

## ART TERMS

**accidental color** - *Color* obtained by mixing on a painting's *surface* without conscious preliminary planning during the process of painting.

**acculturation** - Borrowing between *cultures*, or, the modifying of one person's or group's culture by contact with a *different* culture. Also, the process by which people acquire knowledge of the cultures in which they live.

**acrylic paints** - *Synthetic* paints, with *pigments* dispersed in a *synthetic vehicle* made from polymerized acrylic acid esters, the most important of which is polymethyl methacrylate. First used by artists in the late 1940s, their use has come to rival that of *oil* paints because of their versatility. They can be used on nearly any *surface*, in *transparent washes* or heavy *impasto*, with *matte* or *glossy finishes*. Acrylic paints dry quickly, do not yellow, are easily removed with *mineral spirits* or *turpentine* (use *acetone* if those don't remove enough), and can clean up with soap and water.

**aesthetic experience** or **æsthetic experience** - Experience of *intrinsic* features of things or events traditionally recognized as worthy of attention and reflection, such as *literal*, *visual*, and *expressive* qualities, which are studied during the *art criticism* process. Also spelled esthetic.

**aestheticism** or **æstheticism** - The belief that the pursuit of *beauty* is the most important goal, for moral reasons especially. Prominent in the nineteenth century, now it often carries the connotation of decadence or preciousness. Also spelled estheticism. Also see *aesthetics* and *art for art's sake*.

**æsthetics** - The branch of philosophy that deals with the nature and value of *art* objects and experiences. Originally, any activity connected with art, *beauty* and *taste*, becoming more broadly the study of art's function, nature, *ontology*, purpose, and so on. To *postmodernists*, these interests have largely been supplanted by questions of *meaning* and *linguistically* based investigations. They use the term to indicate a certain imprecise distinction between art and life, or as a rough synonym for "artistic."

- "Art is the imposing of a pattern on experience, and our aesthetic enjoyment is recognition of the pattern." Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), English philosopher and mathematician. *Dialogues*, June 10, 1943.
- "I hate that aesthetic game of the eye and the mind, played by these connoisseurs, these mandarins who 'appreciate' beauty. What is beauty, anyway? There's no such thing. I never 'appreciate,' any more than I 'like.' I love or I hate." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. Quoted in: Françoise Gilot and Carlton Lake, *Life with Picasso*, part 6 (1964).

**after** - When used in an artist's *inscription*, it means that that artwork was *modeled* on the work of another artist. It may either be nearly identical to the other's work, or differ to some degree from it.

**alienation** - A sense of isolation, depersonalization, disenchantment, estrangement, or powerlessness. Alienation has been considered an especially important issue during the twentieth century. It's often noted as being at the heart of modern dissatisfactions-- especially of youth, women and racial minorities.

**alla prima** - A method of *oil painting* in which the *picture* is completed with the first application of paints to the entire area, instead of being built up by layering. Italian for "the first time." (pr. ah-lah-pree'mah) Also see *abbozzo*.

**allegory** - When the *literal content* of a work stands for *abstract* ideas, suggesting a parallel, deeper, *symbolic* sense.

Examples of allegorical paintings are:

- Sandro Botticelli (Italian, 1445-1510), *Allegory of Spring (La Primavera)*, 1477-78, 10 feet 4 inches x 6 feet 9 inches (315 x 205 cm) painted for the villa of Lorenzo di Pier Francesco de' Medici at Castello now in the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence.
- Hieronymus Van Aeken Bosch (Flemish, 1450-1516), *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, c. 1510-1515, wooden triptych, (206 x 386 cm), Prado Museum, Madrid.
- Antonio Allegri, known as Correggio (Italian, c. 1489-1534), *Allegory of Vices*, c. 1529-1530, tempera on canvas, 1.42 x 0.85 m, Louvre.
- Dosso Dossi (Italian, about 1490-1542), *Allegory of Fortune*, about 1530, oil on canvas, 70 1/2 x 85 1/2 inches (178 x 216.5 cm), J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, CA.
- Rosso Fiorentino (Giovanni Battista di Jacopo di Guasparre) (Italian, Florence, 1494-1540), *Allegory of Salvation with the Virgin, the Christ Child, Saint Elizabeth, the Young Saint John, and Two Angels*, c 1521, oil on panel, 63 1/2 x 47 inches (161.3 x 119.4 cm), Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

- Pieter Brueghel the Elder (Flemish, 1525/30-1569), ·*The Triumph of Death*, 1562, wood, (117 x 162 cm), Prado Museum, Madrid.
- Peter Paul Rubens (Dutch, 1577-1640), ·*The Apotheosis of Henry IV and the Proclamation of the Regency of Marie de Médicis* (May 14, 1610), 1622-1625, oil on canvas, 3.94 x 7.27 m, Louvre.
- Anthony Van Dyck (Flemish, 1599-1641, active in Italy and England), ·*Andromeda Chained to the Rock*, 1637-38, oil on canvas, 84 3/4 x 52 inches (215.3 x 132.1 cm), Los Angeles County Museum of Art.
- Giuseppe Maria Crespi (Italian, 1665-1747), ·*An Allegory of the Arts*, c. 1730, oil on canvas, 126.5 x 138.5 cm, National Gallery of Canada. This personification of the arts holds in her extended left hand a painter's palette and brushes, while with her right she has sketched a scene of Pygmalion and Gaia, signifying sculpture. Behind her, a harp and lute refer to the art of music.
- Gustave Courbet (French, 1819-1877), ·*The Painter's Studio, A Real Allegory*, 1855, [170 k,] oil on canvas, 11 feet 10 1/4 inches x 19 feet 7 1/2 inches (361 x 598 cm), Musée d'Orsay, Paris.
- Marcel Duchamp (French, 1887-1968), ·*Allégorie de genre (genre allegory [George Washington])*, 1943, assemblage: cardboard, gauze, nails, iodine, and gilt stars, 21 x 16 x 3 inches (54 x 42 x 5 cm), Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. See *Dada*.

**all-over painting** - A *painting surface* which is treated as a continuous and indivisible surface, paint applied so that every portion receives equal attention. First used to describe the method of Jackson Pollock (American, 1912-1956), an *Abstract Expressionist* who, by distributing paint in a significantly uniform way, dripping and spattering it onto canvas spread on his floor, abandoned traditional means of *composition*.

**allusion** - An indirect reference to something or someone presumed to be familiar to the viewer, in order to increase the effect of an *image*. Also see *appropriation* and *citation*.

**alternating figures** - *Ambiguous images* which serve in the psychology of *perception* to demonstrate the way the mind habitually tries to achieve a coherent *Gestalt*. An example is a *drawing* of a *cube* made with twelve *lines*-- allowing for two interpretations of which edges are nearest and farthest. *Op art* occasionally makes use of the phenomenon. Also see *closure*.

**ambiguity** - Something open to two or more interpretations. In expository writing, ambiguity is usually something to be avoided, but many creative

works employ it quite effectively. Not to be confused with *ambivalence*. Also see *incongruity*.

**analogous colors** - *Colors* that are next to each other on the *color wheel* and are closely related. For example, blue, blue-green, and green all have the color blue in common. Families of analogous colors include the warm colors (red, orange and yellow) and the cool colors (green, blue and violet). Analogous colors are sometimes referred to as adjacent colors. (pr. a-na"lah-gus').

**analysis** - The separation of the parts of a *subject* for individual study, in order to find out their nature, *function*, and *meaning*. Exercising the ability to break down learned material into its component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood. Analysis represents the fourth level of learning outcomes in the *cognitive* domain-- the level of understanding just beyond *comprehension* and *application* because they require an understanding of both the content and the structural form of the material. Analysis may include the identification of the parts, analysis of the relationships between parts, and recognition of the organizational principles involved. Objectives of lessons which will increase a student's ability to analyze *knowledge* can be stated with such behavioral terms as: analyze, *appraise*, audit, break down, characterize, check, classify, compare, conclude (draw conclusions) *contrast*, debate, deduce, determine, *diagram*, differentiate, discriminate, dissect, distinguish, examine, experiment, generalize, *graph*, *illustrate*, inspect, infer, inventory, *map*, point out, outline (no format given), question, reason, refute, relate to, *research*, screen, scrutinize, search, *section*, select, separate, sift, simplify, solve, study, subdivide, survey, *syllogize*, test, and uncover. The next higher thinking skill is *synthesis*.

**androgyny** and **androgynous** - Having both male and female characteristics or *qualities*. The use of androgynous *figures* in *mythology* is widespread. In Greek mythology, for example, the minor god Hermaphroditus became both male and female after the nymph Salacis was united with him in one body. The *concept* of androgyny has been further developed by those following the psychological *theory* that human personality is invariably made up of both male and female characteristics. The *feminist movement* has promoted the notion that if males develop their feminine side and women their masculine side, differences could be lessened, and rigid *stereotyping* avoided.

**angst** - In German, an emotional state of anxiety without a specific cause. In *existentialism*, the term refers to general human anxiety at having free will, that is, of being responsible for one's actions.

**animism** - The belief that everything, whether animate or inanimate, possesses a soul or spirit. It is a fundamental system of belief in the religions of numerous pre-industrial societies. In philosophy, the term can be applied to the view that in all things consciousness, or something mind like exists. In developmental psychology, an animistic stage in the early thought and speech of the child has been described, notably by Jean Piaget (French, 1896-1980). Also see *anthropomorphic*.

**annotation** - Information added to an *image*, such as arrows, pointers, words, etc. Annotations to a *digital image* might be stored in layers separate from the image.

**anti-cerne** - A white *space* in the *form* of a *line* between two areas of *color* in a *picture*; the opposite of a black line. Anti-cernes were often used by the *fauve* artists.

**antithesis** - A single *figure* with directly opposing ideas. Also, the second and contrasting part of such a juxtaposition.

**application** - The ability to use learned material in new and concrete situations. Application represents the third level of learning outcomes in the *cognitive* domain-- the level of understanding just beyond *comprehension* (basic understanding of meaning). This may include the application of such things as rules, methods, concepts, principles, laws, and theories. Objectives of lessons which will increase a student's to apply *knowledge* can be stated with such behavioral terms as: apply, *carve*, classify, *collect*, compute, *construct*, demonstrate, dramatize, *draw*, employ, exploit, *frame*, imitate, make, make use of, manipulate, *model*, modify, organize, operate, *paint*, practice, predict, prepare, put in action, put to use, profit by, relate, schedule, *sculpt*, *sequence*, show, *sketch*, solve, try, take up, test out, use, utilize, and wield. The next higher thinking skill is *analysis*. Application might instead refer to a piece of computer software.

**applied arts** - The arts concerned with making objects with *functional* purposes, but for which *aesthetic* concerns are significant. The applied arts may include *architecture*, *interior design*, the *design* of manufactured items, *ceramics*, metalwork, *jewelry*, *textiles*, *glass*, furniture, *graphics*, clocks and

watches, toys, leather, *arms and armor*, musical instruments, etc.

*Commercial art* may be considered a branch of applied art. The applied arts are usually contrasted with the *fine arts* (*drawing, painting, sculpture, fine printing*, etc.), which are seen as serving no purpose other than providing an aesthetic experience. Most of the applied arts might also be described as *design*. The distinction between the applied and the fine arts did not emerge strongly until the time of the Industrial Revolution, and accompanied a growing secularization of art and the emergence of a need felt by some artists to replace dying spiritual values with purely aesthetic values, setting art apart from the rest of life. Nevertheless, some have emphasized the importance of *craft* and regard the distinction between the fine and the applied arts as false and undesirable. Even to those who see it as important to make this distinction, many objects make it very difficult because their purposes are so dominated by their aesthetic ones. Also see *high art*, *decorative arts* and *low art*.

**appropriation** - To take possession of another's *material*, often without permission, reusing it in a *context* which differs from its *original* context, most often in order to examine issues concerning originality or to reveal *meanings* not previously seen in the original. This is far more aggressive than *allusion* or *quotation*, it is not the same as *plagiarism* however. An *image* reused in *collage* is an example, but more complete are the *photographs* that Sherri Levine (American) made of photographs by earlier photographers. Another example of a work involving appropriation:

- Robert Rauschenberg (American, 1925-), · *Retroactive I*, 1964, [65 k,] oil, silkscreen ink on canvas, 84 x 60 inches.

**arrangement** - An *order* or *composition*. Or, a setup or composition of items used for a *still life painting* or *drawing*. Also see *abecedarian*, *chronology*, *periodicity*, *principles of design*, *sequence*, and *taxonomy*.

**art** - For numerous reasons, the most difficult word to define without starting endless argument! Many definitions have been proposed. At least art involves a degree of human involvement-- through manual skills or thought-- as with the word "*artificial*," meaning made by humans instead of by nature. Definitions vary in how they divide all that is artificial into what is and isn't art. The most common means is to rely upon the estimations of art experts and institutions. More useful may be to see definitions of *aesthetics*, *the arts*, *beaux-art*, *craft*, *high art*, and *low art*.

- "Life is short, art endures..." Hippocrates (c460-400 BC) Greek philosopher. *Aphorisms*, Section I, 1.
- "Art completes what nature cannot bring to finish" Aristotle (384-322 BC), Greek philosopher.
- "Art is a half-effaced recollection of a higher state from which we have fallen since the time of Eden." Saint Hildegarde (1098-1179).
- "That which is static and repetitive is boring. That which is dynamic and random is confusing. In between lies art." John A. Locke (1632-1704), English philosopher.
- "Criticism is easy, art is difficult." Detouches [Philippe Nericault] (1680-1754) French. *Le Glorieux*, 1732.
- "Were I called on to define, very briefly, the term Art, I should call it 'the reproduction of what the Senses perceive in Nature through the veil of the soul.' The mere imitation, however accurate, of what is in Nature, entitles no man to the sacred name of 'Artist.'" Edgar Allan Poe (1809-45), U.S. poet, critic, short-story writer. "Marginalia," in *Southern Literary Messenger* (Richmond, VA, June 1849; reprinted in *Essays and Reviews*, 1984).
- "Shall I tell you what I think are the two qualities of a work of art? First, it must be the indescribable, and second, it must be inimitable." Pierre Auguste Renoir (1841-1914), French Impressionist. From an interview with Walter Pach in *Scribner's Magazine*, May, 1912.
- "It is art that makes life, makes interest, makes importance... and I know of no substitute whatever for the force and beauty of its process." Henry James (1843-1916), U.S. author. Letter, July 10, 1915
- "Art requires philosophy, just as philosophy requires art. Otherwise, what would become of beauty?" Paul Gauguin (1848-1903), French artist. *Intimate Journals* (translated by Van Wyck Brooks, 1923; reprinted 1930, p. 193).
- "It is through art, and through art only, that we can realize our perfection; through art and art only that we can shield ourselves from the sordid perils of actual existence." Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), English author, playwright. *The Critic as Artist*, part II, 1891.
- "Art is the most intense mode of individualism that the world has known." Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Irish poet and playwright.
- "Paradoxically though it may seem, it is none the less true that life imitates art far more than art imitates life." Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Irish poet and playwright.
- "Art is the imposing of a pattern on experience, and our aesthetic enjoyment is recognition of the pattern." Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), British philosopher. *Dialogues*, June 10, 1943 (1954).
- "Only through art can we get outside of ourselves and know another's view of the universe which is not the same as ours and see landscapes which would otherwise have remained unknown to us like the landscapes of the moon. Thanks to art, instead of seeing a single world, our own, we see it multiply until we have before us as many worlds as there are original artists.... And many centuries after their core, whether we call it Rembrandt or Vermeer, is extinguished, they continue to send us their special rays." Marcel Proust (1871-1922) French writer. *The Maxims of Marcel Proust*, translated by Justin O'Brien, published 1948.

- "Surely all art is the result of one's having been in danger, of having gone through an experience all the way to the end, where no one can go any further." Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926), German poet. Letter, June 24, 1907, to his wife (published in Rilke's *Letters on Cézanne*, 1952; translated 1985).
- "True art is characterized by an irresistible urge in the creative artist." Albert Einstein (1879-1955), German mathematician and physicist.
- "Art does not reproduce the visible; rather, it makes visible." Paul Klee (1879-1940), Swiss artist.
- "Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist.
- "For Arp, art is Arp." Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968), French-American Cubist, then Dadaist. From a catalogue, *Arp*, Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1965.
- "But all categories of art, idealistic or realistic, surrealistic or constructivist (a new form of idealism) must satisfy a simple test (or they are in no sense works of art): they must persist as objects of contemplation." Herbert Read (1893-1968), British art writer. *Modern Sculpture*.
- "Art is the objectification of feeling, and the subjectification of nature." Susanne Langer (1895-1985). *Mind, An Essay on Human Feeling*.
- "Art is an adventure into an unknown world, which can only be explored by those willing to take the risks." Mark Rothko (1903-1970), American painter.
- "Art is coming face to face with yourself. That's what's wrong with [Thomas Hart] Benton. He came face to face with Michelangelo-- and he lost." Jackson Pollock (1912-1956), American *Abstract Expressionist* painter.
- "I have the loftiest idea, and the most passionate one, of art. Much too lofty to agree to subject it too anything. Much too passionate to want to divorce it from anything." Albert Camus (1913-1961), French *existentialist* writer. *Notebooks*, 1942-1951.
- "Art establishes the basic human truths which must serve as the touchstone of our judgment." John F. Kennedy (1917-1963) American president. An address at Amherst College, October 26, 1963.
- "I am for an art that takes its forms from the lines of life itself, that twists and extends and accumulates and spits and drips and is heavy and coarse and blunt and sweet and stupid as life itself." Claes Oldenburg (1929-), American Pop artist. In an exhibition catalogue, 1961.
- "Art today is a new kind of instrument, an instrument for modifying consciousness and organizing new modes of sensibility . . . . Artists have had to become self-conscious aestheticians: continually challenging their means, their materials and methods." Susan Sontag (1933-), American writer. *Against Interpretation*.
- "My dear Tristan, to be an artist at all is like living in Switzerland during a world war." Tom Stoppard (1937-), American (?) playwright. *Travesties*, 1974.
- "Art is making something out of nothing and selling it." Frank Zappa (1940-1993), American musical satirist.
- "Do not imagine that Art is something which is designed to give gentle uplift and self-confidence. Art is not a brassiere. At least, not in the English sense. But do

- not forget that brassiere is the French word for life-jacket." Julian Barnes (1946-), English writer. *Flaubert's Parrot*.
- Fred Babb (American, contemporary), *Art is a place kids travel to where they feel good about themselves. Keep their passports current*. Fred Babb's work typically takes the role of art, and the activities of artists as his subject. It has been reproduced in books, on posters, on t-shirts, etc. .

**art appreciation** - The introduction of basic principles of visual literacy -- especially the means to *analyzing form* without reference to *subject* matter, *symbolism* or historical *context* -- to general *audiences* for the purpose of enhancing their enjoyment of works of art. Most *contemporary critics* disparage art appreciation as demanding too little serious thought.

**art critic** - A person who *analyses*, evaluates, or *expresses* judgments of the merits, faults and value of artworks.

- "CRITIC, n: One who boasts of being 'hard to please' because nobody tries to please him." Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914), American writer. *The Cynic's Word Book*, also known as *The Devil's Dictionary*, 1906.
- "PAINTING, n: The art of protecting flat surfaces from the weather and exposing them to the critic." Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914), American writer. *The Cynic's Word Book*, also known as *The Devil's Dictionary*, 1906.

**art criticism** - The *analysis*, *evaluation*, *interpretation*, and study of works of art. It is a common assumption that criticism is necessarily negative, when actually it can vary in degrees of positive as well as negative remarks. Critical methods vary considerably in their approaches to considering the *form*, *content*, and *context* of works of art. Also see *aesthetics*, *antiquarianism*, *argument*, *art appreciation*, *art conservation*, *art theory*, *connoisseurship*, *deconstruction*, *feminism*, *formalism*, *hermeneutics*, *iconography*, *interpretation*, *Marxism*, *museology*, *patronage*, *periodicity*, *praise*, *semiotics*, *structuralism*, and *taxonomy*.

- "Then we went to Matisse's studio. He's one of the neo, neo Impressionists, quite interesting and lots of talent but very queer. He does things very much like Pamela's [Fry's 7-year-old daughter]." Roger Fry (1866-1934), British art critic. Letter to his wife, 1909.
- "I am now completely Matissiste . . . after studying all of his paintings I am quite convinced of his genius." Roger Fry (1866-1934), British art critic. Letter to Simon Bussy, 1911.
- "What distinguishes modern art from the art of other ages is criticism." Octavio Paz (1914-), Mexican poet.
- "Without the meditative background that is criticism, works become isolated gestures, ahistorical accidents, soon forgotten." Milan Kundera (1929-), Czech author, critic. "On Criticism, Aesthetics, and Europe," in *Review of Contemporary*

*Fiction* (Summer 1989; originally from Kundera's introduction to François Ricard, *La Littérature Contre Elle-Même*).

**Arte Povera** - Italian for "poor art," it was mostly *sculptural* work made from everyday *materials* including soil, cement, twigs, newspapers, instead of traditional materials like *stone* and *bronze*. This largely Italian *movement*, named by the critic Germano Celant in 1967, endured through the 1970s, concerned with *metaphorical* treatments to do with nature, *culture*, history, and contemporary life. Artists associated with Arte Povera include Jannis Kounellis, Mario Merz, and Michelangelo Pistoletto.

**art for art's sake** - Any of several points of view related to the possibility of art being independent of concerns that order other disciplines. The term is primarily used regarding artists and art writers of the second half of the nineteenth century, especially Charles Baudelaire (French, 1821-1867), James A. McNeill Whistler (American, 1834-1903) and Oscar Wilde (English, 1854-1900), and Edgar Allan Poe (American, 1809-1849). Here's a link to Whistler's *Harmony in Blue and Gold: The Peacock Room* (detail, south wall), 1876--77, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. The Peacock Room was once the dining room in the London home of Frederick R. Leyland, a wealthy ship owner from Liverpool, England. Leyland commissioned Whistler to paint the dining room. Between 1876 and 1877, Whistler brightened the room with golden peacocks, painting every inch of the ceiling and walls to create an elegant setting in which Leyland could display his blue-and-white porcelain as well as Whistler's painting *The Princess from the Land of Porcelain*.

**art history** - Knowledge about the contributions artists and art make to *culture* and society.

**artifact** - An object produced or shaped by human *craft*, especially a rudimentary art form or object, as in the products of prehistoric workmanship. In *digital imagery*, visual effects introduced into an *image* in the course of *scanning* or compression that do not correspond to the image scanned.

**artist** - One who makes art. It is very interesting to consider that some find this standard far too liberal-- that one might be a great painter, for instance, but an "artist" is something significantly above and beyond that in

achievement. Nevertheless, a distinction is generally drawn between an artist and an artisan.

- "Art is a jealous mistress and if a man has a genius for painting, poetry, music, architecture or philosophy, he makes a bad husband and an ill provider." Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1888), American essayist, critic, and philosopher.
- "Every artist dips his brush in his own soul, and paints his nature into his pictures." Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), American clergyman.
- "He is the greatest artist who has embodied, in the sum of his works, the greatest numbers of the greatest ideas." John Ruskin (1819-1900) English critic. *Modern Painters*, Vol. I, part I, chapter 2, 1843.
- "History has remembered the kings and warriors, because they destroyed; Art has remembered the people, because they created." William Morris (1834-1896), English artist, poet, and social reformer.
- "The artist is the confidant of nature. Flowers carry on dialogues with him through the graceful bending of their stems and the harmoniously tinted nuances of their blossoms. Every flower has a cordial word which nature directs towards him." Auguste Rodin (1840-1917), French sculptor.
- "All Artists are Anarchists." George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), Irish playwright. Quoted by painter Augustus John, c. 1945, *Chiaroscuro*.
- "The position of the artist is humble. He is essentially a channel." Piet Mondrian (1872-1944), modern Dutch painter.
- "The artist is not a special kind of man, but every man is a special kind of artist." Ananda Coomaraswamy (1877-1947), Indian writer. *Transformation of Nature in Art*.
- "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), modern Spanish artist.
- "There really is no such thing as Art. There are only artists." E. H. Gombrich, English art historian, writing in 1950.

**artwork** - A general term referring to any artistic production. Sometimes, like *oeuvre*, it can also signify an entire body of works.

**asymmetry, asymmetrical balance** - The parts of a *design* organized so that one side differs from the other without destroying the overall *harmony*. Also known as informal *balance*, it can be observed in this picture:

- Edgar Degas (French, 1834-1917), *Race Horses*, 1885-1888, [100 k,] pastel on panel, 11 7/8 x 16 inches, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Asymmetrical and symmetrical are two kinds of balance, which is a principle of art. (pr. ay-sih"meh-tree')

**audience** - Any viewer, reader, or listener, either alone or with others. Sometimes those for whom a work is either intended, or whoever will eventually view, read or listen to a work, though at present unforeseen.

**authorial ignorance** - The idea that the entire or true *meanings* of works of art actually elude their makers.

**authorial irrelevance** - The idea that the *audience's* understanding of the meaning of an art work ought not be effected by an *author's* biography, social *context*, or stated intentions.

**authorial responsibility** - The idea that the *audience* has no responsibility for a work's success or failure, but that it rests entirely upon the artist's efforts. This point of view has largely been rejected by *postmodernist art critics*.

**automatism** - A process of making mechanically, randomly, or by unconscious free association (rather than under the control of a conscious artist), after establishing a set of conditions (such as types of materials, etc.) within which a work is to be carried out. Also called automatic *drawing*, *painting* or writing. Joan Miró (Spanish, 1893-1983), André Masson (French, 1896-1987), and "Matta" Roberto Matta Echaurren (Chilean-American, 1912-) employed this method. Example:

- "Matta" Roberto Matta Echaurren (Chilean-American, 1912-), *Let's Phosphoresce by Intellection #1*, c. 1950, oil on canvas, 58 x 69 5/8 inches (148.6 x 179.1 cm), Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

**balance** - A *principle of art*, it refers to the way the *art elements* are arranged to create a feeling of stability in a work. Balance can be *symmetrical*, or formal; or it can be *asymmetrical*, or informal. It can also be *radial*. Here's a link to a painting which is famous for the *elegant* balance in its *composition*: *Young Woman with a Water Jug* by Johannes Vermeer (Dutch, 1632-1675), oil on canvas; 18 x 16 inches (45.7 x 40.6 cm), Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY. Quotation about balance:

- "I find sometimes I may want to end up with subtlety, but I have to start out boldly. I think you have to exaggerate to get it across. . . . All I can say is that you have to lean over a little to the left, and overdo it a bit, and then come back into balance, that ever-important balance." Andrew Wyeth (1917-), American figurative painter, *The Two Worlds of Andrew Wyeth: Kuerners and Olsons*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976.

**beauty** - A delighting *quality* generally associated with *harmony* of *form* or *color*, excellence of *craftsmanship*, truthfulness, *originality*, or other noble aspects of experience beyond *superficial* appearance or mere prettiness.

- "The beautiful is that which is desirable *in itself*." Aristotle (384-322 BC), Greek philosopher.
- "Beauty in things exists in the mind which contemplates them." David Hume (1711-1776), Scottish philosopher and historian.

"We may. . . begin at once by asserting that artistic beauty stands higher than nature

- For the beauty of art is a beauty that is born-- born again, that is-- of the mind; and by as much as the mind and its products are higher than nature and its appearances, by so much is the beauty of art higher than the beauty of nature." Georg W. F. Hegel (1770-1831), German philosopher who proposed that truth is reached by a continuing dialect.
- "What is beautiful is a joy for all seasons and a possession for all eternity." Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Irish-born writer. *A Picture of Dorian Gray*, 1891.
- "The beauty of materials is my last concern." Constantin Brancusi (1876-1957), Rumanian modernist sculptor. Sidney Geist, *Brancusi: A Study of the Sculpture*, 1968.
- "Art is not the application of a canon of beauty but what the instinct and the brain can conceive beyond any canon. When we love a woman we don't start measuring her limbs." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. "Conversation avec Picasso", in *Cahiers d'Art*, vol. 10, no. 10 (1935; translated in Alfred H. Barr Jr., *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art*, 1946).
- "When I think of art I think of beauty. Beauty is the mystery of life. It is not in the eye, it is in the mind. In our minds there is awareness of perfection." Agnes Martin (1912-), American modernist painter.

**binary colors** - *Colors* made by the mixing of two *hues*. Examples are orange, green, and purple.

**biomorphic form** - An *abstract form* whose *shapes* are more *organic* than *geometric*, more curvaceous than *linear*. Much of the work of Hans [Jean] Arp (German-French, 1887-1966) was composed as biomorphic forms.

Another example:

- Jean [or Hans] Arp (French, 1887-1966), *Head with Mustaches and Bottles*, 1929, oil on wood, cut and glued onto wood, 80 x 100 x 3 cm, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.
- Jean [or Hans] Arp, *Petite Sculpture de Reve*, 1946, bronze, Norton Museum, West Palm Beach, Florida.

**bland** - Without impact or strength. Bland art is too mild. Also see *academic, bad art, buckeye, calendar painting, edge, ennui, kitsch, low art, picturesque, popular art, and sublime*.

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

**Body Art** or **body art** - An art form in which the artist's body is the *medium*. A type of *conceptual art* which was a precursor to *performance art*, Body Art often took the form of public or private performances, many of which became known more widely through *photographic* and *textual documentations*. Among the Body artists at its height from the 1960s to about 1980 were Vito Acconci (American, 1939-), Chris Burden (American, 1946-), and Ana Mendieta (American, ). *Tattooing*, body-piercing, *scarification*, and *mehndi* are forms of body art with long traditions, each too with contemporary manifestations. Yahoo has a list of Body Art sites.

**calendar painting** - *Painting* having pleasing *subject* matter, but rarely having lasting value as art. Also see *academic, bad art, bland, buckeye, kitsch, low art, picturesque, and popular art*.

**canon** - In art, the body of unquestionably important artists (*DWMs*-- dead white males) and works. Until recently the canon was seldom challenged, and changed at a sluggish pace. Now it's being relentlessly challenged by art historians and critics recovering forgotten and ignored artists (especially by women, non-whites, and *outsiders*) both within and outside the Western world. The scope of what is considered art has been widening as new fields, including *photography, performance, video, crafts, and design*, are added to what amounts to an ever-increasing canon. *Postmodernism*, however, has put in question the very idea of an irreducible list of *masters* and *masterpieces*. So, when referring to the canon today, one should specify what sort of canon one means.

**catalog** or **catalogue** - A list which is an inventory of works in a *gallery, museum, or other collection*. It describes the works, and may contain articles discussing their history, or assessing them in other ways. It is usually in *book form*, but it may be produced in other ways as well. Also see *catalogue raisonné*.

**catalogue raisonné** - A *monograph* purporting to contain a complete list of an artist's works, including thorough chronology, descriptions, photographs, notes on *provenance*, owners, samples of signatures, and a bibliography.

**chiaroscuro** - A word borrowed from Italian ("light and shade" or "dark") referring to the *modeling* of *volumes* by depicting *light* and *shade* by *contrasting* them boldly. This is one means of strengthening an *illusion* of *depth* on a *two-dimensional surface*, and was an important topic among artists of the *Renaissance*. (pr. kee-ahr'oh-scyoo"roh)

**chroma** - One aspect of *colors* (other than those in the black-white scale): *hue* and *saturation*, or degree of vividness.

**chromatic pigments** - All the *pigments* which are neither black, white, nor gray-- the *achromatic pigments*. Also see *chroma*.

**chronology** - The arrangement of events in the *order* in which they occurred in *time*; sequential order. Or, a list, a *survey*, or *exhibit* which is *sequenced* in this way. Such *linear narratives* follow an easy logic, but can be oppressive. The most commonly employed alternative model is *thematic*. A quote:

- "Chronological surveys typically misrepresent the history of art as a seamlessly coherent narrative. . . . art historians have fetishized a chronological, diachronic model based on causality and often teleology that supports a linear model of history and an elitist, exclusive lineage of art." Patricia Matthews, contemporary American art historian, *Art Journal*, 1995.

**classical** - This term has come to have several *meanings*. Originally it was used when referring to the art of *ancient* Greece produced during the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. Later it included all works of art created from 600 B.C. until the fall of Rome. Still later it was used to describe any art form thought to be inspired or influenced by ancient Greek or Roman examples. Today, classical is used to describe *perfection* of *form*, with an *emphasis* on *harmony* and *unity* and restraint of emotion. Usually, it is applied to works that are *representational* but *idealistic*. Classic is used to describe anything which is the *epitome* of its type.

**cliché** - An idea or expression that has lost its *originality* or its force, and become trite because of its overuse. A *stereotype*. Most clichés become popular over the years because they express a thought aptly and concisely, when, if used too often, their aptness can be overwhelmed by their dullness. About cliché: "The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug." Samuel Clemens, aka "Mark Twain" (1835-1910), American writer.

**cognitive** - Having to do with the mental process or faculty of knowing, including such things as *analysis*, *application*, awareness, *comprehension*, *perception*, reasoning, *synthesis*, *evaluation*, and *meta-cognition*.

**collaboration** - Two or more artists working together in a joint effort to produce artworks. Also known as working in an art collective. One example is called *exquisite corpse*.

- "Art is a collaboration between God and the artist, and the less the artist does, the better." Andre Gide (1869-1951), French author.

**collage** - A *picture* or *design* created by *adhering* such basically *flat* elements as *newspaper*, wallpaper, printed *text* and *illustrations*, *photographs*, cloth, string, etc., to a *flat surface*, when the result becomes *three-dimensional*. Introduced by the *Cubist* artists, it was widely used by artists who followed, and is a familiar *technique* in *contemporary* art.

**collection** - An accumulation of objects. [Someone said that as soon as you have three of something, you have a collection.] Collections can be formed around any of a variety of *parameters*. They may be centered upon a *medium* or *technique*, a certain *period* or group of artists, or a *subject*, for instance; or they may be encyclopedic, as can be the entire collection of a large *museum*. Museums typically have both permanent collections and traveling collections. Also see *accession*, *deaccession*, *donation*, *gallery*, and *patron*

**collograph** - A *print* made from an *image* built up with glue and sometimes other materials. The *inked* image is transferred from *plate* to *paper* and is simultaneously *embossed*. The name derives from *collage*. Not to be confused with a *collagraph*.

**color** - Produced when *light* strikes an object and then reflects back to your eyes. An *element of art* with three properties: (1) *hue* or *tint*, the color name, e.g., red, yellow, blue, etc.; (2) *intensity*, the purity and strength of a color, e.g., bright red or dull red; and (3) *value*, the lightness or darkness of a color. *Photographers* measure color temperature in degrees *kelvin* (K).

- "Color is the keyboard, the eyes are the harmonies, the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand that plays, touching one key or another, to cause vibrations in the soul." Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944), *modern* Russian painter, one of the first creators of pure *abstraction* in modern painting and founder of *Der Blaue Reiter*.
- "Blue is the male principle, stern and spiritual. Yellow the female principle, gentle, cheerful and sensual. Red is matter, brutal and heavy, and always the color which must be fought and vanquished by the other two." Franz Marc (1880-1916), German painter of *Der Blaue Reiter*. In a letter to Auguste Macke.
- "Colors, like features, follow the changes of the emotions." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. "Conversation avec Picasso", in *Cahiers d'Art*, vol. 10, no. 10 (Paris, 1935; translated in Alfred H. Barr, Jr., *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art*, 1946).
- "Anybody who paints and sees a sky green and pastures blue ought to be sterilized." Adolph Hitler (1889-1945), German dictator and perpetrator of genocide, who painted as a very young man. Also see *degenerate art*.
- "I try to apply colors like words that shape poems, like notes that shape music." Joan Miró (1893-1983), Spanish *Surrealist* artist.
- "I make black and white prints because I want to go back to the beginning, and because in prints black and white are absolute: these two colors express the most delicate vibration, the most profound tranquility, and unlimited profundity." Shiko Munakata (1903-1975), Japanese.
- "Artists can color the sky red because they know it's blue. Those of us who aren't artists must color things the way they really are or people might think we're stupid." Jules Feiffer, contemporary American cartoonist and writer.

**color-field painting** - *Paintings* with solid areas of *color* covering the entire *canvas*, as exemplified in the work of Mark Rothko (American, 1903-1970), Kenneth Noland (American, 1924-), and Jules Olitski (American, 1922-). A type of *Abstract Expressionism*, these artists were interested in the lyrical or atmospheric effects of vast expanses of color, filling the canvas, and by suggestion, beyond it to infinity. Most color-field paintings are large-- meant to be seen up close so that the viewer is immersed in a color environment.

**color scheme** - The *colors* an artist uses and the way they are combined in an artwork. About color schemes:

- "Why do two colors, put one next to the other, sing? Can one really explain this? No. Just as one can never learn how to paint." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. *Arts de France*, no. 6 (Paris; 1946; translated in Dore Ashton, *Picasso on Art*, 1972).
- "He who knows how to appreciate color relationships, the influence of one color on another, their contrasts and dissonances, is promised an infinitely diverse imagery." Sonia Delaunay (1885-1979), French painter. Quoted by Jacques Damase in *Sonia Delaunay: Rythms and Colors*.

**combine** - Any painted *assemblage* that is neither simply *painting* or *sculpture*, but rather a hybrid painting-sculpture. The term combine was coined by Robert Rauschenberg (American, 1925-).

**commodity and commodification** - Something which can be bought and sold; an article of trade. Referring to an artwork as a commodity minimizes its significance in other ways-- as an *expression* of an artist's feelings, *allegory*, *formal* issues, etc. Bringing out this aspect in an object is called commodification. And, about commodities and commodification:

- "Art among a religious race produces relics; among a military one, trophies; among a commercial one, articles of trade." Henry Fuseli (1741-1825), English Romantic painter.
- "The works of art, by being publicly exhibited and offered for sale, are becoming articles of trade, following as such the unreasoning laws of markets and fashion; and public and even private patronage is swayed by their tyrannical influence." Prince Albert (1819-1861), husband to English Queen Victoria.

**communication** - Conveying information; exchanging ideas, etc., in such a way that they are understood. A notion underlying popular ideas of art-- that is, that an artwork is made to convey something specific that the artist had in mind, and making an artwork is primarily a matter of finding the means to make that something understood. In the 1960s, *Minimalists* entirely rejected the validity of this point of view, largely in favor of *formalist* issues. About communication:

- "I paint only for myself. I would like my work to communicate, but if it doesn't, that's all right too. I never think of the public when I paint-- never." Edward Hopper (1882-1967), American painter. Quoted by Katherine Kuh, *The Artist's Voice*, 1960.
- "Painting a picture is not a form of self-expression. It is, like any other art, a language by which you communicate something about the world." Mark Rothko (1903-1970), American *Abstract-Expressionist* painter. Lecture delivered at Pratt Institute, 1958.

- "Every art changes inevitably in its manifestations as its creators develop, but less than one might think: it always keeps its simple, noble function, indispensable to man, which is to communicate." Karel Kupka. *Dawn of Art*, 1965.

**complementary colors** - *Colors* that are directly opposite each other on the *color wheel*, such as red and green, blue and orange, and violet and yellow. When complements are mixed together they form the *neutral* colors of brown or gray.

Note that this term is spelled differently than the word "complimentary," which means gift.

**complexity** - Closely related to *variety*, a *principle of art*, this term refers to a way of combining the *elements of art* in involved ways, to create intricate and complicated relationships. A picture composed of many shapes of different *colors*, sizes, and *textures* would be called complex.

**compose** - To create, put together, or arrange the *elements of art* in a work, usually according to the *principles of art*.

**composition** - The *plan*, placement or arrangement of the *elements of art* in a work, usually according to the *principles of art*. The *design* of a composition should either be pleasing or otherwise *expressive*. The term has also come to refer to any work of art, because any work's composition is so essential to it.

**concept** - An idea, thought, or notion conceived through mental activity. The words concept and conception are applied to mental formulations on a broad scale.

- "Art is the expression of the profoundest thoughts in the simplest way." Albert Einstein (1879-1955), German scientist.
- "I begin with an idea and then it becomes something else." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish modern artist.

**conceptual** - In general, referring to *concepts* or conception. In reference to art, *imagery* which departs from *perceptual accuracy* to present a mental formulation of the object, rather than its appearance alone. As examples, the rigidly formal art of ancient Egypt may be viewed as conceptual, whereas the *Realism* of Gustave Courbet (French, 1819-1877) is *perceptual*. Nevertheless, it should not be thought that perceptual art is really without ideas (or *ideology*), however.

**conceptual art** - Art that is intended to convey an idea or a *concept* to the perceiver and need not involve the creation or appreciation of a traditional art object such as a *painting* or a *sculpture*.

**concrete** - In *art criticism*, concrete refers to things which are real, particular, tangible; as opposed to *abstract*.

**connotation** - A thought or *meaning* suggested by or associated with a word or thing which goes beyond *denotations*, or *literal* meanings. Any *figurative* meaning, emotional baggage, or conventional associations attaching to words and things. Connotations may be universal, restricted to a group (for instance, a nationality, income level or gender), or personal. The usefulness of the latter category is questionable, since it is quite possible for an individual viewer to read into a work personal connotations which are not shared by a general *audience*.

**consign and consignment** - To consign is to transfer something, a work of art or an antique for instance, to a merchant so that it will be sold. In advance of the transference, the terms of the consignment must be agreed upon -- time period, price, fee paid to merchant, etc. The person or entity consigning something is known as the consignee; the person or entity to which it is consigned is the consignor (also spelled consigner). Example:

- Artnet.com takes consignments of 19th century and early 20th century European paintings, watercolors, prints, drawings, and sculpture.

**consistency** - Agreement among things or parts. Compatibility between related aspects. Continuously similar in certain respects. Also, degree or *texture* of density, firmness or *viscosity*. Also see *absurd*, *hardness*, *harmony*, and *incongruity*.

- "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines." Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82), U.S. essayist, poet, philosopher. *Essays*, "Self-Reliance" (First Series, 1841).
- "What, then, is the true Gospel of consistency? Change. Who is the really consistent man? The man who changes. Since change is the law of his being, he cannot be consistent if he stick in a rut." Mark Twain (1835-1910), U.S. author. "Consistency," paper, read in Hartford, Connecticut, 1884 (published in 1923; reprinted in *Complete Essays*, edited by Charles Neider, 1963).
- "Consistency is the last refuge of the unimaginative." Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Anglo-Irish playwright, author. "The Relation of Dress to Art," in *Pall Mall Gazette* (London, Feb. 28, 1885; reprinted in *Aristotle at Afternoon Tea: The Rare Oscar Wilde*, 1991).

- "Consistency is contrary to nature, contrary to life. The only completely consistent people are the dead." Aldous Huxley (1894-1963), British author. *Do What You Will*, "Wordsworth in the Tropics" (1929).

**content** - What a work of art is about; its *subject* matter. Content should not be confused with *form* (a work's physical characteristics) or *context* (a work's environment-- time, place, *audience*, etc.), although each of these effect each other, and a work's total significance. On the other hand, some feel that content is the *meaning* of a work beyond its subject matter-- *denotations*-- that it consists also of its *connotations*, levels of meaning which are not obviously apparent. Content has three levels of complexity. The first includes *literal iconography*; straightforward *subjects* and *imagery*, describable facts, actions, and/or poses. The second includes the basic *genres*, figurative meanings like those afforded by conventional *signs* and *symbols*, basic *tropes*, and/or *performance* qualities. The third represents the effect on the subject of form and context. Quotations about content:

- "Content is that which a work betrays but does not parade." Edwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 1903. (pr. con'tent)

**context** - The varied circumstances in which a work of art is (or was) produced and interpreted. There are three arenas to these circumstances, each of them highly complex. The first pertains to the artist: attitudes, beliefs, interests, values, intentions and purposes, education and training, and biography (including psychology). The second is the setting in which the work was produced: the apparent *function* of the work (to adorn, beautify, *express*, *illustrate*, mediate, persuade, record, redefine reality, or redefine art), religious and philosophical convictions, socio-political and economic structures, and even climate and geography. Third is the field of the work's reception and interpretation: the traditions it is intended to serve, the mind-set it adheres to (ritualistic, *perceptual*, rational, and emotive), and, perhaps most importantly, the color of the lenses through which the work is being scrutinized-- i.e., the *interpretive* mode (artistic biography, psychological approaches, political criticism, *feminism*, *cultural* history, intellectual history, *formalism*, *structuralism*, *semiotics*, *hermeneutics*, *post-structuralism* and *deconstruction*, *reception theory*, concepts of *periodicity* [stylistic pendulum swinging], and other chronological and contextual considerations. Context is much more than the matter of the artist's circumstances alone.

**contrast** - A large difference between two things; for example, hot and cold, green and red, light and shadow. Closely related to *emphasis*, a *principle of art*, this term refers to a way of combining *art elements* to stress the differences between those elements. Thus, a painting might have bright *colors* which contrast with dull colors, or angular *shapes* which contrast with rounded shapes. Used in this way, contrast can excite, emphasize and direct attention to points of interest.

"Isn't it fascinating to realize that no image, no form, not even a shade or color, 'exists' on its own; that among everything that's visually observable we can refer only to relationships and to contrasts?" Maurits Cornelius Escher (1898-1972), Dutch graphic artist.

**convention** - General agreement on or acceptance of certain *customs*; a standard attitude, interpretation, or practice (procedure, *technique*, *iconography*, etc.).

**cool colors** - *Colors* often associated with water, sky, spring, and foliage, and suggest coolness. These are the colors which contain blue and green and appear on one side of the *color wheel* opposite the *warm colors*. Psychologically, cool colors are said to be calming, unemphatic, depressive; optically, they generally appear to recede. Also see *analogous colors*.

**copy** - An intentional imitation, *reproduction*, or duplication of an *original* work of art, usually produced in the same *medium*. Unlike a *fake*, a copy generally is intended as an emulation of a *model* rather than as a deception. A variation on copying, complicating the issues involved in distinguishing between originals, copies, and *forgeries*, are *appropriations*. Also, *text* material, to be *printed* or spoken. And, to *photocopy* as with *xerography*..

"Success is dangerous. One begins to copy oneself, and to copy oneself is more dangerous than to copy others. It leads to sterility." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. *Vogue* (New York, Nov. 1, 1956).

**craft** - Technical skill, manual dexterity, considered apart from the *fine arts*, or from the cerebral, *expressive*, or *aesthetic* aspects of them. Also, any of the manual activities performed by artisans or craftpeople, as distinguished from the specific group of techniques that are practiced by artists in the making of fine art. Although there have been tensions resulting from differentiations between the art and the craft, especially since the onslaught of mechanization in the

industrial era, support for the notion of craft has been undercut. However, there have been certain revivals and other *movements*

**creativity** - The ability or power to create. Productivity with originality and expressiveness; imagination; newness. The stages of the creative process:

1. Finding or formulating a problem. George Kneller (American psychologist) called this stage "first insight."
2. Researching and drawing from life experience, networking, etc. This stage is variously called "discovery" and "saturation."
3. Mulling over the problem in a sort of chaos of ideas and knowledge, letting go of certainties. Jacob Getzel (American psychologist) called this stage "incubation"-- engaging the intuitive, non-sequential, or global thinking at the core of creativity.
4. One or more ideas surface. This is also called "immersion" and "illumination." The idea is tested as a potential solution to the problem. Getzel called this "verification." This final stage often involves revision-- conscious structuring and editing of created material. which have served to counterbalance this trend.

**critique** - A critical review or discussion, especially one dealing with works of art or literature. Often refers to the *evaluation* of fine arts students' work. Also, to review or discuss critically. The word criticize often has a negative connotation, while critique is generally used more neutrally, or practically. Also see *art criticism*. (pr. cri-teek')

- "Art is there to be seen, not talked about, except perhaps in its presence." Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), German writer and scientist, who did important work on the nature of color, and spent 50 years on his two-part dramatic poem *Faust*.

"Artists should be judged by results, not by intentions." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist.

**culture** - The entirety of socially transmitted behavior *patterns*, arts, beliefs, and all other products of human work and thought: *decorative artifacts*, environmental pollutants, *high art*, political *ideologies*, ritual beliefs, social *customs*, and so on. In anthropology, culture refers to the way of life of a human society, transmitted from one generation to the next by learning and by experience. Cultural universals include social organization, religion,

**deaccession** - To sell a work of art from a *museum's collection*, especially in order to purchase other works of art. During the art market of the 1980s, when prices were driven up by speculators, some museums resorted to the sale of what were considered secondary or redundant pieces in order to raise funds to acquire others. This is a controversial practice, raising questions as

to whether such decisions reflect current tastes and will stand the test of time. (pr. dee´ak-sesh"en) Also see *accession*, *commodification*, and *gallery*.

**decollage** - The tearing away of parts of posters or other images which were adhered to each other in layers, so that portions of the underlayers contribute to the final *image*. (pr. de'coh-lahzh") Also see *New Realism*. Decollage should not be confused with *collage*-- which is its opposite-- or with *décolletage*-- which is another subject altogether.

**deconstruction** - A method of literary criticism that assumes language refers only to itself rather than to a reality outside of a *text*, that asserts multiple conflicting interpretations of a text, and that bases such interpretations on the philosophical, political, or social implications of the use of language in the text rather than on the author's intention.

**deduction** - Reaching a conclusion only when it follows necessarily from stated facts or proposals; reasoning from the general to the specific. One cannot contradict such a conclusion without questioning one or more of the premises from which it followed.

**depth** - The apparent distance from front to back or near to far in an artwork. *Techniques* of *perspective* are used to create the *illusion* of depth in *paintings* or *drawings*. Examples of these techniques are: controlling variation between sizes of depicted *subjects*, *overlapping* them, and placing those that are on the depicted ground as lower when nearer and higher when deeper. An interesting example is a wood engraving by M.C. (Maurits Cornelis) Escher (Dutch, 1898-1971) that he titled *Depth*, 1955, 32 x 23 cm. Also see *aerial perspective*, *chiaroscuro*, *herringbone perspective*, and *linear perspective*.

**derived image** - In *digital imaging*, an *image* that is obtained from another one, usually by eliminating part of it. Common techniques used to create a derived images include taking a detail, *subsampling* to a lower resolution, using *lossy compression*, or using image-processing techniques to alter an image. Also called derivative image. Also see *new*, *original* and *originality*.

**description** - A statement creating a mental *image* of something experienced, or the act of making such a statement. Not to be confused with *interpretation*, description demands only the facts. About description: "A picture is worth a thousand words." Proverb.

**detritus** - Loose fragments that *nature* or *carving* has worn away from rock. Often, by extension, the material or debris resulting from the making of any work of art; the disintegrated or eroded material left behind by past *civilizations*. (pr. de-try'tes) Also see *palimpsest* and *rhopography*

**different** and **difference** - Not the same. One of *modernism's* most pervasive characteristics is its embrace of what's new. While *postmodernism's* expectations of newness are not as intense, difference remains an attribute we crave. Nevertheless, one of the most shallowly used terms used in evaluating art, "different" is too often the only reaction of a viewer who has discerned nothing else about a work than its variation from some norm. Faint praise.

Quotations about difference: "The most universal quality is diversity." Montaigne (1533-1592), French writer.

"Of the resemblance of children to their fathers," *Essays*, 1580-1588.

**director** - In a *museum*, the person in charge of its administration, fund-raising, and public relations.

**discovery** - To find, learn of, or observe; gaining knowledge of something not known before. Special credit goes to one who is the first to do these things. More important in practice, discovery is an early stage in the *creative* process, involving investigation or research into what others have found, learned or observed.

**discrimination** - To recognize differences and act upon that awareness.

**documentary art** - Any artwork the purpose of which is to present facts *objectively*, without inserting fictional matter, recording and/or commenting on some *content*, often political or social, by accumulating factual *detail*. Many *conceptual* art installations of the 1970s were overtly documentary -- e.g., *Post-Partum Project* by Mary Kelly (American), the various *Reading Rooms* by Joseph Kosuth (American, 1945-), *Guggenheim Trustees* by Hans Haacke (German, 1936-). More common examples: documentary films with an attitude. Not to be confused with *documentation*.

**documentation** - *Textual* and/or *photographic* information that describes a work of art or image, recording its physical characteristics and placing it in *context*, as in records of works of *conceptual art*, *earth art*, or *performance art*.

**dominant** - The part of a composition that is the most important, powerful, or has the most influence. A certain color can be dominant, and so can an object, line, shape, or texture.

**drawing** - Depiction of *shapes* and *forms* on a *surface* chiefly by means of *lines*. *Color* and *shading* may be included. A major *fine art technique* in itself, drawing is the basis of all pictorial *representation*, and an early step in most art activities. Though an integral part of most *painting*, drawing is generally differentiated from painting by the dominance of line over *mass*. The artist's choices of drawing *media*-- tools and surface-- tend to determine whether a drawing will be more or less *linear* or *painterly* in *quality*. There are many sorts of drawing techniques, varying according to the effect the artist wants, and depending on whether the drawing is an end in itself-- an independent and finished work of art-- or a *preliminary* to some other *medium* or *form*-- although distinct from the final product, such drawings also have *intrinsic* artistic value. Preliminary drawings include various exercises (e.g., *contour drawing*, *gesture drawing*, *figure drawing*, drawing from the *flat*), as well as *sketches* and *studies*, including *cartoons* and *underdrawings*. Drawing has been highly appreciated since the Italian *Renaissance*, greatly because it implies *spontaneity*-- an embodiment of the artist's ideas. This spontaneous idea has always been used to particular advantage in *caricature*. The invention of *printmaking* techniques in the fifteenth century made possible the duplication and dissemination of drawings, further establishing drawing as a definitive art form.

**earth art** and **earthworks** - Earth art refers to a *movement* of artists with wide ranging goals, but all created in nature, employing such materials as rocks, dirt, and leaves. Most works are sculptural. Earthworks often refer to phenomena such as the slow process of erosion or to the movement of planets or stars, especially the sun. Many earthworks are intended to help us understand nature better. Some demonstrate the inherent differences between nature and civilization, often pointing out artists' desires to understand, conquer, and control natural processes. While some earthworks have been small enough to be gallery pieces, others involve huge land masses, as did the 1970 piece by Robert Smithson (American, 1938-1973) titled *Spiral*

*Jetty*, which extended 1500 feet into the Great Salt Lake, though today it can be witnessed only through *documentation*. Earth art's emergence in the 1960s was simultaneous with that of the ecological movement, *Arte Povera* and *process art*, with each of which it had a kinship. Earthworks can be considered part of the category of works known as *environment art*. Also see *entropy*.

**earth colors** - *Pigments*, such as yellow ochre and umber, that are obtained by mining; usually *metal oxides*.

**eclecticism** - A system or method in which individual elements are selected or employed from a variety of sources, systems, or *styles*.

**edge** - Where two things meet. Also, may refer to a *quality* sensed in art works which is other than a smooth *decorativeness*; and that may be a sense of something unusual, disturbing, controversial, or in any of many other ways more demanding of the *audience*.

**elements of art** or **elements of design** - The basic components used by the artist when producing works of art. Those elements are *color, value, line, shape, form, texture, and space*.

**emotionalism** - A theory of art which places emphasis on the *expressive* qualities. According to this theory, the most important thing about a work of art is the vivid *communication* of moods, *feelings*, and ideas.

**emphasis** - Any forcefulness that gives importance to some feature or features of an artwork; something singled out, *stressed*, or drawn *attention* to for *aesthetic* impact. A way of combining *elements* to stress the *differences* between those elements and to create one or more centers of interest in a work. Often, contrasting elements are used to direct and *focus* attention on the most important parts of a *composition*. A *principle of art*.

**empirical** - Relying on or derived from observation or experiment. See *empiricism*.

**empiricism** - The philosophical stance that experience, especially of the senses, is the only source of *knowledge*. Also, the use of *empirical* methods. Also see *epistemology, ontology, and phenomenology*.

**empower** - To enable, to invest with power, as in giving recognition to artists who are members of marginalized groups.

**empty shape** - In an artwork a *shape* that is left bare instead of filled with *lines* or *color*. Also see *closed shape* and *open shape*.

**entropy** - The tendency of all matter and energy in the universe-- including all systems, societies, etc.-- to change toward a state of disorder or randomness. The works of *earth artists*-- Robert Smithson (American, 1938-1973), for example-- reflect an interest in the concept of entropy. Related to this is the use of the term in information *theory*, where entropy is a measure of the apparent disorder of a system, so that the more there is known about it, the less entropy it seems to have. In this vein, entropy is understood as the number of possibilities, which decreases as knowledge grows. Also see *chaos*, *composition*, and *order*.

**environment art** - Refers to art which involves the creation or manipulation of a large or enclosed space, many effectively surrounding its audience. Architecture and landscape design might be said to qualify as environment art, although the term usually refers to artworks which do not function as either of these kinds of environmental design typically do. Several artists, many associated with American Pop art-- like Edward Kienholz (American, 1927-) and Lucas Samaras (Greek-American, 1936-)-- created tableaux in the 1960s and 1970s which were called environments. Many *earthworks* would qualify as environment art too.

**ephemera** - *Printed* matter, intended to have only passing interest. Examples are: tickets, leaflets, handbills, pamphlets, junk mail, and the "business-reply" postcards that come inserted in magazines. Since these things are produced cheaply, with short-lived acidic materials, *museologists* and *art conservators* find it difficult to preserve visual art produced without high technical standards, as they do in preserving *sketches* made on such *papers* as *newsprint*.

**evaluation** - The ability to judge the value of material (work of art, statement, writing, music, etc.) for a given purpose.

**existentialism** - An anti-rationalist philosophical tendency and attitude to life concerned with the being or existence of the free individual in an *absurd* or meaningless universe. Existentialism has had many variants, but its most

prominent spokesmen have been Søren Kierkegaard (Danish, 1813-1855) and Jean-Paul Sartre (French, 1905-1980). An example of work influenced by Existentialism:

- Alberto Giacometti (Swiss, 1901-1966), *The Nose*, 1947, plaster on metal, suspended by synthetic string within a metal structure, 81.5 x 66 x 36.7 cm, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. Alberto Giacometti was a Surrealist and a friend of Sartre's.

**expression** and **expressionism** - (with a small e-- the more general sense) A *quality* of inner experience, the emotions of the artist (*expressive qualities*) communicated through *emphasis* and *distortion*, which can be found in works of art of any period. See a larger article devoted exclusively to expression and expressionism, including examples of expressionist works, quotations, etc.

**expressive qualities** - The feelings, moods, and ideas communicated to the viewer through a work of art. This *aesthetic quality* is favored by *emotionalism*.

- "An enormous part of our mature experience cannot not be expressed in words."  
Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), English mathematician.

**fascist aesthetic** - Art with *propagandistic* intentions presented in *realist styles*, giving it a close resemblance to *socialist realism*, associated primarily with Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco. In Germany, myths of Aryan superiority were reflected in *pictures* of strong young blonds, while the heavily pompous *architecture* at Munich and Nuremberg proclaimed an imperial destiny inherited from *antiquity*. It strongly contrasts with *modern* art, which Hitler had dubbed *degenerate*.

**fetish** - An object believed to have magical powers, especially one capable of bringing to fruition its owner's plans; sometimes regarded as the abode of a supernatural power or spirit. (pr. fe'tish)

**field** - A *background* area or an entire physical *plane*, often of one *color* and/or *texture*. Also, a sphere of activity, or a *context*, or a discourse. And, the area in which an *image* is *rendered* by the lens of an *optical* instrument; also called field of view. In computer terminology, an element of a database record in which one piece of information is stored.

**foreground** - The area of a *picture* or *field* of vision, often at the bottom, that appears to be closest to the viewer. Also, to give priority to one aspect of a thing over another.

**form** - In its widest sense, total *structure*; a *synthesis* of all the visible aspects of that structure and of the manner in which they are united to create its distinctive character. The form of a work is what enables us to apprehend it. Form also refers to an *element of art* that is *three-dimensional* (height, width, and *depth*) and encloses *volume*. For example, a *triangle*, which is *two-dimensional*, is a *shape*, but a *pyramid*, which is three-dimensional, is a form. *Cubes, spheres, pyramids, cones, and cylinders* are examples of various forms. Also, all of the elements of a work of art independent of their *meaning*. *Formal* elements are primary features which are not a matter of semantic significance -- including *color, dimensions, line, mass, medium, scale, shape, space, texture, value*; and the *principles of design* under which they are placed-- including *balance, contrast, dominance, harmony, movement, proportion, proximity, rhythm, similarity, unity, and variety*. Also see *formalism*.

- "Always lines, never forms! But where do they *find* these lines in Nature? For my part I see only forms that are lit up and forms that are not. There is only light and shadow." Francisco Goya (1746-1828), Spanish painter. From a conversation, quoted by L. Matheron, *Goya*, Paris, 1858.
- "The first things to study are form and values. For me, these are the things that are the basics of what is serious in art. Color and finish put charm in one's work." Jean Baptiste Corot (1796-1875), French painter. Keith Roberts, *Corot*, 1965.
- "It matters not whether the form is personal, national stylistic, whether or not it stands within the contemporary mainstream, whether it is related to a few or to many other forms, or whether it is unique or not, etc., etc.; but the most important point in the question of form is whether or not it springs from inner necessity." Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944), Russian painter, "Über die Formfrage," *Almanach der blaue Reiter*, 1912.
- "If the significance (spirit) of form is lacking, creative art can be nothing of or for the soul. Only where this significance is the aura of form does the spirit enter into man-made things. Art." Frank Lloyd Wright (1869-1959), American architect, *The Living City*, 1958.
- "We don't even learn form through the eyes; we learn it through the sense of touch." John Sloan (1871-1951), American painter of the *Ashcan School*, *The Gist of Art*, 1941.
- "Cézanne is the Christopher Columbus of a new continent of form." Clive Bell (1881-1964), British art critic. *Art*.
- "... From the point of view of art there are not concrete or abstract forms, but only forms which are more or less convincing lies. That those lies are necessary to our mental selves is beyond any doubt, as it is through them that we form our aesthetic point of view of life." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist, *The Arts*, 1923.
- "Sculpture must have a feeling for organic form, a certain pathos and warmth. Organic forms, though they may be symmetrical in their main disposition, in their

reaction to environment, growth and gravity, lose their perfect symmetry." Henry Moore (1898-1987), English sculptor, *The Sculptor's Aims*, 1966.  
"Art doesn't transform. It just plain forms." Roy Lichtenstein (1923-), American *Pop Art* painter.

**formal** - Relating to the outward *form* or *structure* of a work; not to be confused with "ceremonial" or "stately," since formal elements can be quite informal in character.

**formal analysis** - The study of a work of art with reference to its *form*, rather than to its *content* or *context*.

**formalism** - Any of several types of art-making or *art criticism* which places emphasis on *form*, the *structural* instead of either *content* (sometimes called *allegorical* qualities) or *contextual qualities*. According to this point of view, the most important thing about a work of art is the effective organization of the *elements of art* through the use of the *principles*. Also known as structuralism, in the 1960s and early 1970s formalism was so entrenched as the most powerful critical approach, that artists frequently produced works that were particularly attentive to it, and even now some think of *modernism* as more or less synonymous with formalism. Critic Clement Greenberg (see *flat*) is frequently cited as an instigating force, but formalism can be traced back through many artists, including J. A. M. Whistler (American, 1834-1903. See *art for art's sake*) to the philosopher Immanuel Kant.

**fugitive colors** - Short-lived *pigments* and *dyes*-- capable of fading or changing, especially with exposure to *light*, to atmospheric pollution, or when mixed with certain substances; in each case the result of a chemical change. Examples are the *colors* in magazine *photographs* and inexpensive construction *papers*, especially the yellows, and then reds. While student works are generally forgiven the use of such inexpensive poor-quality pigments, professional artists' works are expected to be made with *permanent* colors. Tubes and other containers of paint are sometimes labeled with a code indicating a color's degree of permanence:

**function** - Refers to the intended use or purpose of an *object*. The term is often applied to manufactured products, particularly *crafts*, and when discussing *designs* for *architecture*. Though sometimes said to be non-functional, *art* is expected to function in various ways, including: to

*beautify*, to adorn, to *express*, to *illustrate*, to mediate, to persuade, to record, to redefine reality, to redefine art, to provide therapy, to give unselfconscious experience, to provide *paradigms* of order and/or disorder, and to train *perception* of reality.

**genre** and **genres** - Genre *painting* is the depiction of *subjects* and scenes from everyday life, ordinary folk and common activities. It achieved its greatest popularity in seventeenth century Holland with the works of Jan Steen (1626-1679) and Jan Vermeer (1632-1675).

When used in the plural form, genres are the various categories of subject matter in the traditional academic hierarchy, in descending order of importance: *history*, *megalography*, *mythology*, religion, *portraiture*, genre (see the first sense above), *landscape*, *still-life*, *rhopography*, and *vernacular*. (pr. jahn're).

**hard-edge** - Refers to a twentieth century *movement* in *painting* in which the *edges* of *shapes* are crisp and precise rather than blurred. Examples of paintings made in this manner:

- Stuart Davis, · *Schwitzki's Syntax*, 1961, oil and wax emulsion on canvas, 42 x 56 inches, Yale University Art Gallery. Stuart Davis is a precursor to the hard-edge painting movement.

Ellsworth Kelly (American, 1923-), · *Black/white (EK 765)*, 1988, oil on canvas (two connected canvases), 224 x 231.5 cm, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

**harmonious colors** - *Colors* that look good together because they are *complementary*, *analogous*, or otherwise related.

**harmony** - A *principle of art*, it refers to a way of combining *elements* to accent their similarities and bind the *picture* parts into a whole. It is often achieved through the use of *repetition* and *simplicity*. Quotations about harmony:

- "Harmony consists of opposing tension, like that of the bow and the lyre." Heraclitus (flourished 500 BC), Greek philosopher, *On the Universe*.
- "If I could make musicians of you all, it would be to your advantage as painters. All is harmony in nature, a little too much, or a little less, disturbs the scale and strikes a discordant note. One has to learn to sing true with the pencil or brush, just as with the voice; correct form is like correct sound." Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867), French painter, advising his students in 1864. Walter Pach, *Ingres*, 1939.
- "The secret of drawing and modeling resides in the contrasts and relationships of tone." Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), French *Post-Impressionist* painter, in a letter to Emile Bernard. *Paul Cézanne, Letters*, edited by John Rewald, 1984.

"Art is harmony. Harmony is the analogy of contrary and of similar elements of tone, of color, and of line, conditioned by the dominant key, and under the influence of a particular light, in gay, calm, or sad combinations." Georges Seurat (1859-1891), French Neo-Impressionist painter, in a letter to Maurice Beaubourg, August 28, 1890. *Artists on Art: From the Fourteenth to the Twentieth Century*, edited by Robert Goldwater and Marco Treves, 1945.

**hatching** - Creating *tonal* or *shading* effects with closely spaced parallel *lines*. When more such lines are placed at an angle across the first, it is called cross-hatching. Artists use this technique, varying the size, closeness and other qualities of the lines, most commonly in *drawing*, linear *painting*, *engraving*, and *etching*. Hatching is also referred to with the French word *hachure*.

**Heidelberg school** - An Australian *school* of art. Dominating Australian art for about thirty years in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the group was led by Thomas William Roberts (1856-1931), and included Charles Conder (1868-1909), Sir Arthur Ernest Streeton (1867-1943), and Frederick McCubbin (1855-1917). Heavily influenced by French *Impressionism*, Roberts believed that it offered the direction for an authentically Australian *painting style*. The group often met in the Australian bush near Heidelberg, Victoria, for a series of "camps" between 1887 and 1890. First gaining recognition at an exhibition in Melbourne in 1889, the Heidelberg school was viewed as a direct challenge to the prevailing trend in Australian art, which was characteristically very polished and dark in *color*. Although the group had virtually disbanded in 1900, its vision of the Australian *landscape* inspired many landscape and *social realist* painters in later decades.

**hue** - The name of any *color* as found in its pure state in the *spectrum* or rainbow, or that aspect of any color. May refer to a particular *wavelength*. *Pigment* colors combine differently than colors of *light*. The *primary colors* (in pigment: red, yellow, and blue; in light: red, green, and blue) together with the *secondary colors* (in pigment: orange, green, and violet; in light: cyan, magenta, and yellow) form the chief colors of the spectrum.

**iconography** - Pictorial *illustration* of a *subject*, or the collected *representations* illustrating a subject. Also, the study of subject matter and *symbolism* in the *visual arts*, as in collections of *pictures* constituting a complete visual record of a subject, or a visual dictionary.

**idealism** - The pursuit of things in an *ideal form*. In philosophy, any of several theories (principally of Berkely, Hegel, and Kant) which hold that reality has no *objective* existence but is produced in some way by the mind. "If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them." Henry David Thoreau (1817-62), U.S. philosopher, author, naturalist. *Walden*, "Conclusion" (1854).

**idealization** - The *representation* of things according to a preconception of *ideal form* or type; a kind of *aesthetic distortion* to produce idealized forms. A possible motive might be to make things appear as they would if the world were perfect.

**idiom** - A *style* or *technique* characteristic of an individual artist, *period*, *movement*, or *medium*. A *potter* might be said to be working in the idiom of early New England potters; or a *painter*, that she or he works in the *abstract expressionist* idiom.

**image capture** - Employing a device, such as a *scanner*, to create a *digital representation* of an *image*. This digital representation can then be *manipulated* with and stored on a computer.

**image manipulation** - Making changes to a *digital image* using *image processing*.

**image processing** - The alteration or *manipulation* of *images* that have been *scanned* or captured by a *digital* recording device. Can be used to modify or improve the image by changing its size, *color*, *contrast*, and *brightness*, or to compare and *analyze* images for characteristics that the human eye could not *perceive* unaided.

**imitationalism** - A theory of art which places emphasis on the *literal qualities*. According to this theory, the most important thing about a work of art is the *realistic representation* of *subject matter*. A work is considered successful if it looks like and reminds the *audience* of what is seen in the real world.

**incongruity** - A state of two or more things lacking *harmony*, being incompatible, inconsistent, absurdly combined. Such things would be described as incongruous. What makes something humorous or tragic is essentially an instance of incongruity. (pr. in'con-grew"i-tee)

An example:

- > Fornasetti (Italian, 1913-1988), · *Plate*, 1950, glazed ceramic. The image glazed onto this plate displays the incongruous combination of a human face in the center of a twisted napkin.

**installation** - Art made for a specific space, exploiting certain *qualities* of that space, more often indoors than out. The term became widely used in the 1970s and 1980s, largely replacing the term "site-specific," which means the same thing. Installations may be temporary or *permanent*, but most will be known to posterity through *documentation*. As a consequence, one aspect of installations is often the difficulty with which they can be *commodified*. Artists especially identified with installations are Ken Unsworth, Judy Chicago. Etc

**intensity** - The *brightness* or dullness of a *hue* or *color*. For instance, the intensity of the pure color blue is very bright. When a lighter or darker color is added to blue, the intensity is less bright, or more subdued.

**intermediate colors** - Also known as tertiary colors, they are produced by mixing unequal amounts of two *primary* colors. For example, adding more red to the combination of red and yellow will produce the intermediate color of red-orange. Intermediate colors are located between the primary and *secondary* colors on a *color wheel*. Other intermediate colors are orange-yellow, yellow-green, green-blue, blue-violet, and violet-red (also known as purple)-- all colors in the *spectrum* except violet-red-- a mixture of the two colors at the extremes of the visible spectrum.

**kitsch** - Art or artwork characterized by *sentimental*, often pretentious bad *taste*. (pr. kitsh)

**Kunstkammer** - From German, a "cabinet of curiosities" where odd and wondrous rarities were brought together for private contemplation and pleasure. This precursor of the *museum* was a development of the *Renaissance*. The museum, on the other hand, was a creation of the Enlightenment.

**loan** - *Museums* and *patrons* often work closely together to lend objects to each other to improve the range of works in the *collections* they *exhibit*.

**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. Thus the characteristic local color of a lemon is yellow.

**low art** - Refers to the lesser or minor arts, including the *decorative* or *applied arts*, with the inference that these are low partly because of shoddy manufacturing in inferior materials of superficial *kitsch*, simply catering to popular *taste*, unreflective acceptance of *realism*, and a certain "couch potato" mentality. The boundary between *high* and low art has faded in the *contemporary* art scene. Its place has been taken by discussion of *popular* or *mass culture*.

**manifesto** - A public declaration of principles, policies, or intentions. Although usually of a political nature, there is a history in art, especially in *modernism* during the first half of the twentieth century, of the spokesmen of various *avant-garde movements* publishing manifestos which declare their *theories*, motivations and direction, stimulating support for them or *reactions* against them. These movements have included *Futurism* and *Surrealism*. Other resources about manifestos:

**Mannerism** - A European art *style* that developed between 1520 and 1600. It was a style that rejected the calm *balance* of the *High Renaissance* in favor of *emotion* and *distortion*. Works of art done in this style reflected the tension that marked Europe at this time in history.

**mass** - Refers to the effect and degree of bulk, *density*, and weight of matter in *space*; the area occupied by a *form* such as a building or *sculpture*. As opposed to plane and area, mass is three-dimensional. A drawing which effectively conveys this concept is an architectural design by Hugh Ferriss (American, 1889-1962), *Study for the Maximum Mass Permitted by the 1916 New York Zoning Law*, State 3, 1922, black crayon, stumped and varnished on illustration board, 67 x 51.6 cm, Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum. "Incorporating urban zoning requirements which determined the maximum building mass permissible on a city block, Ferriss's drawing presents a dynamic possibility for how monumental skyscrapers might look, before any New York skyscrapers were actually constructed."

**mass media** - Means of *communication* to a large population-- a mass of people. These generally include newspapers, magazines, radio, or television.

**master** - Someone whose teachings or doctrines are accepted by followers. In the old apprenticeship system, an artist of great and exemplary skill, whose followers might be called apprentices or disciples. The "old masters" are artists recognized in the *canon*, most often from the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries.

- "Disciples be damned. It's not interesting. It's only the masters that matter. Those who create." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. Quoted in: Michel George-Michel, *De Renoir à Picasso*, (1954, pp. 94-95).

**material culture** - All of the physical products of a *culture*: *painting*, *sculpture*, *architecture*, *decorative arts*, tools, weapons, clothing, etc.

**materialism** - The *point of view* that physical well-being and worldly possessions matter most in life. Alternatively, an excessive regard for worldly concerns.

**meaning** - What is conveyed or *signified* by something; its sense or significance.

**medium** - The *material* or *technique* used by an artist to produce a work of art. It may also refer to the *vehicle* or *solvent* with which powdered *pigments* are mixed to make *paint* of the proper consistency. The plural form is media.

**middle ground** - The part of an artwork that lies between the *foreground* (nearest to the viewer) and the *background*.

**mixed media or mixed-media** - A *technique* involving the use of two or more artistic *media*, such as *ink* and *pastel* or *painting* and *collage*, that are combined in a single *composition*. (Don't confuse mixed-media with *multimedia*.)

**mobile** - A construction made of *objects* that are *balanced* and *arranged* on *wire* arms and suspended so as to move freely. Alexander Calder (American, 1898-1976) introduced this art form in the 1930s. In 1932, a month before he first referred to his wire *sculptures* with moving parts using this term, it was Marcel Duchamp (French, 1887-1968) who suggested to Calder that he call his pieces "mobiles". (pr. mo'beel")

**modeling or modelling** - A *sculpture technique* in which a *three-dimensional form* is *shaped* in a soft material such as *clay*-- either *plasticine* or *ceramic clay*-- or *wax*. The term also refers to the effect of *light* on a *three-dimensional form*. The three-dimensional *quality* of such a form is emphasized by means of *light, shadow, and color*. *Reproducing* the effect of light, shadow, and color in a *drawing* of such a form makes it seem more *realistic*.

**Modernism or modernism** - The deliberate departure from tradition and the use of innovative *forms* of *expression* that distinguish many *styles* in the arts and literature of the late nineteenth and the twentieth century. Modernism refers to this period's interest in new types of paints and other materials, in expressing feelings and ideas, in creating *abstractions* and *fantasies*, rather than *representing* what is *real*. This kind of art requires its *audience* to observe carefully in order to get some facts about the artist, his intentions, and his environment, before forming judgments about the work. Paul Cézanne (French, 1839-1906) is often called the "Father of Modernism."

About modernism:

- "I have lived enough among painters and around studios to have had all the theories-- and how contradictory they are-- rammed down my throat. A man has to have a gizzard like an ostrich to digest all the brass-tacks and wire nails of modern art theories." D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930), American writer. *Assorted Articles*.
- "Trying to understand modern art is like trying to follow the plot in a bowl of alphabet soup." Anonymous

**monochromatic** - Consisting of only a single *color* or *hue*; may include its *tints* and *shades*.

**montage** - A single pictorial *composition* made by juxtaposing or superimposing many *pictures* or *designs*. The art or process of making such a composition. Also, a rapid succession of different *images* or shots in a movie. Also see *collage*. (pr. mahn-tahzh')

**monumental** - In *art criticism*, any work of art of grandeur and *simplicity*, regardless of its *size*, although it often connotes great size.

**motif** - Any *figure* or *design*, when used either as the central element in a work or is repeated to create an *architectural* or *decorative pattern*. Also, a recurrent *thematic* element in any work. (pr. mo-teef')

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**movement** - When there is no actual motion, this refers to an implied motion-- the *arrangements* of the parts of an *image* to create a sense of motion by using *lines*, *shapes*, and *textures* that cause the eye to move over the work. A *principle of art*, it can be a way of combining *elements* to produce the look of action.

Also, a movement may be a tendency or trend by artists during a period to use certain *techniques*, methods or attitudes.

**narrative art** - Art which represents elements of a story. While *history painting* depicts famous events, *genre* painting depict events of a more everyday sort. *Modernists* largely rejected narrative art in the 1950s and 1960s, though it has returned strongly since then, with artists embracing several means of presentation previously viewed as theatrical, and therefore inappropriate to the purity of art. These include *video* and *performance*. Narrativemay refer to a textual element, either part of or accompanying a work. For instance, photographer Duane Michals (American, contemporary) adds written *texts* to his series of photographs.

**Naturalism or naturalism** - A *style* in which an artist intends to *represent* a *subject* as it appears in the natural world-- precisely and *objectively*-- as opposed to being represented in a *stylized* or intellectually manipulated manner. Although naturalism is often used interchangeably with the term *realism*, there is a difference between them. The realism of Gustave Courbet (French, 1819-1877) is more interested in the honest depiction of unpretentious *subjects*, while the naturalism of Ernest Meissonier (French, 1815-1891) is more a visually *accurate* depiction of subjects which in other hands might well have been depicted *pretentiously*.

**neo-expressionsim** - Broadly used, this may refer to all *expressionist* art since the *original movement* known as *Expressionism* arose in Germany between 1905 and 1925. *Abstract Expressionism* is an example of a movement which may be referred to as neo-expressionist. Neo-expressionist art stems from Wassily Kandinsky (Russian-German, 1866-1944), its antithesis from the *Neo-Plasticism* of Piet Mondrian (Dutch, 1872-1944). Used more narrowly, this term sometimes refers specifically to the primarily German and Italian expressionist art revival of the 1970s and early 1980s. Rejecting both *conceptual* and *minimalist* modes, these neo-expressionists returned to gestural, *figurative painting*. Often steeped in the German history, paintings by A.R.Penck (1939-) and Anselm Kiefer (1945-) are full of *symbolism* referring to issues repressed by Germans. An example is a

painting by Anselm Kiefer, *Osiris und Isis (Osiris and Isis)*, 1985-1987, oil, acrylic, emulsion, clay, porcelain, lead, copper, wire, and circuit board on canvas, 150 x 220 1/2 x 6 1/2 inches (381 x 560.1 x 16.5 cm), San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

**Neo-Plasticism** - Also called De Stijl. An art *movement* advocating pure *abstraction* and simplicity-- form reduced to the *rectangle*, and *color* to the *primary* colors, along with black and white. Piet Mondrian (Dutch, 1872-1944) was the group's leading figure. He published a *manifesto* titled Neo-Plasticism in 1920. Another member of this movement, painter Theo van Doesberg (Dutch, 1883-1931) started a journal named *De Stijl* in 1917, which continued publication until 1928, spreading the theories of the group. It also included the painter George Vantongerloo (Belgian, 1886-1965), and the architects J.J.P. Oud (1890-1963) and Gerrit Rietveld (Dutch, 1888-1965). Their work exerted tremendous influence on the *Bauhaus* and the *International Style*. (pr. de-style') Examples:

- Piet Mondrian (Dutch, 1872-1944), · *Fox Trot A*, 1930, oil on canvas, 43 1/4 inches diagonally, in the collection of the Yale University Art Gallery.

**New Wave cinema** - A *cinema style* developed in the 1950s and 1960s that characteristically attempted to subvert viewer expectations by using *ambiguity*, surprise, fuzzy *camera work*, and abrupt changes in *space*, *time*, and mood. The French equivalent for this term is La Nouvelle Vague.

**nonobjective art** - Art works having no recognizable *subject* matter such as houses, trees, or people. Also known as *non-representational* art.

**object** - A material thing. Something to which attention, feeling, thought, or action is directed, therefore usually conceived as subhuman, unreflective and passive, in contrast to the active *subject*. It is common, for example, for *feminist criticism* to describe a female nude as the object of the male gaze, as in the painting by Alexandre Cabanel (French, 1823-1889) of *The Birth of Venus*, 1863, oil on canvas, 4 feet 3 1/4 inches x 7 feet 4 1/2 inches (130 x 225 cm), Musée d'Orsay, Paris. Such figures are thus oppressed (see oppression). When the female figure exhibits a less passive personality, as in the painting by Edouard Manet (French, 1832-1883) of *Olympia*, 1863, oil on canvas, 51 3/8 x 74 3/4 inches (130.5 x 190 cm) Musée d'Orsay, Paris; she is sometimes described as a subject, at least with respect to the single issue of her gaze.

**objectify** and **objectification** - To depersonalize; turning something or someone into an *object*. The term is very commonly used to describe the dehumanizing oppression of women, non-whites, and the dispossessed. To do the opposite is to subjectify. And, about objectification:

- "Art is the objectification of feeling." Suzanne Langer

**oeuvre** - The collected works of an artist. Literally, the French word for work. (pr. oo'vere)

**Op Art** - A twentieth century art *style* in which the artists sought to create an impression of *movement* on the *picture surface* by means of *optical illusion*. It is derived from, and is also known as Optical Art.

**open shape** - In an artwork, *space* that is not completely enclosed by a *line*. A *mass* penetrated or treated in such a way that space acts as its *environment* rather than as its limit. For example, a doughnut having a hole in its middle has an open shape in its middle.

**optical mixing** - The blending by the eyes of pure *colors* placed next to each other in a work of art. While this effect is similar to what occurs when the pigments of two colors are mixed, the difference is that when pigments are mixed the resulting color is less intense than when the same colors are mixed optically. *Optical* mixing is important in *Impressionist* and *Pointillist painting*.

**original** - Any work considered to be an *authentic* example of the works of an artist, rather than a *reproduction* or imitation. The term excludes works produced "in the *studio* of" an artist, because that usually means that it was made by others, even if under the artist's influence or at his direction. This *attribution* must be qualified further, however, for workshop *paintings* in which there is evidence of the *master's* hand. Although they are less valued for various reasons, *copies* and *reproductions* have had tremendous impact on our experience, reaching greater *audiences* than originals ever could, and they act as a tonic to *commodification*. Original may also mean the first, preceding all others. In that sense, it may refer to a *prototype*, a *model* after which other works are made, each bears great similarity to the first. Also see *creativity*, *derived image*, *new* and *originality*.

- "No one can be profoundly original who does not avoid eccentricity." André Maurois (1885-1967), French author, critic. *The Art of Writing*, "Turgenev" (1960).

**originality** - The *quality* of being *original*. Used to describe works which were not *derived* from other works. It has strongly influenced art historians' identification of what artists and works are most important. It is important to understand its influence as an ideal amongst the *modernist avant-garde*. Originality has come to be de-emphasized with increased uses of *photography*, *video*, and *appropriation*, along with other *reproductive techniques*. Indeed the "myth of originality" is a central principle of *postmodernism*.

- "It seems to me that today, if the artist wishes to be serious to cut out a little original niche for himself, or at least preserve his own innocence of personality-- he must once more sink himself in solitude." Edgar Degas (1834-1917), French *Impressionist* painter and sculptor.
- "All profound original art looks ugly at first." Clement Greenberg (1909-1994), American art critic.

**Outsider art** - Strictly interpreted, refers to works by those outside of mainstream society. In the United States, Outsider art broadly includes folk and ethnic art as well as by prisoners, the mentally ill and others neither trained in art nor making their works to sell them. In Europe, Outsider art is more narrowly interpreted as art by the mentally disturbed. The term *naive art* was once applied to this work, but is no longer considered current. Because fewer and fewer people are sufficiently isolated to be truly Outsiders, most are either mentally ill or working far from urban art scenes.

**painterly** - A *painting technique* in which *forms* are created with patches of *color*, exploiting color and *tonal* relationships. The opposite approach is known as *linear*, in which things are *represented* in terms of *contour*, with precise *edges*. The painting *Haystack at Sunset* by Claude Monet (French, 1840-1926) is an example of a work done in this manner. Works by Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606-1669), Robert Henri (American, 1865-1929), and Susan Rothenberg (American, 1945-) are also painterly, while the *linear style* is typical of paintings by Leonardo da Vinci (Italian, 1452-1519), Charles Sheeler (American, 1883-1965), and Keith Haring (American, 1958-1989).

**painting** - Works of art made with *paint* on a *surface*. Often the surface, also called a *support*, is either a tightly stretched piece of *canvas* or a *panel*. How the *ground* (on which paint is applied) is prepared on the support depends greatly on the type of paint to be used. Paintings are usually intended to be placed in *frames*, and displayed on walls, but there have been plenty of

exceptions. Also, the act of painting, which may involve a wide range of *techniques* and *materials*, along with the artist's other concerns which effect the *content* of a work..

First I saw the mountains in the painting; then I saw the painting in the mountains."

- Chinese Proverb
- "A man paints with his brains and not with his hands." Michelangelo (1475-1564), Italian Renaissance artist.
- "Only when he no longer knows what he is doing does the painter do good things." Edgar Degas (1834-1917), French Impressionist artist.
- "Drawing and color are not separate at all; in so far as you paint, you draw. The more color harmonizes, the more exact the drawing becomes. When the color achieves richness, the form attains its fullness also." Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), French *Post-Impressionist* painter. Quoted by Émile Bernard, *L'Occident*, July, 1904.
- "PAINTING, n: The art of protecting flat surfaces from the weather and exposing them to the critic." Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914), American writer. *The Cynic's Word Book*, also known as *The Devil's Dictionary*, 1906.
- "Whenever I see a Frans Hals I feel like painting, but when I see a Rembrandt I feel like giving up!" Max Liebermann (1847-1935).
- "There is nothing harder to learn than painting and nothing which most people take less trouble about learning. An art school is a place where about three people work with feverish energy and everybody else idles to a degree that I should have conceived unattainable by human nature." G.K.Chesterton (1874-1936), British writer. *Autobiography*.
- "Painting is stronger than I am. It can make me do whatever it wants." Pablo Picasso
- (1881-1973), modern Spanish artist. A note written on the back of one of his sketchbooks.
- "Painting is just another way of keeping a diary." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), modern Spanish artist.
- "Painting is a blind man's profession. He paints not what he sees, but what he feels, what he tells himself about what he has seen." Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. Quoted in: Jean Cocteau, *Journals*, part 1, "War and Peace" (1956).
- "To me, a painter, if not the most useful, is the least harmful member of our society." Man Ray (1890-1976), modern American photographer, artist. *Self Portrait*, chapter 6 (1963).
- "The painting has a life of its own." Jackson Pollock (1912-1956), American abstract-impressionist painter.
- "Painting is an attempt to come to terms with life. There are as many solutions as there are human beings." George Tooker (1920-), contemporary American painter.

**paradigm** - An example that serves as a *pattern*, an *exemplar*, or a *model*. (pr. pair"a-dime") Also see *paradigm shift*.

**paradigm shift** - When one era shifts into another, the old habits are disrupted by new ones which eventually settle into a familiar routine. The phrase is used to describe any sort of major shift of mind-set or *world-view*. For example, the change from pre-modern to modern art was effectively a change from a *paradigm* in which *paintings* were seen as windows through which one looked, as in *Renaissance* and *Baroque illusionism* -- to a new paradigm of *abstraction*. Similarly, the change from modernism to *postmodernism* is now commonly called a paradigm shift.

**parameter** - A factor that either restricts what is possible or what results, or determines a range of variations. In mathematics, a parameter may be a constant value in an equation that varies in other equations of the same general type, especially such a constant that describes a *curve* or *surface*, such that changing it changes the curve or surface in some way. It may also be a variable that stands for the coordinates of a point. And, in other sciences, a parameter may be one of a set of measurable factors-- such as temperature, *volume*, *color*, or acidity-- that define a system and determine its behavior.

**parergon** - A part of a work of art which is secondary to the main *subject* or *theme* of its *composition*, such as a *still-life* or *landscape* which is a *detail* within a *portrait*.

**parody** - A work that imitates the characteristic *style* of another work, either for comic effect or ridicule. Parody is one of the basic *tropes*. Also see *content*, *caricature*, and *satire*

**patriarchy** and **patriarchal** - The social dominance of the father-- their rule as heads of families, and the preference given to males in descent and inheritance. *Feminism* sees patriarchy as more pervasive, and as oppressive to women. The opposite of patriarchy is matriarchy. Each is a form of sexism.

**patron** - Someone who supports, protects, or champions somebody or something, such as an institution, an event, or a cause; a sponsor or benefactor. In Europe, most patrons of the arts were either leaders of the aristocracy and of the Catholic church, until the growth of the middle classes

in the nineteenth century, when more and more patrons of the arts were wealthy merchants and industrialists. Now some of them have made their fortunes with profits from products like the apparatus you're looking at right now. Artists have often made their patrons the subjects of their work.

**performance art** - Art in which works in any of a variety of *media* are executed premeditated before a live *audience*. Although this might appear to be "theater," theatrical performances present illusions of events, while performance art presents actual events as art. One of the things setting *postmodernism* apart from *modernism* is its acceptance of aspects of theater. Performance elements surfaced in a number of *conceptual art movements* of the 1960s, including: *Happenings*, *body art*, *process art*, *street works*, etc. The 1980s saw the emergence of performance artists like David Byrne (American) and Laurie Anderson (American, 1947-), who had each been students of visual art, but whose work gradually incorporated voice, music, *costumes*, *projected images*, stage lighting, etc.

**picture** - A visual representation or image drawn, painted, photographed, or otherwise produced on a flat surface. Considered as a synonym for painting, some Americans mistakenly think it uncultivated, however the term is much more commonly used by the British.

Quote:

"A picture is something which calls for as much cunning, trickery and vice as the perpetration of a crime." Edgar Degas (1834-1917), French Impressionist. Quoted by P.A.Lemoisne, *Degas et Son Oeuvre*, Paris, 1946-1949, volume 1.

"A picture is nothing but a bridge between the soul of the artist and that of the spectator." Edgar Degas.

**picture plane** - In perspective, the plane (a flat level) occupied by the surface of the picture -- its frontal boundary. When there is any illusion of depth in the picture, the picture plane is similar to a plate of glass behind which pictorial elements are arranged in depth. Artists indicate the supposed distance of subjects beyond the picture plane through the use of changes in the sizes of things, the ways they overlap each other, and (when subjects are placed on the depicted ground, as opposed to flying above it) by positioning them on the area taken up by the depicted floor, ground, or a body of water. Abstract Expressionists worked directly on the plane itself, unconcerned with recession in depth.

**picturesque** - In general, this may refer to any scene which seems to be especially suitable for representation in a picture. It is especially associated with an aesthetic mode formulated in the late eighteenth century which valued deliberate rusticity, irregularities of design, and even a cultivated pursuit of quaint or nostalgic forms. Such pictures became common in nineteenth century Europe and America. Examples can be found among the American painters of the Hudson River school -- Thomas Cole (1801-1848), Jasper Cropsey (1823-1900), and Asher B. Durand (1796-1886) -- and of the Rocky Mountain school -- Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902) and Thomas Moran (1837-1926).

**plagiarism** - The taking of ideas, writings or other creative work of someone else, passing them off as one's own. (pr. play"je-rizm') Also see appropriation, copy, counterfeit, forgery, likeness, reproduction, simulacrum, and trompe l'oeil.

**plasticity** or **plastic quality** - The three-dimensional quality of sculptured or constructed forms. Plasticity can also refer to the quality of a material which can be easily manipulated-- modeled, molded or pressed into a desired shape; malleable and yet holding its shape. Clay is an example of a material which can be extremely plastic. Alexander Calder (American, 1898-1976) enjoyed the plasticity of wire; Claes Oldenburg (Swedish-American, 1929) has enjoyed using vinyl, plaster and several other materials for their plasticity.

**en plein air** - French for "in the open air," used chiefly to describe paintings that have been executed outdoors, rather than in the studio. Plein air painting was taken up by the English painters Richard Parks Bonington (1802-1828) and John Constable (1776-1837), and the French Barbizon School, and it became central to Impressionism. Its popularity was aided by the development of easily portable painting equipment and materials, including paints sold in tubes. The equivalent term in Italian is "alfresco," which is also used by English-speakers. (pr. pleh-nayr')

**pluralism** - The doctrine that numerous distinct ethnic, religious, and cultural groups should and do coexist, and that no single group is superior to others. This is very similar to multiculturalism. The opposite is particularism. Pluralism is also used to refer to art in the 1970s and 1980s, when the great variety of attitudes and style was taken as a sign of cultural vigor. It has been seen as one of the hallmarks of postmodernism,

encouraging divergent perceptions of the world, and arguing against the setting of any single standard.

**point of view** - A position from which something is observed or considered, and the direction of the viewer's gaze; a standpoint which is either a physical location or one in the mind. Examples of the points of view possible in a picture are: from below, from inside, from outside, from above, and so on. A manner of viewing things; an attitude. The attitude or outlook of a narrator or character in a piece of literature, a movie, or another art form. In discussing art, to use the common synonym "perspective" may be confusing. An image in which, peculiarly, three points of view can be seen simultaneously:

And about point of view:

"I live in a very small house but my windows look out on a very large world." Confucius (550-478 B.C.), Chinese religious leader.

**political correctness, politically correct, and PC** - Developed in the mass media, these terms came into use in the 1980s to describe those who seek a social transformation in various ways: challenging the canon to which the traditional curriculum had adhered (demanding the inclusion of studies of non-mainstream cultures), traditional notions of identity (race, gender, class, and sexuality), as well as sensitivity to unconscious racism and sexism and to environmental concerns. The momentum of this movement came largely from the political left, and from intense debates taking place on college and university campuses. Although there is no defensible ground on which to disagree with its spirit, this movement has been derided as a form of thought-police-- for its demands of adherence to a party line. See ethnocentrism, feminism and feminist art, gender issues, multiculturalism, pluralism, xenophilia, and xenophobia.

Quotations:

"Political correctness is the natural continuum from the party line. What we are seeing once again is a self-appointed group of vigilantes imposing their views on others. It is a heritage of communism, but they don't seem to see this."

Doris Lessing (1919-), British novelist. *Sunday Times: Books*, London, May 10, 1992.

"During the years 1945-1965 (I am referring to Europe), there was a certain way of thinking correctly, a certain style of political discourse, a certain ethics of the intellectual. One had to be on familiar terms with Marx, not let one's dreams stray too far from Freud.... These were the... requirements that made the strange occupation of writing and speaking a measure of truth about oneself and one's time acceptable."

Michel Foucault (1926-1984), French philosopher. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, Preface, 1972.

"The thing has been blown up out of all proportion. PC language is not enjoined on one and all-- there are a lot more places where you can say "spic" and "bitch" with impunity than places where you can smoke a cigarette."

Katharine Whitehorn (1926-), British journalist. *Observer*, London, Aug. 25, 1991.

**polychrome** - Having many colors; multicolored. This term is usually used to describe sculptural or decorative objects finished or decorated with paint or glazes.

**Pop Art** - An art movement and style that had its origins in England in the 1950s and made its way to the United States during the 1960s. Pop artists have focused attention upon familiar images of the popular culture such as billboards, comic strips, magazine advertisements, and supermarket products. Leading exponents are Richard Hamilton (British, 1922-), Andy Warhol (American, 1928?-1987), Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923-1997), Claes Oldenburg (American, 1929-), Jasper Johns (American, 1930-), and Robert Rauschenberg (American, 1925-).

**popular culture** - Low (as opposed to high) culture, parts of which are known as kitsch and camp. With the increasing economic power of the middle- and lower-income populace since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century, artists created various new diversions to answer the needs of these groups. These have included pulp novels and comic books, film, television, advertising, "collectibles," and tract housing. These have taken the place among the bourgeois once taken among the aristocracy by literature, opera, theater, academic painting, sculpture, and architecture. But modernist artists rarely cultivated the popular success of these new cultural forms. Modernist works were little appreciated outside of a small elite. *Life* magazine's 1950s articles on the abstract expressionist Jackson Pollock (American, 1912-1956), and the silkscreened paintings by Andy Warhol (American, 1928?-1987) of soup cans and celebrities signaled unprecedented fusions between high and low art and the transition to the postmodern age.

Quotations:

"Popularity is the crown of laurel which the world puts on bad art. Whatever is popular is wrong."

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Anglo-Irish playwright, author. Lecture, June 30, 1883, to students of the Royal Academy, London (published in *Aristotle at Afternoon Tea: The Rare Oscar Wilde*, 1991).

"The fact is popular art dates. It grows quaint. How many people feel strongly about Gilbert and Sullivan today compared to those who felt strongly in 1890?"

Stephen Sondheim (1930-), contemporary American composer, lyricist. *International Herald Tribune* (Paris, June 20, 1989).

"Popular art is the dream of society; it does not examine itself."

Margaret Atwood (1939-), Canadian novelist, poet, critic. "A Question Of Metamorphosis," interview in *Malahat Review*, no. 41 (1977; reprinted in *Conversations*, edited by Earl G. Ingersoll, 1990).

"Popular culture is the new Babylon, into which so much art and intellect now flow. It is our imperial sex theater, supreme temple of the western eye. We live in the age of idols. The pagan past, never dead, flames again in our mystic hierarchies of stardom."

Camille Paglia (1947-), American author, critic, educator. *Sexual Personae*, chapter 4 (1990).

**Portrait** - A work of art that represents a specific person, a group of people, or an animal. Portraits usually show what a person looks like as well as revealing something about the subject's personality. Portraits can be made of any sculptural material or in any two-dimensional medium. Portraiture is the field of portrait making and portraits in general.

Portrait is a term that may also refer simply to a vertically oriented rectangle, just as a horizontally oriented one may be said to be oriented the landscape way.

"I would rather see the portrait of a dog that I know, than all the allegorical paintings they can shew me in the world."

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), English writer and lexicographer. *Johnson Miscellanies*, edited by G.B. Hill, 1987.

"By means of a back, we want a temperament, an age, a social condition, to be revealed; through a pair of hands, we should be able to express a magistrate or a tradesman; by a gesture, a whole series of feelings. A physiognomy will tell us that this fellow is certainly an orderly, dry, meticulous man, whereas that one is carelessness and disorderliness itself. An attitude will tell us that this person is going to a business meeting, whereas that one is returning from a love tryst. 'A man opens a door; he enters; that is enough: we see that he has lost his daughter.' Hands that are kept in pockets can be eloquent. The pencil will be steeped in the marrow of life."

Edgar Degas (1834-1917), French Impressionist. Quoted by Edmond Duranty, *La Nouvelle Peinture: A Propos du Groupe d'Artistes Qui Expose dans les Galeries Durand-Ruel*, Paris, 1876, translated by Linda Nochlin and included in the Sources and Documents series, *Impressionism and Post-Impressionism*, 1874-1904, Englewood Cliffs, 1966.

After his model-- Ambroise Vollard-- had posed for a portrait by Paul Cézanne for one hundred and fifteen sittings, Cézanne abandoned the canvas with the remark:

"I am not altogether displeased with the shirt."

Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), French Post-Impressionist painter.

"If the man who paints only the tree, or flower, or other surface he sees before him were an artist, the king of artists would be the photographer. It is for the artist to do something beyond this: in portrait painting to put on canvas something more than the face the model wears for that one day; to paint the man, in short, as well as his features."

James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903), American painter and etcher. *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*, "Propositions" (1890). See aestheticism and art for art's sake.

"Every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist, not of the sitter."

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Anglo-Irish playwright, author. Said by the character Basil Hallward, in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, chapter 1 (1891).

"A portrait is a painting with something a little wrong with the mouth."

John Singer Sargent (1856-1925), American painter of many portraits.

"The point on which we differ is one which a long experience of portrait painting has made me perfectly familiar-I have very often been reproached with giving a hard expression to ladies' portraits, especially when I have retained some look of intelligence in a face."

Quote of John Singer Sargent, undated letter.

"When you start with a portrait and search for a pure form, a clear volume, through successive eliminations, you arrive inevitably at the egg. Likewise, starting with the egg and following the same process in reverse, one finishes with the portrait."

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. *Intransigent* (Paris, June 15, 1932).

"What is a face, really? Its own photo? Its make-up? Or is it a face as painted by such or such painter? That which is in front? Inside? Behind? And the rest? Doesn't everyone look at himself in his own particular way? Deformations simply do not exist."

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. *Arts de France*, no. 6 (Paris, 1946). Quoted in: *Picasso on Art* (edited by Dore Ashton, 1972).

"A portrait, to be a work of art, neither must nor may resemble the sitter . . . the painter has within himself the landscapes he wishes to produce. To depict a figure one must not paint that figure; one must paint its atmosphere."

Umberto Boccioni (1882-1916), Italian Futurist painter and sculptor. *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting*, April 11, 1910.

**Post-Minimalism** - (See Minimalism.) Although minimalist art of the 1960s had a stripped-down, prefabricated look, striving to be free of content (free of allegorical qualities), art with minimalist tendencies from the 1970s onward typically became more content-laden. The term Post-Minimalism was coined by Robert Pincus-Witten in *Artforum*, November, 1971, "Eva Hesse: Post-Minimalism into Sublime." Pincus-Witten pointed out the more embellished and pictorial approach Richard Serra took in his cast-lead pieces, and Eva Hesse in her pliable hangings.

**postmodernism or Postmodernism** - Art, architecture, or literature that reacts against earlier modernist principles, as by reintroducing traditional or classical elements of style or by carrying modernist styles or practices to extremes.

Phillip Ritter asked about the shades of difference in the meanings of "postmodern", "postmodernist theory" and "postmodernism".

"Postmodernist theory" and "postmodernism" are nearly identical. The former can imply more the body of writing along with the thought, while the latter is more simply the body

of thought, albeit largely encoded in texts. The term "postmodern theory" is potentially more confusing. It could be read as referring to any or all theory (collective theories) associated with the era of postmodernism, although what most writers probably mean is "postmodernist theory," and perhaps writers can be allowed to expect that the second meaning (postmodernist theory) will be read by readers, if/because this meaning is apparent in the context of its use.

About postmodernism:

A joke: "What do you get when you cross a postmodernist with a used car salesman?

Answer: You get an offer you can't understand." Written by "vance" to a listserve, in turn quoted by "MaloneyMK" on the ArtsEdNet listserve, Jan. 27, 1998.

**post-redneck-constructivism** - A confabulation of neo-porcine-reductivist effluvia with overtones of unrepentent deconstructivist frivolity. The leading practitioner (and former male model) is Michael A. Maglich (American, 1945-). The A. stands either for Aesthesian, Aguacate, Arsephenamine, Athodyd, or Attelet.

**Poussinisme** - The doctrine that form, rather than color, was the most important element in painting, as it is in the works of Nicolas Poussin (French, 1593/94-1665). It highly valued draftsmanship and linear style of painting. Poussinisme was a movement in seventeenth century France which arose in reaction to Rubénisme, which favored the coloristic brilliance and painterly style of Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577-1640). The Poussinistes were led by Charles Lebrun (French, 1619-1790), although Lebrun's work shows him emulating Rubens's style along with Poussin's. Rubens, Poussin, the Rubenistes, and the Poussinistes were all active during the Baroque period of art.

**Precisionism** or **precisionism** - A style of early twentieth century painting in which depicted scenes-- many of industrial architecture-- or objects. Precisionists typically depicted mechanical and industrial subject matter, such as smokestacks, steel foundries, or grain elevators. These subjects were usually reduced or simplified to geometric forms and rendered in bright and clear light, by a combination of abstraction and realism. In a work such as *River Rouge Plant*, Sheeler's commercial photography proved a valuable source of imagery. Pre-eminent among artists painting in this style were Charles Demuth (American, 1883-1935) and Charles Sheeler (American, 1883-1965).

**primary colors** - The colors yellow, red (magenta), and blue (cyan) from which it is possible to mix all the other colors of the spectrum-- also known as the subtractive or colorant primaries. Thus pigments that reflect light of one of these wavelengths and absorb other wavelengths may be mixed to produce all colors. Also, the light (-source) primaries: Lights of red, green, and blue wavelengths may be mixed to produce all colors. Light primaries are used in theatrical stage lighting, and in color video and computer screens.

**principles of design or principles of art** - Refers to the different ways that the elements of art may be used in a work of art. Artists "design" their works to varying degrees by controlling and ordering the elements of art. To do this, they use such principles as balance, emphasis (or dominance), harmony, horror vacui, movement, pattern, proportion, rhythm, unity, and variety.

**horror vacui** - The compulsion to make marks in every space. Horror vacui is indicated by a crowded design. In Latin, it is literally, "fear of empty space" or "fear of emptiness." (pr. horror vack'wee)

Quote:

- "Horror vacui -- fear of emptiness -- is the driving force in contemporary American taste. Along with the commercial interests that exploit this interest, it is the major factor now shaping attitudes toward public spaces, urban spaces, and even suburban sprawl." Herbert Muschamp, contemporary architecture critic, New York Times, August, 21, 2000.

**proportion** - A principle of design, it refers to the relationship of elements to the whole and to each other; a ratio. Often proportion is allied with another principle of art, emphasis. For example, if there is a greater proportion of intense hues than dull hues in a work, emphasis is suggested. Proportion may also refer to size relationships. For example, if one figure is made to look larger compared to other figures in a composition, it is said to be out of proportion and is given greater importance. Also see distort, elongate, Golden Mean, and scale.

**public art** - Art works that are designed specifically for, or placed in areas physically accessible to the general public. The meanings and functions of these works varies widely, based on the societal and aesthetic values of the communities, institutions, and individuals which commission them.

**Quote:**

"Public art can express civic values, enhance the environment, transform a landscape, heighten our awareness, or question our assumptions. Placed in a public site, this art is therefore for everyone, a form of collective community expression--from the once celebrated but now unrecognized general on a horse to the abstract sculpture that may baffle the passer-by on first glance." Penny Balkin Bach (contemporary American), art administrator".

**Readymade** - An object manufactured for some other purpose, presented by an artist as a work of art. Between 1914 and 1921, Marcel Duchamp (French, 1887-1968), who originated this concept, selected and signed, among others, a snow shovel, a comb, and a urinal. He occasionally altered readymades (sometimes called assisted readymades)-- the most famous of which was a cheap reproduction of *Mona Lisa* on which Duchamp drew a mustache.

"Now Mr. Mutt's fountain is not immoral, that is absurd, no more than a bathtub is immoral. It is a fixture that you see every day in plumbers' show windows. Whether Mr. Mutt with his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He CHOSE it. He took an ordinary article of life, placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view-- created a new thought for that object." From an anonymous article published by Duchamp, Beatrice Wood, and H.-P. Roche in *Blind Man*, May 1917.

**register** - The exact alignment of shapes or edges in various areas of any piece of work. In printmaking, registration is the proper positioning of colors. In museum work, registration is the process of developing and maintaining an immediate, brief, and permanent means of identifying an object for which the museum has assumed responsibility.

**reify** - To treat an abstraction as if it had concrete or material existence. Reification is what the viewer experiences in treating an abstraction as if it had concrete or material existence. (pr. ree'e-fi:)

**render** - To represent in a drawing or painting, especially in perspective. Also, to create an interpretation of another artist's work, perhaps in another form. Also, a coat of plaster, cement, or concrete which is applied to raw brick, stone, etc., or to apply such a coat.

**repetition** - Closely related to harmony, a principle of design, this term refers to a way of combining elements of art so that the same elements are used over and over again. Thus, a certain color or shape might be used

several times in the same picture. Repetition also can contribute to movement and rhythm in a work of art.

Quote:

"That which is static and repetitive is boring. That which is dynamic and random is confusing. In between lies art." John A. Locke (1632-1704), English philosopher.

**represent** and **representation** - To stand for; symbolize. To depict or portray subjects a viewer may recognize as having a likeness; the opposite of abstraction. A representation is such a depiction.

Quote:

"Painting is an essentially concrete art and can only consist of the representation of real and existing things . . . an object which is abstract, not visible, non-existent, is not within the realm of painting." Gustave Courbet (1819-1877), French Realist painter.

**reproduction** - The act of reproducing; copying; creating a facsimile. The product of the act of reproducing, especially when it is significantly faithful in its resemblance to the form and elements of the original.

A quotation about reproduction:

"For the first time in world history, mechanical reproduction emancipates the work of art from its parasitical dependance upon ritual. To an ever greater degree the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility. But the instant the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applicable to artistic production, the total function of art is reversed. Instead of being based on ritual, it begins to be based on another practise-- politics." Walter Benjamin (1892-1940), German critic. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," 1936, in *Illuminations*, reprinted in 1969.

**retrospective** - An exhibit that shows a large number of works over time by a living artist. This allows a viewer to study the development of the artist's style, use of techniques, and choice of subjects, along with other aspects of the work. Retrospectives have traditionally been arranged chronologically-- early career, middle career, late career-- but may also be arranged thematically. Also see catalogue raisonné.

**rhythm** - A principle of design, it refers to a way of combining elements of art to produce the look and feel of movement, especially with a visual tempo or beat. It is often achieved through the careful placement of repeated elements which invite the viewer's eye to jump rapidly or glide smoothly from one to the next.

**Rubénisme** - The doctrine that color, rather than form, was the most important element in painting. A movement in seventeenth century France which highly valued the coloristic brilliance and painterly style of Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577-1640), in reaction to Poussinisme, which highly valued the prominence of drawing and the linear style of Nicolas Poussin (French, 1593/94-1665). Rubens, Poussin, the Rubénistes, and the Poussinistes were all active during the Baroque period of art.

**rule of compensation** - A guideline for balancing a composition that states that the bigger the mass, the more toward the center of an artwork it should be placed. Similarly, the smaller the mass, the more toward the edge it should be placed.

**Salon or Paris Salon or Salon d'Apollon** - [upper case S] The annual art exhibition of painting and sculpture by the French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, later known as the Académie des Beaux-Arts. Although from the seventeenth century informal exhibitions were held in the Salon d'Apollon, in the Louvre, not until the nineteenth century did the Salon assume its paramount importance. Exhibits were selected by a jury and acceptance generally secured an artist's sales and reputation, while further prestige attached to the medals awarded for painting, sculpture and printmaking. As the century progressed, the academic and increasingly conservative jury rejected many innovatory artists until in 1863 Napoleon III established a Salon des Refusés in response to the protest against the number of works rejected by the official Salon that year. By 1870 the Salon had become synonymous with conventional art and had declined in importance.

**Salon d'Automne** - A Parisian exhibition that has been held every year since its inception in 1903 as a reaction to the conservative policies of the official Salon. The Salon d'Automne displayed the paintings of Henri Matisse (French, 1869-1954) and Paul Cézanne (French, 1839-1906) in its early days, gaining acceptance for their work.

**Salon des Refusés** - An art exhibition held in Paris in 1863, set up by the government at the urging of the artists involved, as an exhibition of paintings that had been refused by the official annual Salon of the Académie des Beaux-Arts. The show's major sensations were two paintings by Edouard Manet (French, 1832-1883), each considered scandalous-- *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, for portraying nude and clothed figures together in a scene of

everyday life, and *Olympia*, for portraying a nude prostitute, whose form was not typical of those considered ideal. Other exhibitors were Claude Monet (French, 1840-1926), Camille Pissarro (French, 1830-1903), and James A. M. Whistler (American, 1834-1903).

**S.A.S.E.** - S.A.S.E. is an abbreviation for "self-addressed stamped envelope." Arts organizations often ask artists submitting work for exhibitions, etc. to include S.A.S.E. In this way such organizations save themselves time and expense meeting their responsibilities in replying to submissions, and perhaps in returning materials as well. Information from arts organizations sometimes includes disclaimers of responsibility to return materials. Although artists should expect to receive replies and the return of their materials in a timely manner, whenever assurances of such practices are not received, it's wise to inquire.

**scale** - A proportion used in determining the dimensional relationship of a representation to that which it represents (its actual size), as in maps and architectural plans. Sometimes, proper proportion.

**semiotic** or **semiotics** - Of or relating to semantics; a linguistic, or literary study of the meaning of forms-- signs and symbols and what they represent. It includes studies of iconography, iconology, and typology. It is strongly associated with postmodernism.

**serigraphy** - A stencil method of printmaking in which an image is imposed on a screen of silk or other fine mesh, with blank areas coated with an impermeable substance, and ink is forced through the mesh onto the printing surface. Also called silkscreen process and screen-printing. A serigraph is a print made by this method.

**sgraffito** - A method of decorating or designing a surface, as of paint, plaster, or glazing, by scratching through a layer of one color to expose a different color underneath. Examples include: scratching through a layer of wet paint to reveal dry paint or gilding beneath, and scratching through unfired glaze to reveal the ceramic body beneath, The Italian word meaning to scratch. (pr. sgrah-fee'toh)

**shape** - An element of art, it is an enclosed space defined and determined by other art elements such as line, color, value, and texture. In painting and drawing, shapes may take on the appearance of solid three-dimensional

object even though they are limited to two dimensions-- length and width. This two-dimensional character of shape distinguishes it from form, which has depth as well as length and width. Examples of shapes include: circle, oval; polygons such as triangle, square, rectangle, rhombus, trapezium, trapezoid, pentagon, hexagon, heptagon, octagon, nonagon, decagon, undecagon, dodecagon, etc.; and such other kinds of shapes as amorphous, biomorphous and concretion..

**sign** - Something that suggests the presence or existence of a fact, condition, or quality. An act or a gesture used to convey an idea, a desire, information, or a command. A conventional figure or device that stands for a word, a phrase, or an operation; a symbol. Sign language, or to communicate with a sign or by sign language; to signal. A structure or notice bearing a designation, direction, command, advertisement, or information, which may include lettering, symbols and other imagery; signage. To put one's signature on something, usually to mark it as one's own, or to approve.

Quote:

"Just as all thought, and primarily that of non-signification, signifies something, so there is no art that has no signification." Albert Camus (1913-1960), French-Algerian philosopher, author. *The Rebel*, part 4 (1951; translated in 1953).

**signage** - The design or use of signs and symbols. Signage may include billboards, posters, placards, etc. It may refer to a number of signs thought of as a group.

**simplicity** - Closely related to harmony -- a principle of design -- this term refers to the practice of using a limited number of similar elements to secure a more uniform appearance.

Quotes:

"To write simply is as difficult as to be good." W. Somerset Maugham (1874-1965), English author and playwright.

"The urge toward simplification and order keeps us going and inspires us in the midst of chaos. Chaos is the beginning; simplicity is the end." Maurits Cornelius Escher (1898-1972), Dutch graphic artist.

**simulacrum** - A representation, or an unreal or vague likeness. The plural is simulacra.

**social realism** or **Social Realism** - A type of realism which is more overtly political in content, critical of society, marked by its realistic depiction of social problems. Paintings by Jean François Millet (French, 1814-75), a

painter associated with the Barbizon school, such as *The Angelus* (1854-59, Louvre) and *The Gleaners* (1857, Louvre), are considered early examples of social realism. The greatest impact of this art movement was felt in the first half of the twentieth century, however. Mexican muralists Diego Rivera (1886-1957), José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949), and David Alfaro Siqueiros (1896-1974) strongly influenced many North American social realist and WPA artists. Some of these northern artists emerged from the Ashcan school, while others, like Ben Shahn (American, 1898-1969), evolved separately. Be careful not to confuse social realism with socialist realism.

**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.

**specifications** - In commissioned works, especially in areas of design, specifications are specific expectations communicated to an artist, designer, fabricator, etc. Whether the entity forming and communicating specifications is a patron or employer, an art director or a teacher, specifications must be communicated clearly in a statement listing such particular requirements of a project as its materials, dimensions, subject or theme, elements or principles of design, quantity, or other qualities of the work expected. Specifications may allow for different interpretations, however, and can even be incomplete or vague in order to provide room for greater creativity. It is generally best to give and receive *written* specifications, as in a contract providing a record of what the specifications are agreed to be by each of the interested parties. If a work lives up to these parameters, then the work should be considered contractually satisfactory and successful. Related issues might include deadlines, locations, tools or techniques employed, engineering and safety issues, transportation, lodgings, etc

**stimulus** - Something causing a response, or that incites or rouses to action; an incentive. The plural form is stimuli.

Quote:

"My work is for dreamers, it's to stimulate people's dreams." Larry Bell (), contemporary American sculptor, interviewed in *Artlines* Magazine, January 1985.

**structuralism** - A school of art or of art criticism that advocates and employs a method of analyzing phenomena chiefly by contrasting the elemental structures of the phenomena in a system of binary opposition.

Quote:

"By day, Structuralists constructed the structure of meaning and pondered the meaning of structure. By night, Deconstructivists pulled the cortical edifice down. And the next day the Structuralists started in again."

Tom Wolfe (1931-), American journalist, author. *From Bauhaus to Our House*, chapter 5, 1981.

**structure** - Something made up of a number of parts that are put together in a particular way. The way in which parts are arranged or put together to form a whole. Also, to give form or arrangement to something. Sometimes, especially the parts that keep a thing from collapsing.

Quote:

"Structure, then, is on the one hand, the technique by which the art of architecture is made possible; and, on the other hand, it is part of its artistic content. But in the first case it is subject to mechanical laws purely, in the second, to psychological laws. This double function, or double significance, of structure is the cause of our confusion. For the aesthetic efficacy of structure does not develop or vary *pari passu* with structural technique. They stand in relation to one another, but not in a fixed relation. Some structural expedients, though valid technically, are not valid aesthetically, and vice versa." Geoffrey Scott, *The Architecture of Humanism*, W.W. Norton, New York, 1974, p.95.

**stylize and stylization** - To stylize is to alter natural shapes, forms, colors, or textures in order to make a representation in a preset style or manner. The design of any work tends to result in its having a style, and its having been freely chosen is one aspect of its appeal. "Stylization" suggests a more controlled application of a style, the artist having less freedom of choice. Consistency can be seen either as a positive attribute, or as a negative one. Seen positively, when an artist's style remains the same, it might be interpreted as the artist remaining true to his or her experience or personality, or to an idea or an ideal, etc. Seen negatively, a consistent stylization might be read as overuse, monotony, artifice, lack of originality, lack of imagination, too rigidly ordered (controlled), unfashionable, etc. This is the war of two constant battles: the battle between new and old that's thrown together with the battle between consistency and change. We love newness; and all the more as children of the modern era. But because the change and its pace is stressful, we also cherish consistency, and selectively cherish the past.

Particularly in the postmodern era, artists have very consciously chosen historical styles in which to convey their art. One aspect of postmodernism has been to embrace the idea (heresy to modernists), that originality / creativity is either a less important or an impossible objective. (Note how common are copying, appropriation, sampling, and plagiarism, and questions about copyright issues.) The pursuit of newness was at the heart of modernism. But as much as postmodernists believe it cannot and should no longer be a goal, the zeitgeist still favors those who produce the next new thing. Advice to students: be aware that you might choose to employ any of many styles, and that your choice will affect the audience's interpretation of your work.

**subject** - That which is represented in an artwork. For example, a nineteenth century rural American classroom is the subject in the painting by Winslow Homer (American, 1836-1910) of *The Country School*, 1871, oil on canvas, Saint Louis Art Museum. The subject of a work is one of its literal qualities. Quote:

"Energy is eternal delight; and from the earliest times human beings have tried to imprison it in some durable hieroglyphic. It is perhaps the first of all the subjects of art." Kenneth Clark (1903-1983), English art writer. *The Nude: A Study of Ideal Art*.

**subjectivity** - Whenever conclusions are considered or reached which depend upon ideas existing within a person's mind; taking a personal point of view; personal. quality of perceptions existing only within the experiencer's mind, but not in reality. expression of the individuality of an artist or author.

Quote:

"Yet in spite of the total disregard of the dictionary of manners, he shows a politeness toward us which no other man here would have shown . . . Cézanne is one of the most liberal artists I have ever seen. He prefaces every remark with *Pour moi* it is so and so, but he grants that everyone may be as honest and as true to nature from their convictions; he doesn't believe that everyone should see alike." Mary Cassatt (1845-1926), American Impressionist painter. In a letter to Mrs. Stillman, 1894.

**sublime** - A concept, thing or state of exceptional and awe-inspiring beauty and moral or intellectual expression -- a goal to which many nineteenth-century artists aspired in their artworks. Noble, majestic.

**superficial** - Being on or near the surface; lacking in depth or thoroughness. Shallow; concerned with or understanding only what is apparent or obvious. Apparent rather than actual or substantial. Insignificant; trivial.

**Symbolism** - An art movement which rejected the purely visual realism of the Impressionists, and the rationality of the Industrial Age, in order to depict the symbols of ideas. Influenced by Romanticism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, it thrived in France in the late nineteenth century, its influence spreading throughout much of Europe. Rather than the precise equivalents of ideas or emotions, its symbols were meant to be more mysterious, ambiguous suggestions of meanings. The work of one group, including Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (French, 1824-1898), Gustave Moreau (French, 1826-1898), and Odilon Redon (French, 1840-1916), took a literary approach, employing some of the imagery of Symbolist writers, including such icons as severed heads, monsters and glowing or smoky spirits, synthesized from elements of Bible stories and ancient myths. Later, the imaginative incongruities in these works were to influence the Surrealists. Another group, taking a formal approach, in which linear stylizations and innovative uses of color produced emotional effects, included Paul Gauguin (French, 1848-1903), Vincent van Gogh (Dutch, 1853-1890) and the Nabis.

**technique** - Any method of working with art materials to create an art object.

**technology** - The use of science, especially to achieve industrial, commercial, or engineering results; or the particular scientific method and material used to achieve those results. Often refers to the essential qualities of a person's or society's tools, machines, or other apparatus used to achieve a mechanical end.

**texture** - An element of art which refers to the surface quality or "feel" of an object, its smoothness, roughness, softness, etc. Textures may be actual or simulated. Actual textures can be felt with the fingers, while simulated textures are suggested by the way the artist has painted certain areas of a picture. Words describing textures include: flat, smooth, shiny, glossy, glittery, velvety, soft, wet, gooey, furry, sandy, leathery, prickly, abrasive, rough, bumpy, corrugated, and sticky.

**thematic** - Reference to one or more themes which may determine choice or ordering of subject matter, or works displayed in an exhibition.

**tone** - A quality of a color, such as its tint, shade, value, or brightness; or to create such a quality in a color. To tone down is to make a color less vivid, harsh, or violent; moderate. To tone up is to make one become brighter or more vigorous. May refer to the general effect in painting of light, color, and shade.

**truth** - Conformity to fact or actuality. Veracity. Being in accord with fact or reality. Expressing integrity. Truth is a comprehensive term that in all of its nuances implies accuracy and honesty. Verisimilitude is the quality of having the appearance of truth or reality. A belief of some modernist painters, especially Abstract Expressionists, is that to create an illusion of depth is dishonest -- that a work is more truthful when it declares its inherent flatness. Postmodernists have rejected this notion. Other opposites to truth: counterfeit, fake, forgery, plagiarism, ostentation, and pretentiousness.

Quotes:

"However indifferent men are to universal truths, they are keen on those that are individual and particular."

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), German philosopher. "Psychological Remarks," *Parerga and Paralipomena*, 1851.

"A picture is something that requires as much knavery, trickery, and deceit as the perpetration of a crime."

Edgar Degas (1834-1917), French Impressionist artist.

"TRUTH, n: An ingenious compound of desirability and appearance."

Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914), American writer. *The Cynic's Word Book*, also known as *The Devil's Dictionary*, 1906.

"The truth is rarely pure and never simple."

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Irish-born writer. See aestheticism and fin de siècle.

"We all know that Art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realize truth, at least the truth that is given us to understand. The artist must know the manner whereby to convince others of the truthfulness of his lies."

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. "Picasso Speaks," in *The Arts* (New York, May 1923; reprinted in Alfred H. Barr, Jr., *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art*, 1946).

"If there were only one truth, you couldn't paint a hundred canvases on the same theme."

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. Quoted in: Hélène Parmelin, *Picasso Says...*, "Truth" (1966; translated 1969).

"You mustn't always believe what I say. Questions tempt you to tell lies, particularly when there is no answer."

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish artist. Quoted in: Roland Penrose, *Picasso: His Life and Work*, chapter 13 (1958).

"To be an artist, one must . . . never shirk from the truth as he understands it, never withdraw from life."

Diego Rivera (1886-1957), Mexican painter. See artist and mural.

"The veracity [in photographs] is beginning to go -- it's going like painting, which isn't necessarily about veracity."

David Hockney (1937-), English painter and photographer. Quoted by Bernard Weinraub, *New York Times*, August 15, 2001. See photography, photomontage, and Pop Art.

"Discovery of truth is the sole purpose of philosophy, which is the most ancient occupation of the human mind and has a fair prospect of existing with increasing activity to the end of time."

Unknown

**unconscious** - Not having awareness or sensory perception. Occurring in the absence of conscious awareness or thought. Without conscious control; involuntary or unintended. In psychoanalytic theory, the portion of the mind which holds such things as memories and repressed desires, that are not subject to conscious perception or control but that often affect conscious thoughts and behavior. The unconscious is an important issue to artists influenced by Surrealism.

**underpainting** - The layer or layers of color on a painting surface applied before the overpainting, or final coat. There are many types of underpainting. One type is an all-over tinting of a white ground. Another is a blocked out image in diluted oil paints that serves as a guide for the painter while developing the composition and color effects.

**unity** - The quality of wholeness or oneness that is achieved through the effective use of the elements and principles of design. Often it is realized through a deliberate or intuitive balancing of harmony and variety. However, this balance does not have to be of equal proportions. Harmony might outweigh variety, or variety might outweigh harmony. Harmony aids efforts to blend picture parts together to form a whole. Variety adds visual interest to this unified whole.

**variety** - A principle of design that refers to a way of combining elements of art in involved ways to achieve intricate and complex relationships. Variety is often obtained through the use of diversity and change by artists who wish to increase the visual interest of their work. An artwork which makes use of many different hues, values, lines, textures, and shapes would reflect the artist's desire for variety. Unity is the principle which is its variety's opposite.

Quotations:

"No pleasure endures unseasoned by variety."

Publius Syrus (1st century B.C.), Roman writer of mimes.

"Hooray for the difference!" (Vive la difference!)

Anonymous, French proverb.

"Variety's the very spice of life."

William Cowper (1731-1800), English poet.

"Variety is the mother of enjoyment."

Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), English statesman, author.

**viewer** - A person who views; an onlooker or spectator. Sometimes used as a synonym for audience. Also, any of many possible optical devices used in viewing something, especially photographic transparencies such as slides, by illuminating and magnifying them.

**virtual reality** - An interactive computerized simulation or synthesis of an experience in several senses.

**visual culture** - A term which is used more and more in place of the term art. It has the advantage of including works that a Eurocentric audience might call art, but are not called art by the cultures that produced them. Examples of such work might include kachina dolls, bonsai, and boomerangs.

**visual qualities** - The careful arrangement of the elements and principles of design in a work of art. This aesthetic quality is favored by formalism.

**world-view** or **worldview** - The larger point of view one has, and from which one interprets the world. A collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual or a group. Also, this is the English equivalent of the German term *Weltanschauung*-- the mind-set or outlook of a particular group, whether aesthetic, ethnic, political, social, etc. *Weltanschauungs* (or *Weltanschauungen*) are usually limited in scope to readily identifiable historical, geographical, ethnic and other groupings. About world-view:

"I think the experiential test of whether this art is great or good, or minor or abysmal is the effect it has on your own sense of the world and of yourself. Great art changes you." Sister Wendy Beckett, contemporary English art historian, on BBC Radio 2, 1994.

**xenophilia** - Love of the foreign or unfamiliar. A xenophile is a person attracted to that which is foreign (or ethnic), especially to foreign peoples, manners, or cultures. In Western societies during the 1990s, in reaction to the prevailing opinion that the great accomplishments have been made

almost exclusively by males of European descent (DWMs), there was a xenophilic embrace of works by women, non-whites and the dispossessed.

**xenophobia** - Irrational fear or hatred of anything foreign or unfamiliar, especially other social or foreign (ethnic) groups. A xenophobe is a person who is unduly fearful or contemptuous of anything foreign, especially of strangers or foreign peoples. Subcategories include racism, sexism, homophobia, and religious intolerance; and specific to the art world, the off-hand dismissal of art by a viewer without attempting to understand it. People tend to fear or distrust those who are not like themselves. When we convince ourselves that our way is the "right" way, we are more likely to strike out at those who are different. In fact, intolerance of differences is at the root of most violence.

Xenophobia has increased with the growth of various fundamentalist religious movements -- notably within every major monotheistic religion, each of which has been frustrated that it has failed to fill the huge spiritual void of modernity -- one that Jean-Paul Sartre called "a God-shaped hole." Art xenophobia is fear of art which is not immediately understood. There is a long history to intolerance directed toward art and artists.

Examples:

The original "iconoclasts" among Christians of the Byzantine Empire. When iconoclasm was at its height, especially in the eighth and ninth centuries, the iconoclasts destroyed countless works of art -- religious images were the focus of this controversy.

During the French Revolution of 1789-1795, the stone saints at Notre Dame de Paris were beheaded in the name of "the people," who mistook the statues for royalty.

In the last century, the rise of modernism witnessed a powerful backlash from those who saw works of each avant-garde art movement as tasteless or ugly or bad art, as insulting the public, as mean jokes, as radical political propaganda, etc.

Examples:

The reaction to the Armory Show in New York City in 1914. Another is the Nazi's program of condemning modernist art and artists as degenerate (see fascist aesthetic).

Attempts in the last few years to discipline museums and other organizations which have supported or mounted exhibitions of controversial works in the United States and elsewhere. (See National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).) Vandals have targeted numerous works of art. Most vulnerable have been works in public places, such as in parks and museums. These works include

such Renaissance masterworks as Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* (*La Joconde*), Michelangelo's *Rome Pietà*, as well as works of other periods by such artists as Rembrandt and van Gogh, among many others.

In the spring of 2000, Afghanistan's Taliban (Islamic extremists in power) destroyed colossal statues of the Buddha, carved from a living rock cliff at Bamiyan, 145 km west of Kabul, Afghanistan, long before the arrival of Islam in that area. One of the statues was 53 metres high and dated to the 5th century; the other was 37 metres tall and dated to the 3rd century. These were rare examples of statuary in the Greco-Buddhist style, priceless ancient relics of this important cultural crossroads. Several thousand monks once lived in the caves next to the statue. The Taliban's supreme leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar, ordered the destruction in an edict, saying such images were contrary to Islam. "These idols have been gods of the infidels, who worshipped them, and these are respected even now and perhaps maybe turned into gods again," his edict said. Other resources on this story: 1, 2, 3, and 4. (See Buddhist art, Islamic art, and living rock.)

Today, a syndrome of intolerance continues to develop from people's irritation with the ascendancy of modernism and postmodernism, and from the inevitably mixed results (ranging from the worst through the best achievements) of secular, democratic societies. This hatred often results in disputes over artists' freedom of expression (in the US, called First Amendment rights).

**zeitgeist** or **Zeitgeist** - The spirit of the times. A German word (especially when capitalized) for the taste, outlook, or general trend of thought which is characteristic of the cultural productions of a period or generation. For example, the zeitgeist of the Neoclassical period is considered to be rationalism, whereas that of the Romantic period is sentiment. The zeitgeist of the early modern period may have been faith in salvation through technological advancement, whereas that of the postmodern period would be disdain for such expressions of certainty. Because the identification of a zeitgeist tends to obliterate differences and imply a degree of essentialism, it is safe to say that postmodern thought in general distrusts it. The *New York Times Manual of Style and Usage* calls use of the word zeitgeist "pretentious." (pr. tsyt'gyst)