

1. PAINTING : French – English vocabulary

paint from life	peindre d'après nature	seascape	une marine
painter	peintre	still life	nature morte
painting	une peinture	life-size picture	tableau grandeur nature
school of painting	école de peinture	nude	un nu
picture (N)	tableau, image, photo	fresco(es)	fresque(s)
picture (V)	représenter	mural	peinture murale
sketch (N)	ébauche	triptych	triptyque
sketch (V)	esquisser	self-portrait	auto-portrait
rough sketch	pochade	madonna	madone
study	étude	untitled	sans titre
outline (V)	tracer les grands traits	lithograph	lithographie
outline (N)	contour	coloring	coloris
draw	dessiner	light	lumière
drawing	dessin	shade (N)	ombre
pencil drawing	dessin au crayon	shade (V)	ombrer
charcoal drawing	dessin au fusain	shade off	dégrader
gouache	gouache	hue	nuance
stencil (V)	passer au pochoir	tint	teinte
stencil (N)	pochoir	tinge	ton
engraving	gravure	chiaroscuro	clair-obscur
steel engraving	gravure en taille douce	brush work	facture
wood engraving	gravure sur bois	picturesque	pittoresque
etching	eau-forte	apply colors	appliquer les couleurs
print	estampe	tone down	atténuer
oil painting	peinture à l'huile	soften down	adoucir
oil on canvas	huile sur toile	glowing	chaud
oil on panel	huile sur bois	vivid	vif
acrylic paint	acrylique	brightly colored	éclatant
water-color	aquarelle	gaudy	criard
pastel / crayon	pastel	striking	impressionnant
landscape	paysage		

2. Describing a painting

background - The part of a picture or scene that appears to be farthest away from the viewer, usually nearest the horizon. This is the opposite of the foreground. Between background and foreground is the middle distance.

backlight - Light coming from behind a subject.

balance - Way the elements of art are arranged to create a feeling of stability in a work.

canvas - Commonly used as a support for oil or acrylic painting. (la toile)

delineate - To depict by drawing with a tool which leaves a linear trail behind the drawer's gesture. May also mean: to describe.

emphasis - Any forcefulness that gives importance or dominance (weight) to some feature or features of an artwork; something singled out, stressed, or drawn attention to by means of contrast, anomaly, or counterpoint 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, emphasized elements are used to direct and focus attention on the most important parts of a composition -- its focal point.

foreground - The area of a picture or field of vision, often at the bottom, that appears to be closest to the viewer.

leitmotif - By extension, a leitmotif often means a recurring and often dominant theme in art, writing, or in life itself. Literally the German word means "leading or guiding motive."

oneiric - Of or pertaining to dreams.

perspective - The technique artists use to project an illusion of the three-dimensional world onto a two-dimensional surface. Perspective helps to create a sense of depth-- of receding space. Fundamental techniques used to achieve perspective are: controlling variation between sizes of depicted subjects, overlapping some of them, and placing those that are on the depicted ground as lower when nearer and higher when deeper.

Pastoral - concerning shepherds, or animal husbandry in general, the country, country life, rustic serenity.

picturesque - In general, this may refer to any scene which seems to be especially suitable for representation in a picture, especially that which is sublime. 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.

sacral-idyllic scene - A landscape depicting country life and idealized nature.

texture - An element of art which refers to the surface quality or "feel" of an object, its smoothness, roughness, softness, etc.

Words describing textures include: flat, smooth, shiny, glossy, glittery, velvety, feathery, soft, wet, gooey, furry, sandy, leathery, crackled, prickly, abrasive, rough, furry, bumpy, corrugated, puffy, rusty, and slimey.

verisimilitude - Appearing to be true or real.

votive, votary - A votive object or votary is an object which expresses or symbolizes a wish, prayer, or vow. Votive pictures and sculptures, for instance, are intended to inspire devotion to a saint or deity, or are used in an act of religious worship, reverence, or supplication. It may also refer, for example, to certain candles, prayer cards, or offerings.

waterscape - A painting of or including a body of water. It might otherwise be called a marine picture, a seascape, or a riverscape, etc.

worm's-eye view - As if seen from the surface of the earth, or the floor.

Useful expressions

"In the 'photograph / 'caricature / en'graving / ad'vertisement / woodcut / car'toon...

In the bottom lefthand corner / in the foreground / in the middle distance...

The layout of the visual is particularly pro'vocative / is designed to shock / has real shockvalue/is intended to puzzle/intrigue the reader...

The composition is cha'otic / geo'metrical / 'balanced...

The composition is framed so as to stress...

A hori'zontal/ 'vertical di'viding line clearly 'separates...

The lines, inter'sect in the centre of the picture to form...

The lines lead the eye to a vanishing point...

The di'agonal lines intersect/cross over in the middle of the picture...

The tension between the horizontal and vertical lines denotes...

O'blique lines intersect the, perpen'dicular lines...

The 'lowangle shot 'emphasizes the overwhelming 'aspect of...

The pers'pective is blocked by the 'absence of ho'rizon...

The inscription /the 'signpost / the gra'ffiti / points to / draws our attention to...

The eye travels from left to right... The eye is led/drawn to...

The first thing to catch the eye is... the most salient/striking element is...

The subject stands out against the background / is highlighted by the skyline...

The words in the speech balloon/bubble refer to/can be interpreted as..."

3. Colors

Color is 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;
- (3) value, the lightness or darkness of a color.

When the spectrum is organized as a color wheel, the colors are divided into groups called primary, secondary and intermediate (or tertiary) colors; analogous and complementary, and also as warm and cool colors.

Colors can be objectively described as saturated, clear, cool, warm, deep, subdued, grayed, tawny, mat, glossy, monochrome, multicolored, particolored, variegated, or polychromed.

Some words used to describe colors are more subjective (subject to personal opinion or taste), such as: exciting, sweet, saccharine, brash, garish, ugly, beautiful, cute, fashionable, pretty, and sublime.

Sometimes people speak of colors when they are actually referring to pigments, what they are made of (various natural or synthetic substances), their relative permanence, etc.

Additive Color

The additive primary colors are red, blue and green. These three additive colors represent the three main components of white light in the additive color module. Black is produced by the absence of the primary colors. In theory, any color can be created by mixing these three colors.

analogous colors - Any two or more 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.

deep, depth - A color is deep or has depth when it has low lightness and strong saturation. The opposite of deep colors in their value -- much lighter, but just as high in saturation -- are called brilliant colors. Opposite to deep colors in saturation -- little saturated, but similarly very low in lightness -- are called dark colors. Opposite to deep colors in both value and saturation are pale colors.

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

Hue - Hue is the actual color of an object. Hue is measured as a pure color (on the color wheel) in degrees, for example degrees/variations of blue which is from a green-blue or sea-blue up to a purple-blue.

opacity - The quality of being opaque. In painting, the power of a pigment to cover or obscure the surface to which it is applied. When opacity is not complete, it can be described as translucence, or as opaque from 99% down to 1%. The equivalent of 0% opacity is transparency.

Temperatures

The temperatures of colors are often described as warm (purples, reds, oranges, and yellows), neutral (violets and greens), and cool (blue-greens and blues). Warm colors are often associated with fire and sun. They appear on one side of the color wheel, bordered by the neutral colors, and opposite the cool colors. Psychologically, warm colors are said to be stimulating and passionate. Optically, warm colors generally appear to advance, coming toward the viewer.