

Visual Arts Glossary

Abstract: 1. a style of art that includes various types of avant-garde art of the 20th century; 2. images that have been altered from their realistic/natural appearance; images that have been simplified to reveal only basic contours/forms; 3. an artwork that is based upon a recognizable object that has been simplified to show some purer underlying form (sometimes, any references to recognizable objects are removed).

Additive processes: processes that involve adding, attaching, or joining a form to, or pulling or extending a form from, a surface.

Aesthetics: 1. the study of the rules and principles of art; 2. the study of the philosophies of art; 3. the branch of philosophy that deals with the study of aesthetic values, such as beauty and the sublime; 4. an outward appearance: the way something looks, especially when considered in terms of how pleasing it is; 5. an idea of what is beautiful or artistic or a set of criteria for defining what is beautiful or artistic; 6. criteria or theories used to judge art, such as imitationalism, emotionalism, formalism, functionalism, and instrumentalism.

Alternating rhythm: a principle of design; alternating rhythm is created by repeating two or more of the elements of visual arts to produce an alternating pattern, such as red-blue, red-blue, red-blue.

Analogous: related colors; colors that appear next to each other on the color wheel and have one color in common, such as blue-green, blue, blue-violet; see *color*.

Angular rhythm: rhythm that is created by repeating two or more lines that have straight angles and edges.

Aperture: an adjustable opening in a camera lens that allows light into the camera; see also *f-stop*.

Appliqué: an embellishment made by cutting pieces of one material and applying it to the surface of another; a technique used in quilting.

Art work: the outcome, product, or result of using a creative process to produce or delineate objects and/or images that are intended primarily for aesthetic purposes and to communicate ideas through visual language; any of the art forms, such as drawing, painting, sculpture, or other artistic productions.

Artist: a person who intentionally endeavors to make artworks by composing subject matter and using the elements, principles, techniques, procedures, and materials of visual arts; see *art work*.

Assemblage: a three-dimensional composition made by combining (assembling) a variety of objects, often found objects. The term was first used in the visual arts during the 1950's when artist Jean DuBuffet created a series of collages of butterfly wings, which he called *assemblages d'empreintes*. Other well known assemblage artists are Louise Nevelson, Joseph Cornell, John Chamberlain, and Marcel Duchamp.

Asymmetrical balance (informal balance): the type of balance that results when two sides of an artwork are equally important, but one side looks different from the other.

Atmospheric perspective: the effect on the appearance of an object of the air/space between the object and the viewer: in the foreground, colors are warmer and more intense and values are darker; in the distance, the details of an object appear to decrease, colors appear cooler and less intense, and values lighten and fade.

Attributes: characteristics, traits, features, aspects, and elements that are specific and particular to someone or something, such as a lion's mane or a zebra's stripes.

Background: the area of an artwork that appears farthest away on a picture plane, usually nearest the horizon: a way of showing depth; background is the opposite of foreground; between the background and foreground is the middle ground.

Balance: a principle of design; the arrangement of elements that makes individual parts of a composition appear equally important; an arrangement of the elements to create an equal distribution of visual weight throughout the format or composition. If a composition appears top- or bottom-heavy and/or anchored by weight to one side, it is not visually balanced. *Types of balance:*

Symmetrical (formal balance): the image or form is equally weighted on both sides of a center line.

Asymmetrical (informal balance): the image or form is unevenly weighted.

Radial: the weight of the image or form radiates from a center point.

Bas-relief: a sculpture in which forms are carved on a flat surface so they slightly project from the background.

Biomorphic: a shape, form, or pattern that resembles a living organism in appearance; a painted, drawn, or sculpted form or design that is suggestive of the shape of a living organism; see *organic*.

Bisque: unglazed pottery that has been fired at a low temperature to make handling easier during glazing and to remove all physical water from the clay body; clayware that has been fired once in preparation for a surface finish, such as paint, stain, or glaze; *unbisqued* clay has not been fired; *bisqueware* refers to pottery that has been bisque fired; *bisqueware* is also called *biscuit ware* in some areas.

Body: the main part of a pot, usually the largest part.

Burnished: leather-hard clay that has been rubbed with any smooth tool to polish and lighten the clay's surface to a fine and smooth finish.

Cable release: a cable, attached to a camera shutter, with a push-button on one end to trip the shutter; because it minimizes the movement of the camera, a cable release is useful when photographing scenes that require long exposure times.

Calligraphy: a sometimes elegant style of handwriting with precise flow.

Camera obscura: a darkened enclosure in which an image is projected through a small aperture onto a facing surface.

Center of interest: the area of a composition that attracts the viewers' attention; also called the *focal point*.

Ceramic: pottery and any of a number of art forms made from clay products.

Chiaroscuro: the technique of creating a picture by using several shades of the same color.

Coiling: a method of forming pottery from rolls of clay.

Collage: a way of making a work of art by gluing different objects, materials, and textures to a surface.

Color: an element of visual art; the visible range of reflected light. Color has three properties: hue, value, and intensity.

Color saturation: the pure hue at its fullest intensity without white, black, or complementary color added.

Color schemes: groupings of colors that are related on the color wheel, such as complementary, analogous, warm, and cool:

Analogous: colors that appear next to each other on the color wheel and have one color in common, such as blue-green, blue, and blue-violet.

Complementary colors: contrasting colors; colors that are opposite on the color wheel, such as yellow/violet, blue/orange, and red/green.

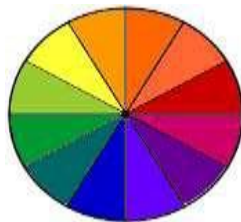
Cool colors: a group of colors on the color wheel associated with coolness, such as blues, greens, and violets; in an artwork, cool colors appear to be farther away from the viewer.

Warm colors: a group of colors on the color wheel associated with warmth, such as red, yellow, and orange; in an artwork, warm colors appear to advance toward the viewer.

Color value: the lightness or darkness of a color.

Color wheel: colors arranged in a circle to show color relationships; there are several versions of color wheels:

1. **Traditional color wheel:** a subtractive color diagram that typically includes 6–12 divisions and shows how colors are related to one another; it is a reference for the mixing of colors of pigment, such as paint or ink. The traditional color wheel includes red, yellow, and blue as primary colors.

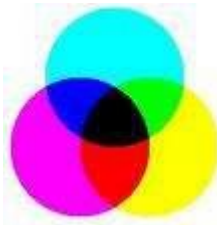


2. **Printer's color wheel:** a color wheel in which the primaries include yellow, cyan, and

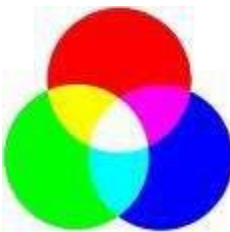


magenta; a wheel typically used by professional designers and printers.

3. **Color disk:** a color wheel on which the colors blend together instead of being separated; used in printing, web design, video, and graphic arts (*RGB*).



4. **RGB color model:** an additive color model in which red, green, and blue light are added together in various ways to reproduce a broad array of colors; the RGB spectrum is used in web design, video, and graphic arts.



Complementary colors: colors that are opposite one another on the color wheel, such as yellow/violet, blue/orange, and red/green.

Components: the parts of a whole composition.

Composition: the use of the principles of design to arrange the elements of visual arts to create a piece of artwork; the way individual design elements are combined to express a particular idea.

Construction techniques: different ways to put materials together (for example, by stapling, cutting, gluing, or taping).

Contour: an outline of an object or figure; the inner and outer lines and edges of an object or form; contours describe the outermost edges of a form, as well as edges of planes within the form.

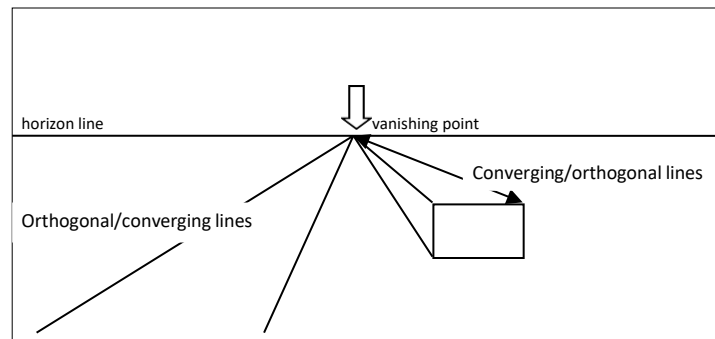
Contour line: the line that defines a form or the edge of an object's outline.

Contour-line drawing: a line drawing that follows the visible edges of a shape or form, both exterior and interior.

Contrast: a principle of design; a technique that shows differences in the elements of visual arts in an artwork, such as smooth/rough textures, light/dark colors, or thick/thin lines.

Contrast photography: the difference between light and dark tones in an image.

Convergence lines or converging lines: also called orthogonal lines; lines that converge or come together at a vanishing point; parallel lines that appear to converge as they move away from the viewer toward a vanishing point on the horizon; see the illustration below:



Cool colors: a group of colors on the color wheel that includes blues, greens, and violets; in an artwork, cool colors appear to be farther away from the viewer.

Cornice: a decorative horizontal molding at the top of exterior walls, below the eaves.

Cubism: a style of art of the 20th century, cubism emphasizes the separation of the subject into cubes and other geometric forms, which are depicted from multiple viewpoints; a style associated with the works of artists Marcel Duchamp and Pablo Picasso.

Decorative: ornamental; aesthetically pleasing; providing enhancement.

Depth-of-field scale: a measurement (in feet or meters) on a camera that indicates what portions of the depth-of-field zone will be acceptably sharp at a given aperture.

Design: a composition.

Digital media: the images or data generated by a computer.

Dominance: a principle of design; the way an artwork shows emphasis; a way of organizing a composition so that one element or object in the composition is the strongest or most important part of the work. See also *emphasis*.

Drawing techniques: different ways of drawing, such as hatching, stippling, contour, blending, or shading:

Hatching: drawing repeating parallel lines to create a texture or value.

Cross hatching: drawing repeated crossing lines to create a texture or value.

Contour: drawing the outlines of a shape.

Blending: smudging to create a texture or value.

Shading: creating various gradations of value of a color.

Elements of photographic design: those parts (such as point, line, and plane) that are used to make a composition.

Elements of visual arts: the basic components that make up a work of art: color, form, line, shape, space, texture, and value:

Color: the visible range of reflected light. Color has three properties: hue, value, and intensity (brightness or dullness).

Form: a three-dimensional object that has height, length, width, and depth.

Line: the one-dimensional path of a dot through space used by artists to control the viewer's eye movement; a thin mark made by a pencil, pen, or brush.

Shape: a closed space made when a line connects to itself.

Space: an element of visual arts; the area above, below, around, and within an artwork; the illusion of depth or space on a flat surface, created by means of the following techniques: rendering shapes and forms so that they overlap and using size, detail, value, color, and linear perspective.

Texture: an element of visual arts that portrays surface quality: *actual* texture is how something feels; *visual* texture is how something appears to feel.

Value: the lightness and darkness of a line, shape, or form.

Emphasis: a principle of design; the importance assigned to certain objects or areas in an artwork; color, texture, shape, space, and size can be used to create a focal point or center of interest. See also *dominance*.

Encaustic: a wax-based paint that is fixed in place with heat.

Exaggeration: showing something in a way that makes it seem larger or more important than it is.

Expression: showing an emotion or feeling in a work of art.

Expressionism: a style of painting of the 20th century, expressionism uses simplified designs and brilliant colors to express a definite or strong mood or feeling.

Extrude: a method of shaping moist clay by forcing it through a die.

Façade: the exterior front or side of a building or wall.

Feathering: a technique used in drawing and painting; to feather is to blend an area or edge so that it fades off or softens; blending; smudging; the overlapping of values and/or colors in the manner of the overlapping feathers of a bird.

Flowing rhythm: a principle of design; the repetition of wavy lines or curved shapes to suggest movement or motion.

Focal length: the length of a lens (measured in millimeters) from the center point to the image sensor when the lens is focused at infinity.

Focal point: the part of an artwork that is emphasized in some way and attracts the eye and attention of the viewer; also called the *center of interest*.

Focus: the maximum clarity or sharpness of an image.

Foot: the base of a pot upon which the pot can stand.

Foreground: the area of an artwork or field of vision, often at the bottom of a picture plane, which appears closest to the viewer; also used to give priority to one aspect of a composition.

Foreshortening: the illusion that an object that is closer to the viewer is larger than one that is farther away.

Form: an element of visual arts; a three-dimensional object that has height, length, width, and depth.

Frame or photographic framing: the visible area that makes up an image: typically, the view in the viewfinder or camera's monitor; the shape of a picture as determined by a digital sensor, typically rectangular; also called *format*.

Free form: a shape or form that has an asymmetrical or irregular contour, often with a curvilinear, flowing outline; sometimes referred to as *organic* or *biomorphic*.

Freestanding: able to stand on its own.

Frieze: an architectural ornament or decoration consisting of a horizontal band around a room, mantel, window, cornice, etc.

F-stop: the setting or delineation of the opening in a camera's lens that allows light into the camera; the f-stop number is the ratio of the focal length of the lens to the diameter of the aperture; see also *aperture*.

Functional: useful; practical; well-designed; efficient; serviceable.

Gallery: a room, series of rooms, or building where works of art are exhibited.

Geometric: any shapes and/or forms based on math principles, such as a square/cube, circle/sphere, triangle/cone, pyramid, etc.

Gestalt: a composition of unified elements that form a whole that cannot be described by singling out its individual components.

Gesture line: an energetic type of line that captures the movement or pose of a figure.

Gradation: (of value) a range of values between light and dark.

Graffiti art: art inspired by urban graffiti; interest in graffiti art as a movement emerged in the 1970s in New York City with artists such as Keith Haring.

Greenware: bone-dry, unfired pottery; pottery that is ready for bisque firing.

Ground line: a line that defines the plane on which the subject in an artwork sits.

Hand-building: making clay forms by a non-mechanical process, such as pinching, coiling, and slab-building.

Harmony: a principle of design; the creation of unity by stressing the similarities of separate, but related parts of the artwork.

High key: an image having tones that fall mostly between white and gray, with very few dark tones.

Highlight: the brightest area of an image that is illuminated by a light source.

Homage: an artwork that reflects intentional imitation and acknowledgement of or respect for a particular artist, artwork, body of work, or style; originally, such works were created by artists to honor the “masters” who trained them.

Horizon line: based on an artist’s eye level, an invisible plane that cuts through everything that exists at eye level; a line at which sky appears to meet earth.

Horizontal line: a line that is parallel to the horizon; a horizontal line, surface, or position.

Hue: color.

Illustration: a picture that is specifically designed to communicate commercial ideas, such as an image created for the cover of a CD or book.

Illustrator: a person who draws or creates pictures for magazines, books, or advertising.

Implied line: lines that are suggested by the placement of other lines, shapes, edges, and colors, but that are not actually seen in the artwork.

Impressionism: a style of painting, popular in the late 1800s and early 1900s, that featured everyday subjects and showed the changing effects of color and light.

Incise: to remove (subtract) clay by cutting into the surface.

Incised line: a line that was created by cutting into the surface.

Informal balance (asymmetrical balance): the type of balance that results when two sides of an artwork are equally important, but one side looks different from the other.

Intensity: the brightness or dullness of a color.

Intermediate color: a color created by mixing a primary color with the secondary color next to it; also called a *tertiary* color; intermediate colors include red-orange, yellow-orange, yellow-green, blue-green, blue-violet, and red-violet.

Juxtapose: to place side-by-side.

Kinesthetic: a sensory experience derived from the sense of touch. See *tactile*.

Kinetic: relating to motion or movement.

Leather-hard: the condition of a clay body when much of the moisture has evaporated and shrinkage has just ended, but the clay is not totally dry. Joining slabs, carving, or burnishing is done at this stage.

Line: an element of visual arts; the flat path of a dot through space used by artists to control the viewer's eye movement; a long narrow mark or stroke made on or in a surface; a thin mark made by a pencil, pen, or brush. The repetition of lines (and/or shapes) is used to create texture, pattern, and gradations of value.

Line of sight: a type of implied line that directs the attention of the viewer from one part of a composition to another.

Line personality: the general characteristic of a line: its weight, direction, movement, and/or other qualities.

Line quality: the width or appearance of any line, such as thick or thin, smooth or rough, continuous or broken.

Line types: the variety of directions and shapes that a line may have: vertical, horizontal, diagonal, curved, zigzag.

Lip: in pottery, the rim of a pot.

Low key: an image that consists of dark tones with little contrast.

Maquette: a small-scale two-dimensional sketch or three-dimensional model or plan of a proposed work, such as a sculpture or architectural form; used by architects and sculptors to design large-scale works.

Medium (plural: media): the material chosen by the artist to create a work of art, such as paint, pencil, or clay.

Middle ground: the area between the foreground and background of a landscape.

Modeling: a sculptural technique that involves manipulating a soft material into a three dimensional form.

Monochromatic: having or appearing to have only one color, which may include variations on the value of that color; a one-color plus black-and-white color scheme.

Motif: a repeated shape or design in a work of art; a design unit that may be repeated in a visual rhythm.

Movement: a principle of design; the use of the elements of visual arts to draw a viewer's eye from one point to another in an artwork.

Mural: a painting, generally drawn or painted directly onto an interior or exterior wall; for example, Michelangelo's frescos at the Sistine Chapel and Diego Rivera's mural at the Detroit Institute of Art.

Negative space: the empty space surrounding a shape, figure, or form in a two- or three-dimensional artwork.

Neutral color: color that has no chromatic qualities: black, white, grays, and browns.

Non-color value: the lightness and darkness of a line, shape, or form that was created using a neutral scale: blacks, grays, and whites.

Non-representational: an artwork with no recognizable subject; artwork that uses forms that make no direct reference to external or perceived reality.

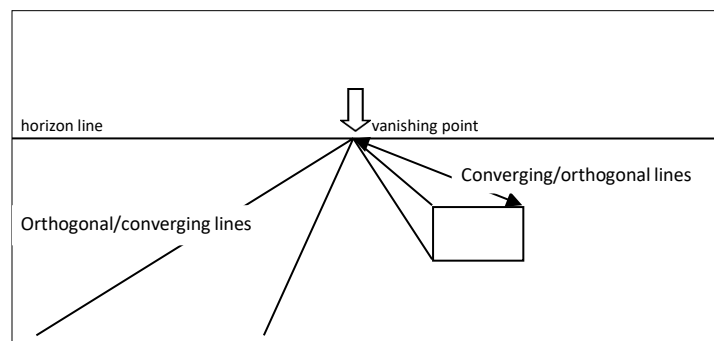
Nōtan: a Japanese design concept that involves the placement of light against dark in art and imagery; Nōtan's use of light and dark transforms shape and form into flat shapes on two-dimensional surfaces; Nōtan is traditionally presented in cut paper, paint, and/or ink and more recently in graphic arts.

Novelty: original; innovative; fresh; a new idea or new purpose; a whimsical item.

Organic: shapes and/or forms, often curvilinear in appearance, that are similar to those found in nature, such as plants, animals, and rocks.

Originality: a unique personal expression of arts knowledge and skills.

Orthogonal lines: lines that converge or come together at a vanishing point; orthogonal lines are parallel lines that appear to converge as they move away from the viewer toward a vanishing point on the horizon; also called *convergence lines* or *converging lines*; see illustration below:



Outline: a line that is defined by the outside edge or contours of an object or figure.

Overlap: to position things in such a way that the edge of one thing appears to be or is on top of and extending past the edge of another; used as a spatial device or perspective technique in perspective drawing.

Paddling: beating clay, generally with a flat, fairly wide stick that is often covered with fabric, twine, or rope so that the damp clay body does not stick to the paddle; other paddles include rocks, shoes, and found or natural objects; paddling is used to strengthen joints, thin walls, alter shape, or create texture.

Pattern: a principle of design; the repetition of the elements of visual arts in an organized way; pattern and rhythm are both created through repetition; see *rhythm* for examples of regular, alternating, random, and progressive rhythmic patterns.

Perspective: a way to create the appearance of depth and three dimensions on a two-dimensional surface; types of perspective include one-point linear perspective, two-point linear perspective, and atmospheric perspective.

Pigment: a substance used in coloring; usually, an insoluble powder mixed with a base of water, acrylic, or oil to produce paint or other similar products.

Pinching: a method of manipulating clay by pinching with the fingers to sculpt, hollow out, and/or form clay into new forms.

Photography: the process of forming and fixing an image of an object by the chemical action of light and other forms of radiant energy on photosensitive surfaces; the art and business of producing and printing photographs.

Point of view: the angle from which a viewer sees an object.

Pointillism: a technique that involves the use of dots to create an artwork.

Portfolio: a flat, portable envelope or binder that is used to carry artwork or a collection of work.

Positive space: the actual space taken up by the line, shape, or form.

Primary colors: the basic colors from which all other colors are mixed: traditionally, red, yellow, and blue; no other colors can be mixed to make primary colors.

Principles of design of visual arts: a means of organizing the elements in a work of art: balance, contrast, emphasis/dominance, harmony, movement, pattern, proportion, repetition, rhythm, unity, and variety.

Progressive rhythm: changing the shape or size of a motif by altering it in steps every time it repeats.

Proportion: a principle of design; the relationship of parts to a whole or parts to one another in regards to size and placement.

Prototype: the first of its kind; a sample; an example; a trial product; an original design for a product.

Pulling: the process of stroking plastic clay with the hand to shape handles for a pot.

Radial balance: a type of balance that is equally symmetrical from the center point throughout.

Random rhythm: a type of visual rhythm in which the same elements are repeated, but without a recognizable order, such as stars in the sky.

Realism: a style of art that portrays objects or scenes as they might appear in everyday life. A recognizable subject is portrayed using lifelike colors, textures, and proportions.

Reflected light: light that is bounced back from a source.

Reflection/response: a personal reaction, expressed either orally or in writing, to an artwork or to another person's question about an artwork; a reaction to something done.

Regular rhythm: a visual rhythm that is created by repeating the same elements again and again.

Relief: a type of sculpture in which forms project from a flat background; areas of relief may be concave or convex.

Bas-relief: a low relief.

High relief: a sculptural relief that is viewed only from the sides and front.

Additive relief: a type of relief in which elements are added to and protrude from a surface.

Subtractive relief: a type of relief in which elements are carved, etched, or inscribed on a surface.

Repetition: the repeated use of particular elements of visual arts to create a pattern, movement, rhythm, or unity.

Resist: in art, a process that uses two or more materials that do not mix, such as crayon and watercolor or wax and ceramic glaze.

Rhythm (visual): a principle of design; the repetition of elements of visual arts to create movement in an artwork; the following are types of visual rhythms:

Alternating rhythm: created by repeating an element of visual arts at least twice, such as red-blue, red-blue, red-blue.

Angular rhythm: created by repeating two or more lines that have straight angles and edges.

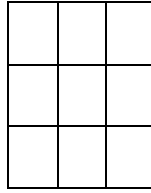
Flowing rhythm: created by repeating wavy lines or curved shapes to suggest movement or motion.

Progressive rhythm: created by changing the shape or size of a motif incrementally so that the shape is altered every time it repeats.

Random rhythm: created by repeating the same elements, but without a recognizable order, such as stars in the sky.

Regular rhythm: created by repeating the same elements again and again.

Rule of thirds: a rule that dictates placing the center of interest in an image on one of the cross-points of a grid:



Scoring: scratching the edges of clay before joining them together.

Scruffito: a method of producing patterns from contrast by scratching through a slip or glaze (layers).

Sculptural techniques: different ways to create three-dimensional (3-D) forms; for example, cutting, folding, rolling, twisting, curling, scoring, bending, additive and subtractive processes, attaching, joining, and carving.

Sculpture: a three-dimensional work of art.

Secondary color: a color that is created by mixing two primary colors together in equal parts: green, violet, and orange.

Shade: a value that is created by adding black to a color.

Shadow: the dark areas adjacent to the illuminated (highlighted) side of an object.

Shape: an element of visual arts; a two-dimensional (flat) area enclosed by a line:

Geometric: shapes and/or forms that are based on mathematical principles, such as a square/cube, circle/sphere, triangle/cone, or pyramid.

Organic: shapes and/or forms that are irregular, often curving or rounded, and more informal than geometric shapes.

Sketch: a drawing without much detail, usually completed in a short amount of time, and sometimes used as a rough draft for later work; a drawing that catches the general appearance or impression of an object or place; a drawing that blocks in a quick plan for a composition.

Slab-building: using flat rolled-out pieces of clay to build an artwork or object.

Slip: a fluid suspension of clay in water that is used to join clay pieces and for surface decoration.

Space: an element of visual arts; the area above, below, around, and within an artwork; the illusion of depth or space on a flat surface, created by means of the following techniques: rendering shapes and forms so that they overlap and using size, detail, value, color, and linear perspective.

Spatial devices: methods used to create the appearance of space in an artwork: foreground, middle ground, and background; overlap, placement, size, detail, color, and value:

Foreground: the area of an artwork that appears closest to the viewer.

Middle ground: the area between the foreground and the background.

Background: the area of an artwork that appears farthest away: a way of showing space.

Color value: the lightness or darkness of a color.

Horizon line: based on the artist's eye level, the line at which the sky appears to meet the earth.

Overlap: one part partly covers another part.

Sprig: a decorative or functional clay attachment added by using a slip.

Still life: a piece of artwork that features a collection of nonmoving subject matter.

Structural line: lines that visually hold a composition or design together.

Style: the distinctive use of the elements and principles of visual arts to form characteristics or techniques that are unique to an individual artist, group, or period.

Subtractive process: the process of taking away; carving or cutting away from a surface.

Surreal: the use of fantastic imagery to combine the dreamlike with the realistic.

Symbol: an image that represents something else.

Symmetrical/formal balance: having balance; exact appearance on opposite sides of a dividing line or plane.

Tactile: perceived by touch or related to the sense of touch; see *kinesthetic*.

Technique: a method of working with art materials to create artworks.

Tertiary color: see *intermediate color*.

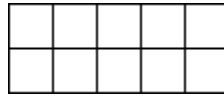
Tessellation: a pattern, often mosaic, that can be repeated in any direction to infinity without any gaps; a style of artwork that is associated with the works of M. C. Escher and Islamic architecture; a regular tessellation is made up of congruent regular polygons (with 3, 4, 5, or more sides); *regular* means that the sides of the polygon are all the same length; *congruent* means the polygons that are put together are all the same size and shape:

The following examples are planes that have been tiled (tessellated):

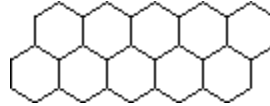
A tessellation of triangles.



A tessellation of squares.



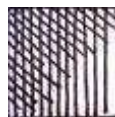
A tessellation of hexagons.



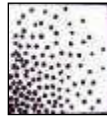
Texture: an element of visual arts; the portrayal of the quality of a surface by using drawing techniques to create texture and patterns, such as stippling, hatching, cross hatching, scribbling, broken lines, and repeating lines and shapes (see examples below); *actual* texture is how something feels when touched; *visual* texture (also called *simulated* texture) is how something appears to feel.



hatching



cross-hatching



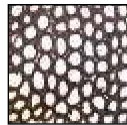
stippling



scribbling



repeating broken lines



repeating shapes



smudging/blending

Theme: the central idea that is revealed in an artwork; focused subject matter; a topic.

Three-dimensional or 3-D: having actual height, width, and depth and existing in three dimensional spaces; or having the illusion of existing in three dimensions.

Throwing: to use the potter's wheel to form pieces from a plastic clay body.

Tint: a value created by adding white to a color.

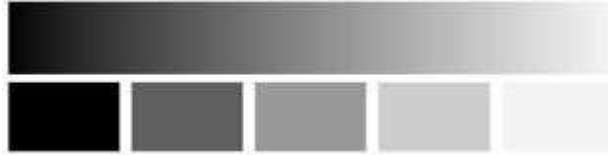
Tone: a color that is created by adding gray.

Typography: the use of text or individual words in a visual design or presentation.

Unity: a principle of art; a successful combination of the elements of visual arts to create a sense of wholeness and visual completion in an artwork.

Utilitarian: useful; functional; efficient; serviceable; usable in everyday life.

Value: an element of visual arts; the lightness and darkness of a line, shape, or form; a measure of relative lightness and darkness.



Vanishing point: a spatial device in which two or more parallel lines appear to come together at one point.

Variety: the use of the elements of visual arts to create differences in an artwork for visual interest.

Vertical: the up-and-down orientation of a line, shape, or form.

Vessel: a container, such as bowl, urn, or other item that holds something.

Visual arts: creative expressions that use imagery to satisfy the human need to communicate thoughts, ideas, feelings, and beliefs.

Visual arts elements: see *elements of visual arts*.

Warm colors: a group of colors on the color wheel that are associated with warmth, such as red, yellow, and orange. In an artwork, warm colors appear to advance toward the viewer.

Working distance: The distance from your camera to the object you are photographing.

Zone of focus: The area in an image that the artist uses as the focal point of the artwork.

Asymmetrical: A balance achieved through the use of unequal parts or elements. (For example: imagine a beach ball by the side of a stick and two baseballs on the other side balancing out the picture.)

Balance: A principle of art and design concerned with the arrangement of one or more elements in a work of art so that they appear symmetrical (identical compositional units on either side of an axis) or asymmetrical (not identical) in design and proportion.

Color: Element of art derived from reflected light. The sensation of color is aroused in the brain by response of the eyes to different wavelengths of light. Color has three properties: *hue*, *value*, and *intensity*.

Composition: The arrangement of forms in a work of art.

Content: A work of art is usually discussed in terms of its subject matter, form and content. Content refers to the intellectual, psychological, spiritual, narrative or aesthetic aspect of the work.

Contour drawing: An outline that shows only the edge and not the volume or mass of an object. Sometimes called blind contour if the artists are not looking at their paper, only at their subject.

Contrast: Use of opposites near or beside one another (light and dark, rough and smooth).

Cool colors: mostly green, blue, violet (purple).

Dominance: The difference in importance of one aspect in relation to all other aspects of design. What stands out most in a work of art.

Emphasis: Principle of design concerned that stresses one element or area in a work of art to make it attract the viewer's attention first.

Exaggeration: Increasing or enlarging an object or figure or one of its parts to communicate ideas and feelings.

Federal Arts Project: Government program established during the Depression to create jobs for American artists.

Focal point: The center of interest of an artwork; the part you look at first.

Form: An artist uses form as a vehicle for rendering a particular type of subject matter. The formal elements of a work consist of the groupings and combinations of shapes.

Gouache: Pigments ground in water and mixed with gum to form opaque watercolor. Gouache resembles school tempera paint or poster paint.

Hue: The name of a color – red, blue, yellow, etc.

Intensity: Brightness of a color.

Line: An identifiable path of a point moving in space. It can vary in width, direction, and length. Horizontal lines tend to create a sense of calm in a picture. Vertical lines tend to create a feeling of stability. Diagonal lines tend to create a feeling of dynamic movement.

Medium: The specific material used by an artist, such as oil and brush; also, the vehicle used, such as sculpture, painting or photography.

Motif: Unit repeated in visual rhythm. Units in a motif may or may not be an exact duplicate of the first unit.

Pattern: Two-dimensional decorative visual repetition. A pattern has no movement and may or may not have rhythm.

Pictorial space: The illusion of space, whether three- or two-dimensional, created by an artist on the two-dimensional surface of the canvas or paper.

Proportion: Principle of design concerned with the size relationships of one part to the whole and one part to another.

Rhythm: Principal of design that repeats elements to create the illusion of movement. Visual rhythm is perceived through the eyes, and is created by repeating positive spaces separated by negative spaces. **Alternating rhythm** is when the visual rhythm is set up by repeating motifs but changing position or content of motifs or spaces between them. **Flowing rhythm** is created by repetition of wavy lines. **Progressive rhythm** is a visual rhythm that changes a motif each time it is repeated. **Random rhythm** is a repetition in no apparent order with no regular spaces. **Regular rhythm** is achieved through repeating identical motifs using the same intervals of space between them.

Screen print: Printing technique that makes use of a squeegee to force ink directly onto a piece of paper or canvas through a stencil containing the image. (The process is also called silk-screen or serigraphy.)

Shade: The dark values of a color (adding black).

Shape: Geometric shapes look as though they were made with a straight edge or drawing tool; square, circle, triangle and oval. **Organic shapes** are also called **free form**. These shapes are not regular or even. Their edges are curved and angular or a combination of both.

Space: (or negative space): is the element of sculpture, which refers to emptiness or areas between, around, above, below or within objects.

Subject matter: The topic of interest or the primary theme of an artwork.

Texture: refers to the way things feel or look as though they might feel if they were touched.

Tint: light values of a color (adding white)

Unity: The arrangement of one or more of the elements used to create a feeling of completeness. Everything in the work seems to belong and contribute to the overall picture.

Value: Light or dark; the variations of light and dark on the surface of an object. The lightness or darkness of a color.

Variety: Principle of design concerned with difference or contrast.

Warm colors: red, orange, yellow.