



The Painting Cave

Art Space Solutions #002

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Learn to speak the Lingo!

Whether you're taking a course or buying a product for art, you will need to understand the terminology!



by [Jacqui Simpson](#) on October 7, 2019

Here is a list of Drawing terms that are used by artists and help to clarify a lot of the information that you read online, in books, or even hear in podcasts, and videos.

Drawing Glossary for Artists

ABSTRACT

A term that can be applied to either art that is non-objective relying on impulse and expression rather than attempting to depict recognizable forms from the exterior world or art that draws its forms from the visible world but renders them with significant interpretation.

AESTHETICS

The study or theory of beauty and the psychological responses to it; specifically the branch of philosophy dealing with art, its creative sources, its forms, and its effects.

BACKGROUND

The plane in a composition perceived furthest from the viewer.

BLENDING STUMP (TORTILLON)

It is a cylindrical drawing tool, tapered at the end and usually made of rolled paper, used by artists to smudge or blend marks made with charcoal, Conté crayon, pencil or other drawing utensils.

BLIND CONTOUR

A contour drawing in which the artist's eye focuses on the object being represented rather than on the image being created on the drawing surface

CALLIGRAPHY

Fine or beautiful handwriting

CHIAROSCURO

means modeling a form, as in a shaded drawing or painting, in terms of light (clear=chiaro), and dark (obscure=scuro)

COLD-PRESSED PAPER

Has a slightly textured surface, somewhere in between rough and hot-pressed paper

COMPOSITION

The arrangement of visual elements such as lines, spaces, tone, and colours in a work of art

CONTOUR

The perceived edges in any three-dimensional form

CRITICISM / CRITIQUE

The analysis, evaluation, interpretation, and study of works of art. While it is certainly true that disapproving remarks are sometimes made, it is a common mistake to assume that "criticism" simply means negative commentary and that to be critical means to be cynical, derogatory and insulting. Constructive criticism highlights the strengths of the art and provides encouragement and strategies to the artist for improving the work.

CROPPING

Showing only part of the image, giving enough information that viewers can mentally complete it.

CROSS-CONTOUR LINES

Contour lines that intersect one another at oblique angles

CROSS-HATCHING

Closely spaced lines that intersect one another and create modulated tonal effects

ECONOMY / PRUDENCE

Using only what is needed to create an intended effect eliminating any elements that might distract the attention from the essence of the idea

EDGE

Hard and soft lines creating the shape or form of the subject

ELLIPSES

A closed curve having the shape of an elongated circle - visible when true circles are seen from an oblique angle

EMPHASIS

Defined as an area or object within the artwork that draws attention and becomes a focal point.

ERASURE

A subtractive method used in a working surface

EXPRESSIONIST

Art that communicates emotion and feelings

EYE-LEVEL

The imaginary line we see when we look straight ahead and then left and right

FOCAL-POINT (EMPHASIS)

The area in the composition to which the viewer's eye is naturally drawn. This can be emphasized by using colour shape or value.

FOREGROUND

This is the forms or figures that appear closest to the viewer in a painting or drawing

FORESHORTENING

The application of perspective to suggest that a single form protrudes for the picture plane

FORM

The physical characteristics of an artwork which include line, shape, texture, value, and colour, in opposition to intellectual or emotional content.

GENRE

A representation of everyday life

GEOMETRIC SHAPES

Such as circles, triangles or squares have perfect, uniform measurements and don't often appear in nature.

GESTURE DRAWING

A drawing technique using rapidly drawn lines to describe and emphasize the essential visual characteristics of a form or forms

GRADATION

Compositional term referring to the transition from one form to another by changes in value

GROUND

The surface on which a picture is drawn or painted

HARMONY

The quality of how the visual elements are working together in a composition. It is achieved when all elements have unity and cohesion, giving a sense of completion to an artwork.

HIGHLIGHTS

In a drawing or painting those areas that represent the lightest values (commonly used in focal points)

HORIZON LINE (POINT -OF-VIEW)

The distant point where the land and sky appear to meet (from the artist's point-of-view)

HOT-PRESSED PAPER

Has a fine-grained, smooth surface, with almost no tooth.

HUE

Another name for colour

HYPERREALISM

A genre of painting and sculpture resembling a high-resolution photograph

LINE

A mark whose length is considerably greater than its width

MIDDLE GROUND

Refers to the focal area of a painting. The middle ground lies between the foreground and background of a painting. The objects in this area appear smaller. They are usually placed behind the objects in the foreground.

MONOCHROME

A term used to describe a painting or drawing created in different values of a single colour

NEGATIVE SPACE

Descriptive of area in a work that appear to be unoccupied or empty

NON-OBJECTIVE

A term referring to art that does not represent or depict any known object, also referenced as non-representational

ORGANIC SHAPES

Are associated with things from the natural world, like plants and animals.

PATTERN

A repetitive arrangement of certain forms or designs

PERSPECTIVE

A system of representing three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface

PROPORTION

refers to the relative size of parts of a whole (elements within an object).

PROPORTIONAL-DIVIDER

The perfect tool for artists who wish to learn how to draw in proportion. It works equally well whether you're working from life or from photographs, and in addition to getting accurate measurements, the proportional divider can be used to measure the angle or slope of any line.

REALISM

The attempts by artists to depict life as it really is, drawing from actual events, with no attempts to disguise hardships or flaws in reality.

RHYTHM AND MOVEMENT

A principle of design that suggests movement or action. Rhythm is usually achieved through repetition of lines, shapes, colours, and more. It creates a visual tempo in artworks and provides a path for the viewer's eye to follow.

SCALE

Refers to the size of an object (a whole) in relation to another object (another whole).

SHADE

a mixture of colour with black, which increases darkness.

STILL-LIFE

A drawing or painting that focuses on still objects. The subject matter is inanimate and never moves, typically with a focus on household objects, flowers, or fruits.

TEXTURE

The perceived surface quality of a work of art. It is an element of two-dimensional and three-dimensional designs and is distinguished by its perceived visual and physical properties.

TINT

a mixture of a colour with white, which reduces darkness,

TOPE

A term used in art to refer to the lightness or darkness of a colour - creating tints or shades of a colour

TWO-DIMENSIONAL

Includes only the length and width of a flat object such as a drawing, print, or painting

THREE- DIMENSIONAL

Paintings or drawings that describe height, width, and length and appear to be realistic in view.

Sculpture takes up three-dimensions as in space so is three dimensional

VALUE

The relative darkness or lightness of a colour or neutral tone, ranging from black to white



Who am I?

My name is Jacqui (Jax) Simpson. I am an Artist and teacher and have taught many students over 30 years.

I am passionate about Art and about those who want to learn how to create art.

I will be sending out tips, tricks, and advice to you on a weekly basis.

I am here to help you and I would love to hear from you.

Stay in touch with us!



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