#### ART TERMINOLOGY

**Abstract** - A 20th century style of painting in which nonrepresentational lines, colors, shapes, and forms replace accurate visual depiction of objects, landscape, and figures. The subjects often stylized, blurred, repeated or broken down into basic forms so that it becomes unrecognizable. Intangible subjects such as thoughts, emotions, and time are often expressed in abstract art form.

**Abstract Expressionism** - 1940's New York painting movement based on Abstract Art. This type of painting is often referred to as action painting.

**Acrylic** - A fast-drying paint which is easy to remove with mineral spirits; a plastic substance commonly used as a binder for paints.

**Action Painting** - Any painting style calling for vigorous physical activity; specifically, Abstract Expressionism. Examples include the New York School art movement and the work of Jackson Pollock.

**Art Nouveau** - A painting, printmaking, decorative design, and architectural style developed in England in the 1880s. Art Nouveau, primarily an ornamental style, was not only a protest against the sterile Realism, but against the whole drift toward industrialization and mechanization and the unnatural artifacts they produced. The style is characterized by the usage of sinuous, graceful, cursive lines, interlaced patterns, flowers, plants, insects and other motifs inspired by nature.

**Bauhaus** - A design school founded by Walter Gropius in 1919 in Germany . The Bauhaus attempted to achieve reconciliation between the aesthetics of design and the more commercial demands of industrial mass production.

**Chiaroscuro** - In drawing, painting, and the graphic arts, chiaroscuro (ke-ära-skooro) concerns the rendering of forms through a balanced contrast between light and dark areas. The technique that was introduced during the Renaissance, is effective in creating an illusion of depth and space around the principal figures in a composition. Leonardo Da Vinci and Rembrandt were painters who excelled in the use of this technique.

**Classical Style** - In Greek art, the style of the 5th century B.C. Loosely, the term “classical” is often applied to all the art of ancient Greece and Rome , as well as to any art based on logical, rational principles and deliberate composition.

**Cubism** - An art style developed in 1908 by Picasso and Braque whereby the artist breaks down the natural forms of the subjects into geometric shapes and creates a new kind of pictorial space. In contrast to traditional painting styles where the perspective of subjects is fixed and complete, cubist work can portray the subject from multiple perspectives.

**Dadaism** - An art style founded by Hans Arp in Zurich after WW1 which challenged the established canons of art, thoughts and morality etc. Disgusted with the war and society in general, Dadaist expressed their feelings by creating "non-art."

**Expressionism** - An art movement of the early 20th century in which traditional adherence to realism and proportion was replaced by the artist's emotional connection to the subject. These paintings are often abstract, the subject matter distorted in color and form to emphasize and express the intense emotion of the artist.

**Fauvism** -A short-lived painting style in early 20th century France , which featured bold, clashing, arbitrary colors - colors unrelated to the appearance of forms in the natural world. Henri Matisse was its best-known practitioner. The word fauve means “wild beast.”

**Fine Art** - An art form created primarily as an aesthetic expression to be enjoyed for its own sake. The viewer must be prepared to search for the intent of the artist as the all-important first step toward communication and active participation.

**Futurism** - Art movement founded in Italy in 1909 and lasting only a few years. Futurism concentrated on the dynamic quality of modern technological life, emphasizing speed and movement.

**Gouache** -Opaque watercolors used for illustrations.

**Hard-Edge Painting** -A recent innovation that originated in New York and was adopted by certain contemporary painters. Forms are depicted with precise, geometric lines and edges.

**Harmony** - The unity of all the visual elements of a composition achieved by repetition of the same characteristics.

**Hatching** - A technique of modeling, indicating tone and suggesting light and shade in drawing or tempera painting, using closely set parallel lines.

**Iconography** - Loosely, the “story” depicted in a work of art; people, places, events, and other images in a work, as well as the symbolism and conventions attached to those images by a particular religion or culture.

**Impasto** - A thick, juicy application of paint to canvas or other support; emphasizes texture, as distinguished from a smooth flat surface.

**Impressionism** - An art movement founded in France in the last third of the 19th century. The artist's vision was intensely centered on light and the ways it transforms the visible world. This style of painting is characterized by short brush strokes of bright colors used to recreate visual impressions of the subject and to capture the light, climate and atmosphere of the subject at a specific moment in time.

**Mannerism** -A term sometimes applied to art of late 16th early 17th century Europe , characterized by a dramatic use of space and light and a tendency toward elongated figures.

**Maquette** - In sculpture, a small model in wax or clay, made as a preliminary sketch, presented to the client for approval of the proposed work, or for entry in a competition. The Italian equivalent of the term is bozzetto, meaning small sketch.

**Medieval Art** - The art of the Middle Ages ca. 500 A.D. through the 14th century. The art produced immediately prior to the Renaissance.

**Medium** - The material used to create a work of art. Also, a term used for the binder for paint, such as oil.

**Minimalism** - A style of painting and sculpture in the mid 20th century in which the art elements are rendered with a minimum of lines, shapes, and sometimes color. The works may look and feel sparse, spare, restricted or empty.

**Mixed Media** - Descriptive of art that employs more than one medium – e.g., a work that combines paint, natural materials (wood, pebbles, bones), and man made items (glass, plastic, metals) into a single image or piece of art.

**Monochromatic** - Having only one color. Descriptive of work in which one hue - perhaps with variations of value and intensity - predominates.

**Monotype** - A one-of-a-kind print made by painting on a sheet or slab of glass and transferring the still-wet painting to a sheet of paper held firmly on the glass by rubbing the back of the paper with a smooth implement, such as a large hardwood spoon. The painting may also be done on a polished plate, in which case it may be either printed by hand or transferred to the paper by running the plate and paper through an etching press.

**Montage** - A picture composed of other existing illustrations, pictures, photographs, newspaper clippings, etc. that are arranged so they combine to create a new or original image. A collage.

**Mosaic** - An art form in which small pieces of tile, glass, or stone are fitted together and embedded into a background to create a pattern or image.

**Mural** - Any large-scale wall decoration done in painting, fresco, mosaic, or other medium.

**Museum** - A building, place or institution devoted to the acquisition, conservation, study, exhibition and educational interpretation of objects having scientific, historical or artistic value. The word Museum is derived from the Latin muses, meaning "a source of inspiration," or "to be absorbed in one's thoughts."

**Narrative Painting** - A painting where a story line serves as a dominant feature.

**Naturalistic** - Descriptive of an artwork that closely resembles forms in the natural world. Synonymous with representational.

**Negative Space** - The space in a painting around the objects depicted.

**Neoclassicism** - “New” classicism - a style in 19th century Western art that referred back to the classical styles of Greece and Rome . Neoclassical paintings have sharp outlines, reserved emotions, deliberate (often mathematical) composition, and cool colors.

**Neo-Expressionism** - “New” expressionism - a term originally applied to works done primarily by German and Italian artists, who came to maturity in the post-WWII era; and later expanded (in the 1980’s) to include certain American artists. Neo- Expressionist works depict intense emotions and symbolism, sometimes using unconventional media and intense colors with turbulent compositions and subject matter.

**Neutral** - Having no hue; black, white, or gray; sometimes a tannish color achieved by mixing two complementary colors.

**Op Art** - Short for Optical Art, a style popular in the 1960s that was based on optical principles and optical illusion. Op Art deals in complex color interactions, to the point where colors and lines seem to vibrate before the eyes

**Overlap Effect** - Spatial relationships are achieved by placing one object in front of another. The object closest to the viewer blocks out the view of any part of any other object located behind it (or, where the two objects overlap, the one in back is obscured).

**Painterly** - Descriptive of paintings in which forms are defined principally by color areas, not by lines or edges. Where the artist's brushstrokes are noticeable. Any image that looks as though it may have been created with the style or techniques used by a painter.

**“Pep Art”** – An amalgamation of Pop Art and energy painting, pioneered by modern American artist David Willardson.

**Perspective** - The representation of three-dimensional objects on a flat surface so as to produce the same impression of distance and relative size as that received by the human eye. In one-point linear perspective, developed during the fifteenth century, all parallel lines in a given visual field converge at a single vanishing point on the horizon. In aerial or atmospheric perspective, the relative distance of objects is indicated by gradations of tone and color and by variations in the clarity of outlines.

**Photorealism** - A painting and drawing style of the mid 20th century in which people, objects, and scenes are depicted with such naturalism that the paintings resemble photographs – an almost exact visual duplication of the subject.

**Pictoral Space** - The illusory space in a painting or other work of two-dimensional art that seems to recede backward into depth from the picture plane, giving the illusion of distance.

**Picture Plane** - An imaginary flat surface that is assumed to be identical to the surface of a painting. Forms in a painting meant to be perceived in deep three-dimensional space are said to be “behind” the picture plane. The picture plane is commonly associated with the foreground of a painting.

**Pointillism** - A branch of French Impressionism in which the principle of optical mixture or broken color was carried to the extreme of applying color in tiny dots or small, isolated strokes. Forms are visible in a pointillist painting only from a distance, when the viewer's eye blends the colors to create visual masses and outlines. The inventor and chief exponent of pointillism was George Seurat (1859-1891); the other leading figure was Paul Signac (1863-1935).

**Polychromatic** - Having many colors, as opposed to monochromatic which means only one hue or color.

**Pop Art** - A style of art which seeks its inspiration from commercial art and items of mass culture (such as comic strips, popular foods and brand name packaging). Pop art was first developed in New York City in the 1950's and soon became the dominant avant-garde art form in the United States .

**Post Impressionism** - A term applied to the work of several artists - French or living in France - from about 1885 to 1900. Although they all painted in highly personal styles, the Post-Impressionists were united in rejecting the relative absence of form characteristic of Impressionism and stressed more formal qualities and the significance of subject matter.

**Prehistoric Art** - Art forms predating recorded history, such as Old, Middle, and New Stone Ages.

**Pre-Columbian** - Art created in the America 's by native people that pre-dates the discovery of the new world

**Primary Colors** - Any hue that, in theory, cannot be created by a mixture of any other hues. Varying combinations of the primary hues can be used to create all the other hues of the spectrum. In pigment the primaries are red, yellow, and blue.

**Print** - An image created from a master wood block, stone, plate, or screen, usually on paper. Prints are referred to as multiples, because as a rule many identical or similar impressions are made from the same printing surface, the number of impressions being called an edition. When an edition is limited to a specified number of prints, it is a limited edition. A print is considered an original work of art and today is customarily signed and numbered by the artist.

**Primitive Art** - Paintings and drawings of and by peoples and races outside the influence of accepted Western styles. Also, works by artists with a "naive" style often due to little, if any, training (or works intentionally made to look this way).

**Realism** - Any art in which the goal is to portray forms in the natural world in a highly representational manner. Specifically, an art style of the mid 19th century, which fostered the idea that everyday people and events are worthy subjects for important art.

**Renaissance** - The period in Europe from the 14th to the 16th century, characterized by a renewed interest in Classical art, architecture, literature, and philosophy. The Renaissance began in Italy and gradually spread to the rest of Europe . In art, it is most closely associated with Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael.

**Representational** - Works of art that closely resemble forms in the natural world. Synonymous with naturalistic

**Rococo** - A style of art popular in Europe in the first three quarters of the 18th century, Rococo architecture and furnishings emphasized ornate but small-scale decoration, curvilinear forms, and pastel colors. Rococo painting has a playful, light-hearted romantic quality and often pictures the aristocracy at leisure.

**Romanesque** - A style of architecture and art dominant in Europe from the 9th to the 12th century. Romanesque architecture, based on ancient Roman precedents, emphasizes the round arch and barrel vault.

**Romanticism** - A movement in Western art of the 19th century generally assumed to be in opposition to Neoclassicism. Romantic works are marked by intense colors, turbulent emotions, complex composition, soft outlines, and sometimes heroic subject matter.

**Salon** - Fashionable gathering of artists, writers, and intellectuals held in a private home.

**Scale** - Size in relation to some “normal” or constant size. Compare with proportion.

**Sculpture** - A three-dimensional form modeled, carved, or assembled.

**Secondary Colors** - A hue created by combining two primary colors, as yellow and blue mixed together yield green. In pigment the secondary colors are orange, green, and violet.

**Sfumato** - From the Italian work for “smoke,” a technique of painting in thin glazes to achieve a hazy, cloudy atmosphere, often to represent objects or landscape meant to be perceived as distant from the picture plane.

**Simultaneous Contrast** - The tendency of complementary colors to seem brighter and more intense when placed side by side.

**Still Life** - A painting or other two-dimensional work in which the subject matter is an arrangement of objects - fruit, flowers, tableware, pottery, and so forth - brought together for their pleasing contrasts of shape, color, and texture.

**Stippling** - A pattern of closely spaced dots or small marks used to create a sense of three-dimensionally on a flat surface, especially in drawing and printmaking. See also hatching, cross-hatching.

**Study** - A detailed drawing or painting made of one or more parts of a final composition, but not the whole work.

**Style** - A characteristic, or a number of characteristics that we can identify as constant, recurring, or coherent. In art, the sum of such characteristics associated with a particular artist, group, or culture, or with an artist’s work at a specific time.

**Surrealism** - A painting style of the early 20th century that emphasized imagery and visions from dreams and fantasies, as well as an intuitive, spontaneous method of recording such imagery, often combining unrelated or unexpected objects in compositions. The works of Magritte and Dali, and Picasso are included in the genre.

**Symbol** - An image or sign that represents something else, because of convention, association, or resemblance.

**Symbolism** - An art style developed in the late 19th century characterized by the incorporation of symbols and ideas, usually spiritual or mystical in nature, which represent the inner life of people. Traditional modeled, pictorial depictions are replaced or contrasted by flat mosaic-like surfaces decoratively embellished with figures and design elements.

**Triptych** - A three-part work of art; especially a painting, meant for placement on an altar, with three panels that fold together.

**Trompe-L’oeil** - A French term meaning "deception of the eye." A painting or other work of two-dimensional art rendered in such a photographically realistic manner as to ‘trick’ the viewer into thinking it is three-dimensional reality.

**Underpainting** - The traditional stage in oil painting of using a monochrome or dead color as a base for composition. Also known as laying in.

**Value** - The relative lightness or darkness of a hue, or of a neutral varying from white to black.

**Vanishing Point** - In linear perspective, the point on the horizon line where parallel lines appear to converge.

**Vehicle** - The entire liquid contents of a paint.

**Wash** - Used in watercolor painting, brush drawing, and occasionally in oil painting and sculpture to describe a broad thin layer of diluted pigment, ink, glaze or patina. Also refers to a drawing made in this technique.

**Watercolor** - A painting medium in which the binder is gum arabic. Water is used to thinning, lightening or mixing.