

## Art 101

Listed below are many art terms and definitions to help on your creative journey.

**Abstract** - The arrangement of lines, forms, tone and colour, even in a painting depicting an aspect of the known world, can be viewed as a series of non-representational relationships.

**Aceo** - Art Cards Editions and Originals. ACEOs are collectible little pieces of art. An ACEO is always 2.5 inches by 3.5 inches. That is the size of a standard sports trading card. The rule about size is the ONLY rule in the ACEO world. An ACEO can be created in any medium the artist desires: paint, colored pencils, ink, etc. There are even ACEOs made from wood, clay, fabric, and metal.

**Académie** - This is the French term for an academy of art. It has also acquired the secondary meaning of the drawn study of the nude figure practiced there, and by extension painted studies of the nude.

**Acrylic** - A painting process involving fast-drying paints comprised of pigments suspended within an acrylic polymer emulsion. Acrylic paintings can resemble watercolor or oil paintings depending on the methods and additives used during the painting process.

**Allegorical Painting** - An allegory is the description of a subject in the guise of another subject. An allegorical painting might include figures emblematic of different emotional states of mind. Allegorical subjects were frequently painted from the Renaissance until around 1800.

**Americana** - Sometimes referred to as American Folk Art, Americana artworks depict patriotic subjects like famous Americans, historical landscapes, and slices of American life typically executed in a primitive or folk manner.

**Analog Photography** - is a commonly used term for photography that uses a progressively changing recording medium, which may be either chemical process based (e.g., photographic film or plate) or electronic (e.g., Videocon or CCD sensor). Through common use this term has come to mean anything that is "not digital" despite some amount of controversy that the use of film isn't a true "analog" process

**Analogous Colors** - Closely related hues, especially those in which you can see a common hue; hues that are neighbors on the color wheel, such as blue, blue-green, and green.

**Antiquity** - a broadly applied term which refers to the history and culture of a period of Western civilization. It is primarily used in an art-historical context to describe Greco-Roman life and art in Europe prior to the decline of the Roman empire.

**Applied Art** - Distinctions have in the past been made between the fine and applied arts. Painting is usually seen as 'fine', while the making of jewelry or porcelain, for example, is seen as 'applied'.

**Aquatint** – A type of etching in which a ground of fine particles is used. This material resists acid, but is not a solid coating, which allows for a tonal effect in the printed result.

**Archival Paper** – a high quality, durable, acid-free paper meant for use in publication that require a permanent medium such as those of high legal, historical or significant value, including artworks.

**Artifact** – An object formed by humans, particularly one of interest to archaeologists, such as a tool or a work of art.

**Art Deco** - An eclectic form of stylish modernism based on mathematical geometric shapes. Art Deco was a popular international design movement from 1925 until 1939.

**Art Nouveau** – An international style of art, architecture and applied arts - especially the decorative arts – that peaked in popularity at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (1890-1905). A reaction to academic art of the 19th century, it is characterized by organic, especially floral and other plant-inspired motifs as well as highly stylized, flowing forms.

**Auteur** – Term used to described film directors who are considered to have a distinctive, recognizable style, they are identifiable regardless of their genre.

**Avant-garde** - refers to people or works that are experimental or innovative avant-garde refers to a pushing of the boundaries of what is accepted as the norm or the status quo. Many artists have aligned themselves with the avant-garde movement and still continue to do so.

**Baroque** - An artistic style prevalent from the late 16th century to the early 18th century in Europe. A dominant style of art in Europe between the Mannerist and Rococo eras, it is characterized by dynamic movement, overt emotion and self-confident rhetoric.

**Bauhaus** - The Bauhaus was founded in 1919 in the city of Weimar by German architect Walter Gropius (1883–1969). Its core objective was a radical concept: to reimagine the material world to reflect the unity of all the arts. The Bauhaus style became one of the most influential currents in Modernist architecture and modern design.

**Botanical Art** – Art whose subject is plant life.

**Byzantine art** - The term refers to the art of the Eastern Christian empire, the capital city of which was Constantinople or Byzantium, now part of Turkey and called Istanbul. Certain artistic traditions that originated in the Byzantine Empire, particularly in regard to icon painting and church architecture, are maintained in Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Russia and other Eastern Orthodox countries to the present day.

**Canvas** - Canvas is one of the most commonly used supports for painting. It consists of strong unbleached cloth, usually of hemp or flax, fixed over a wooden framework.

**Capriccio** - In Italian capriccio (plural capricci) means that which is capricious, whimsical or fantastic. In relation to painting the term is usually used to describe imaginary topographical scenes.

**Caricature** - Art where the subject's distinctive features or peculiarities are deliberately exaggerated to produce a comic or grotesque effect.

**Charcoal** - Historically used in painting to sketch in the composition prior to painting, charcoal is also used to accomplish complete drawings. Charcoal is available in vine, compressed, and powdered forms.

**Chinese Painting** - one of the oldest continuous artistic traditions in the world. Traditional painting involves essentially the same techniques as calligraphy and is done with a brush dipped in black or colored ink; oils are not used. As with calligraphy, paintings are most commonly made on paper and silk. The finished work is then mounted on scrolls, which can be hung or rolled up. Many traditions of Western painting have been adopted by contemporary Chinese painters, who

have incorporated both Eastern and Western traditions into a style that is entirely their own.

**Chromatography** - a technique used to separate mixtures into their different components. Chromatography can be used to determine the type of oil used in paint or the type of resin used in a varnish.

**Chromogenic Print** - A full color photographic print produced from a color slide, a film negative or a digital file. The photographic processes known as chromogenic are characterized by a reaction between two chemicals to form the color dyes that make up a photographic image. These images are composed of three main dye layers – cyan, magenta and yellow – that together form the full color spectrum.

**Commercial Art** - Art made for commerce purposes (advertising, etc.)

**Conceptual Art** - Art in which the concept or idea involved in the work takes precedence over traditional aesthetic and material concerns. When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art.

**Contemporary** - The term used to describe art produced at this present point in time, or art produced since World War II. The definition of the word contemporary would support the first view, but museums of contemporary art commonly define their collections as consisting of art produced since World War II.

**Constructivism** - A modern art movement beginning in Russia that aimed to create abstract sculpture for an industrialized society. The movement utilized technology and building materials such as glass, plastic, steel and chrome. Vladimir Tatlin is credited as the first artist to develop this type of art.

**Cubism** - A 20th century avant-garde art movement pioneered by Pablo Picasso and George Braque that revolutionized European painting and sculpture, and inspired related movements in music, literature and architecture. In cubist artworks, objects are broken up, analyzed and re-assembled in an abstracted form - the paintings are not supposed to look real, the artist uses geometric shapes to show what he is trying to paint.

**Digital Photography** - A form of photography that uses an array of light sensitive sensors to capture the image focused by the lens, as opposed to an exposure on

light sensitive film. The captured image is then digitized and stored as a computer file ready for digital processing, viewing, digital publishing or printing.

**Embossing** - The process of creating a three-dimensional raised image or design in paper and other materials.

**Encaustic** - Paint made from pigment mixed with melted wax and fixed by heat after application on the surface.

**Etching** – It is the process of using strong acid or mordant to cut into the unprotected parts of a metal surface to create a design in intaglio in the metal (the original process—in modern manufacturing other chemicals may be used on other types of material). As an intaglio method of printmaking, it is, along with engraving, the most important technique for old master prints, and remains in wide use today.

**Expressionism** - In Expressionist Art, the artist tries to express certain feelings about some thing. The artists that painted in this style were more concerned with having their paintings express a feeling than in making the painting look exactly like what they were painting.

**Fauvism** - Fauvism was an art style that lasted only four years, beginning in 1905. It got this name because the paintings had bright and unusual colors. The subjects in the paintings were shown in a simple way, and the colors and patterns were bright and wild.

**Feminist Art** - The feminist art movement refers to the efforts and accomplishments of feminists internationally to make art that reflects women's lives and experiences, as well as to change the way that women are viewed within art history and art practice. Founded in the 1960s, the style is very much alive today.

**Figurative art** - sometimes written as figurativism, describes artwork – particularly paintings and sculptures – which are clearly derived from real object sources, and are therefore by definition representational.

**Fluxus** – a name taken from a Latin word meaning "to flow" – is an international network of artists, composers and designers noted for blending different artistic media and disciplines in the 1960s.

**Folk Art** - Art typically created by people who have little or no formal artistic training who use techniques and styles that represent a particular region or culture. However, there is an emerging trend among trained artists to work in this style.

**Form** - The fundamental shape or structure of an object – such as sphere or cube.

**Fresco** - Wall-painting on plaster with a water-based medium. True fresco (buon fresco) is one of the most permanent forms of wall decoration because the pigment is applied while the plaster is still damp.

**Gampi** - A type of Japanese tissue paper made from the inner bark of the gampi bush. This soft, silky medium is used for the mending and conservation of artworks on paper.

**Gelatin Silver Print** – a dominant photographic process that are Gelatin silver prints, monochromatic (gray scale) and typically glossy. They were most popular from the period of the 1880s until the 1960s, at which time it was eclipsed by consumer color photography.

**Giclée** - Is a neologism coined in 1991 by printmaker Jack Duganne, for fine art digital prints made on inkjet printers. The name originally applied to fine art prints created on IRIS printers in a process invented in the late 1980s but has since come to mean any inkjet print. They are often used by artists, galleries, and print shops to denote high quality printing but since it is an unregulated word it has no associated warranty of quality.

**Gold Leaf** - Gold (or silver) beaten into extremely thin sheets; used for gilding.

**Gothic-Medieval Art** – covers over 1000 years of art history in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. It includes some major art movements and periods such as Early Christian art, Migration Period art, Celtic art, Byzantine art, Islamic art, Pre-Romanesque and Romanesque art, and Gothic art.

**Gouache** – A type of painting similar to watercolor but more opaque and reflective in nature due to the presence of white chalk in the paint.

**Pointillism** - the artist uses small dots or strokes of paint to make up the pictures. From far away, these dots blend together to form the picture and give the impression of different colors as they blend together.

**Hue** – the actual name of a color, such as Blue.

**Impressionism** - was developed in France during the late 19th and early 20th centuries (ex. Claude Monet). The paintings were usually in bold colors and did not have a lot of detail. The paintings in this style were usually outdoor scenes like landscapes. The pictures were painted to look like they were shimmering.

**Indigenous Art** - art is made by a social or ethnic group native to a particular land. These groups include the Aborigines in Australia and the Native Americans in the United States.

**Installation Art** - An artistic genre of three-dimensional works designed to transform a viewer's perception of a space. The genre incorporates a very broad range of everyday and natural materials, which are often chosen for their evocative qualities, as well as new media such as video, sound, performance, immersive virtual reality and the Internet. Many installations are site-specific in that they are designed to exist only in the space for which they are created.

**Lithograph** – A print produced by lithography. A lithograph is an authorized copy of an original work created by the artist himself or other skilled craftsmen. The artist uses a set of greasy crayons or pencils to draw a mirrored image of the original artwork onto a smooth stone tablet. The image may be directly printed from this plate (resulting in a reverse image) or offset by being transferred through a flexible sheet prior to printing.

**Minimalism** - describes movements in various forms of art, architecture and design where the work is stripped down to its most fundamental elements. It is primarily identified with developments in post-World War II Western Art, most strongly with American visual arts in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

**Mixed Media** - Any work of art created by employing any combination of mediums.

**Mixed Media Photography** - Photography that uses a variety of techniques and processes including hand colored photographs.

**Modernism** – Ushered into Western society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Modernism in the visual arts rejected the old standards of how art should be made, viewed, and what it should mean. Modernist artists affirmed the power of human beings to create, improve, and reshape their environment with the aid of scientific knowledge, technology, or practical experimentation.

**Monochromatic** – Design based on a single hue.

**Native American Art** – Art by Native Americans in the United States, use of art has been used as a form of expression for hundreds even thousands of years. Arts include painting, pottery, sand painting, carving, beadwork and baskets.

**Neo Classical Art** -- A European movement began after A.D. 1765, Neo Classical artist's favored strong, clean colors with contrasting lights and darks. As a reaction against Baroque and Rococo styles, they sought to return to the perceived purity of the arts of Rome.

**Neutral Colors** - Colors that blend or combine with all other colors to alter their value or intensity. Black, white, gray and variations of brown are considered neutral colors.

**Oeuvre** - An artist's "body of work" is their oeuvre. The term is commonly used by: museum and cultural heritage curators, the interested public, the art patron, private art collector community and galleries.

**Oil Painting** – A process of painting that uses paints composed of pigments that are bound with an oil medium.

**Orientation** - May be Horizontal, vertical or diagonal.

**Painting** – The term painting, refers to works of art created by applying paint to a flat surface such as canvas or paper.

**Panorama** - is any wide-angle view or representation of a physical space, whether in painting, drawing, photography, film/video or a 3D model. Panoramas first originated in the 19th century as a way of immersing large crowds of people into a reconstruction of a foreign place using monumental images.

**Pastel** - A combination of pure pigment and binder forming permanent-colored sticks. When the ground is completely covered with pigment, the work is considered a pastel painting; leaving much of the ground exposed produces a pastel sketch.

**Pen and Ink** – A drawing that uses black ink.

**Performance Art** - refers largely to a performance which is presented to an audience but which does not seek to present a conventional theatrical play or a formal linear narrative, or which alternately does not seek to depict a set of

fictitious characters in formal scripted interactions. It therefore will often include some form of action or spoken word, which is a form of direct communication between the artist and audience, rather than a script written beforehand.

**Persian Art** - The Iranian cultural region – consisting of the modern nations of Iran, Armenia, Turkey, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and surrounding areas – is home to one of the richest art heritages in world history and encompasses many disciplines including architecture, painting, weaving, pottery, calligraphy, metalworking and stone masonry.

**Photography** - The process, activity, and art of creating a still picture on a sensitive medium such as film. During the printing process additional modifications can be made.

**Photorealism** – Photorealism evolved from the Pop Art movement and was a response to the flowing brush strokes and explosion of paint that was Abstract Expressionism. Photo realists relied extensively on photographic reference to compose and execute their works.

**Plein Air** - Referring to landscapes painted outside rather than in a studio, with the intention of catching the impression of the open air.

**Pointillism** – The concept behind Pointillism involves painting small dots of primary colors on the painting surface which are visually mixed by the eye when viewing from a distance creating secondary <secondary colors> and intermediate colors <intermediate colors>. George Seurat is the most famous artist who practiced Pointillism.

**Pop Art** - Pop art can be any every day item that is drawn in a brash and colorful way. Pop Art is short for Popular Art. It is inspired by comic strips, advertising, and popular entertainment.

**Post Modern Art** - or art that emerged after Modernism in the late 20th century, envelops many sub-movements including Installation Art, Conceptual Art, Intermedia, Multi-Media, and Performance Art.

**Post-War American Painting** - After World War II, America (most specifically New York) became a center of artistic production in the art world (whereas before they had been housed in Europe). Characterized by movements such as abstract expressionism and pop art, the term "Post-War American Painting" is sometimes used to categorize the entirety of contemporary art produced in the past six

decades.

**Primary Colors** - The three basic colors: red, blue and yellow. They can be mixed to form all other colors.

**Primitivism** - Primitive Art looks like art that is done by a child. Usually the picture is painted very simply, and the subjects are "flat", or two-dimensional.

**Realism** - Realism is a type of art that shows things exactly as they appear in life. It began in the 18th century, but the greatest Realist era was in the mid-19th century.

**Romanticism** - An art style which emphasizes the personal, emotional and dramatic through the use of exotic, literary or historical subject matter.

**Scatter Art** - A type of installation art. Objects (often found objects) are arranged in a seemingly random fashion or tossed and "scattered" into the space in an act of chance.

**Screen Print** - Also known as Silk Screen or Serigraph. A method of print making in which a design is imposed on a screen of silk or other fine mesh. Negative areas are coated with an impermeable substance and ink is forced through the mesh onto a printing surface. This technique was made famous by Andy Warhol.

**Secondary Colors** - Colors that are mixtures of two primary colors. Red and yellow make orange, yellow and blue make green, and blue and red make violet.

**Sepia Photography** - Black and white photographs that have been bleached and dropped into a sepia bath resulting in a monotone photograph in shades of warm browns. Because this photographic technique was used extensively in the past it often evokes a vintage feel.

**Spit Bite** - A mixture of nitric acid and gum arabic (or in rare cases, saliva) that can be dripped, spattered or painted onto a metal surface to provide an interesting effect in the completed etching

**Subject** - The person, object, event, or idea on which an artwork is based.

**Surrealism** - Surrealists paintings were generally based on dreams. Their

paintings were filled with familiar objects, which were painted to look strange or mysterious.

**Texture** - in a painting is the feel of the canvas. It can be based on the paint and its application or the addition of materials such as ribbon, metal, wood, lace, leather, sand, etc.

**Triptych** - A work of art (often a panel painting), which is divided into three sections, or three carved panels that are hinged together and folded. The middle panel is typically the largest and is flanked by two smaller related works, although there are triptychs of equal-sized panels.

**Unity** - The oneness or wholeness in a design that occurs when all parts work together to create a cohesive whole.

**Vernacular** - A common tongue, or mother language, to which all ordinary conversation or exchanges refer. In photography or other artistic production, it is a work by an amateur or unknown artist who uses everyday life and common situations as subjects. Examples of vernacular art include travel and vacation photos, family snapshots, photos of friends, class portraits, identification photographs, and photo-booth images. Vernacular photographs are types of accidental art, in that they often are unintentionally artistic.

**Video Art** - Video art relies on moving pictures and comprises video and/or audio data. Video art came into existence during the 1960s and 1970s and is still widely practiced, often in video installations. Video art can take many forms: recordings that are broadcast, viewed in galleries or other venues, or distributed as tapes or discs; sculptural installations, which may incorporate one or more television receivers or monitors, displaying "live" or recorded images and sound; and performances in which video representations are included.

**Watercolor** – A painting method that uses water-soluble paints typically applied in a series of washes on paper.

**Warm Colors** - Colors whose relative visual temperature makes them seem warm. Includes red-violet, red, red-orange, yellow-orange, and yellow.