>Complementary colors</b> | Colors opposite one another on the color wheel. Red/green, blue/orange, yellow/violet are complementary colors.   |

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| <b>Composition</b>           | The overall placement and organization of elements in a work of art, as well as the interrelationships between individual elements.  |
| <b>Content</b>               | The representations, messages, ideas, and/or feelings expressed in a work of art.  |
| <b>Contour line drawings</b> | Drawing that represents the edges and ridges of a form, without tonal variation, shading, etc.   |
| <b>Contrast</b>              | Differences between two or more elements (e.g., value, color, texture) in a composition; juxtaposition of dissimilar elements in a work of art. Also refers the degree of difference between the lightest and darkest areas of an image. |
| <b>Cool colors</b>           | Colors suggesting coolness, blues, greens, violets and their variants.   |
| <b>Design</b>                | The plan, conception or organization of a work of art; the arrangement of independent parts (the elements of art) to form a coordinated whole.   |
| <b>Distortion</b>            | The condition of being twisted or altered from a usual or regular shape. In visual art, distortion is often used as an expressive technique.   |
| <b>Dominance</b>             | An emphasis of one aspect, characteristic or quality in an image in relation to all others.  |
| <b>Elements of art</b>       | Sensory components used to create and talk about works of art: line, color, shape/form, texture, value, space.   |
| <b>Emphasis</b>              | Special attention or embellishment on an element, characteristic or object in a work of art that makes it stand out from others.   |
| <b>Expressive content</b>    | Content expressive of ideas and moods in a work of art.  |
| <b>Figurative</b>            | The representation of people, subjects, and scenes from everyday life.   |
| <b>Foreground</b>            | Part of a two-dimensional artwork that appears to be nearer the viewer or in the “front” of the image. <i>Middle ground</i> and <i>background</i> are the parts of the picture that appear to be farther and farthest away.              |
| <b>Focal point</b>           | The place in a work of art at which attention becomes focused because of an element emphasized in some way.  |
| <b>Form</b>                  | (1) The particular characteristics of an artwork’s visual elements (as distinguished from its subject matter or content). (2) A three-dimensional volume or the illusion of three dimensions; related to shape (which is 2-D).           |
| <b>Function</b>              | Purpose and use of a work of art.  |
| <b>Gesture drawing</b>       | The drawing of lines quickly and loosely to show movement in a subject.  |
| <b>Harmony</b>               | The principle of design that creates unity within a work of art.   |

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| <b>Hue</b>                | The gradation or attribute of a color that defines its general classification as a red, blue, yellow, green or intermediate color.   |
| <b>Installation art</b>   | The combining of elements into a singular artwork that is specifically located in one place; an artwork that exists only in the place in which it was/is installed, and is not able to be relocated like a painting or print.                                    |
| <b>Intensity</b>          | Also called <i>chroma</i> or <i>saturation</i> ; refers to the brightness of a color (a color is full in intensity only when in its pure form and unmixed). Color intensity can be changed by adding black, white, gray or an opposite color on the color wheel. |
| <b>Line</b>               | In visual art, a delineation or fracturing of space in color or black and white. Line qualities can vary in width, length, gesture, color, direction, etc.   |
| <b>Linear perspective</b> | A graphic system used to create the illusion of depth and volume on a flat surface. In images of buildings and objects, the lines defining their edges and features are slanted, making them appear to extend back into space.                                   |
| <b>Mass</b>               | The outside size and bulk of an object, such as a building or a sculpture; the visual <i>weight</i> of an object.  |
| <b>Maquette</b>           | A preliminary model (as of a sculpture or a building), usually small.  |
| <b>Media</b>              | (1) Plural of <i>medium</i> referring to materials used to make works of art. (2) Classifications of artworks, such as painting, printmaking, sculpture, film, etc.).  |
| <b>Middle ground</b>      | Area of a two-dimensional work of art between the foreground (closest to the front) and background (furthest receded).   |
| <b>Mixed media</b>        | An artwork in which more than one type of art material is used.  |
| <b>Monochromatic</b>      | Use of only one hue or color that can vary in value or intensity.  |
| <b>Mood</b>               | The state of mind or emotion communicated in a work of art through color, composition, media, scale, size, etc.  |
| <b>Motif</b>              | A repeated pattern, often creating a sense of rhythm.  |
| <b>Movement</b>           | The principle of design that deals with the creation of action.  |
| <b>Multimedia</b>         | Computer programs that involve users in the design and organization of text, graphics, video and sound in one presentation.  |
| <b>Negative space</b>     | Shapes or spaces that are or represent the areas unoccupied by objects.  |
| <b>Neutral colors</b>     | Black, white, gray, and variations of brown. They are included in the color family called <i>earth colors</i> .  |
| <b>Nonobjective</b>       | Having no recognizable object or subject; also, <i>nonrepresentational</i> .   |

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| <b>Oils</b>                  | Oil-based pigment used with paint thinner, turpentine, or other non-water-based suspension.  |
| <b>One-point perspective</b> | A way to show 3-D objects on a 2-D surface, lines appear to go away from the viewer meet at a single point on the horizon known as the <i>vanishing point</i> .                    |
| <b>Organic</b>               | Refers to shapes or forms not of geometric shape, having irregular edges, surfaces or objects similar to natural forms.  |
| <b>Pattern</b>               | A design, image, or shape repeated in a predictable combination.   |
| <b>Performance art</b>       | A type of art in which an event or events are planned and enacted before an audience for aesthetic reasons.  |
| <b>Perspective</b>           | A system for representing three-dimensional objects viewed in spatial recession on a two-dimensional surface.  |
| <b>Point of view</b>         | The angle from which a viewer sees the objects or scene in an image.   |
| <b>Portfolio</b>             | A systematic, organized collection of artwork, usually student artwork.  |
| <b>Positive</b>              | Shapes or spaces in an image that represent solid objects or forms.  |
| <b>Printmaking</b>           | The transference of an image from one surface (plate or block) to another (usually paper) using ink.   |
| <b>Primary colors</b>        | Red, yellow, and blue. From these all other colors are created.  |
| <b>Principles of design</b>  | A design concept describing the ways in which the elements of an image are arranged (i.e. balance, contrast, dominance, emphasis, movement, repetition, rhythm, variation, unity). |
| <b>Properties of color</b>   | The characteristics of color that are perceived: hue, value, and intensity.  |
| <b>Proportion</b>            | The scale relationships of one part to the whole and of one part to another. In images of figures, the appropriate balance between the size of body and its limbs.                 |
| <b>Reflection</b>            | Personal and thoughtful consideration of an artwork, an aesthetic experience, or the creative process.   |
| <b>Rhythm</b>                | Repetitive visual elements that achieve a specific effect.   |
| <b>Rubric</b>                | A guide for judgment or scoring, a description of expectations.  |
| <b>Scale</b>                 | Relative size, proportion; the determination of measurements of dimensions within a design or artwork.   |
| <b>Sculpture</b>             | Three-dimensional artwork to be seen either in the round (from all sides) or as a bas-relief (a low relief in which figures protrude only slightly from the background).           |

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| <b>Secondary colors</b>      | Colors that are created by the mixture of two primary colors, i.e. red and yellow make orange, yellow and blue make green, blue and red make violet, etc.  |
| <b>Shade</b>                 | A color produced by the addition of black.   |
| <b>Shape</b>                 | A two-dimensional area or plane that may be open or closed, free form or geometric. It can be found in nature or created by humans.  |
| <b>Space</b>                 | The area between, around, above, below, or contained within objects. Spaces are areas defined by the shapes and forms around them and within them, just as shapes and forms are defined by the space around and within them. |
| <b>Still life</b>            | A specific type of visual artwork representing one or more inanimate object.   |
| <b>Structure</b>             | The way parts are arranged or put together to form a whole.  |
| <b>Style</b>                 | A set of characteristics of the art of a culture, a period, or school of art; the characteristic expression of individual artists or groups.   |
| <b>Subtractive</b>           | Artistic method accomplished by removing or taking away from the original creative material, (the opposite of <i>additive</i> ).   |
| <b>Symmetry</b>              | A balance of parts on opposite sides of a perceived midline, giving the appearance of equal visual weight.   |
| <b>Texture</b>               | The surface quality of materials, either actual (tactile) or implied (visual). It is one of the elements of art.   |
| <b>Theme</b>                 | A subject or topic of discourse or of artistic representation.   |
| <b>Three-dimensional</b>     | Having height, width, and depth (3-D).   |
| <b>Tint</b>                  | A slight or pale coloration; a variation of a color produced by adding white to it and characterized by a low saturation and high lightness.   |
| <b>Tone</b>                  | Color with gray added to it.   |
| <b>Two-dimensional</b>       | Having height and width but not depth (2-D).   |
| <b>Two-point perspective</b> | A visual system of representation designed to show 3-D objects on a 2-D surface. This illusion of space and volume utilizes two vanishing points on the horizon line.  |
| <b>Unity</b>                 | A principle of design that connects a variety of elements of art and principles of design into a work of art with harmony and balance.   |
| <b>Value</b>                 | Lightness or darkness of a hue or neutral color. A <i>value scale</i> shows the range of values from black to white and light to dark.   |
| <b>Value scale</b>           | A value scale shows the range of values from black to white and light to dark.   |
| <b>Vanishing point</b>       | In perspective drawing, a point at which receding lines seem to converge.  |

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| <b>Variety</b>         | A principle of art concerned with combining one or more elements of art in different ways to create interest.  |
| <b>Visual metaphor</b> | Images in which characteristics of objects are likened to one another and presented as that other. They are closely related to concepts about symbolism. |
| <b>Volume</b>          | Describes the space within a form, such as that of a container or building.  |
| <b>Warm colors</b>     | Colors suggesting warmth, such as reds, yellows, and oranges.  |
| <b>Watercolor</b>      | A transparent pigment used with water. Paintings done with this medium are known as <i>watercolors</i> .   |