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Visual texture A two-dimensional illusion suggestive of a tactile quality.

Volume The appearance of height, width, and depth in a form.

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Wash drawing A technique of drawing in water-based media.

- Earthworks** Artworks created by altering a large area of land using natural and organic materials. Earthworks are usually large-scale projects that take formal advantage of the local topography.
- Emotional color** A subjective approach to color use to elicit an emotional response in the viewer.
- Enigmatic** Puzzling or cryptic in appearance or meaning.
- Equilibrium** Visual balance between opposing compositional elements.
- Equivocal space** *An ambiguous space in which it is hard to distinguish the foreground from the background. Your perception seems to alternate from one to the other.*
- Expressionism** An artistic style in which an emotion is more important than adherence to any perceptual realism. It is characterized by the exaggeration and distortion of objects in order to evoke an emotional response from the viewer.
- Eye level** See **Horizon line**.
- Facade** The face or frontal aspect of a form.
- Fauve** A French term meaning "wild beast" and descriptive of an artistic style characterized by the use of bright and intense expressionistic color schemes.
- Figure** Any positive shape or form noticeably separated from the background, or the negative space.
- Focal point** A compositional device emphasizing a certain area or object to draw attention to the piece and to encourage closer scrutiny of the work.
- Folk art** Art and craft objects made by people who have not been formally trained as artists.
- Foreshortening** A distortion of a shape due to perspective wherein an object appears shorter than we know it to be.
- Form** When referring to objects, it is the shape and structure of a thing. When referring to two-dimensional artworks, it is the visual aspect of composition, structure, and the work as a whole.
- Formal** Traditional and generally accepted visual solutions.
- Fresco** A mural painting technique in which pigments mixed in water are used to form the desired color. These pigments are then applied to wet lime plaster, thereby binding with and becoming an integral part of a wall.
- Gestalt** A unified configuration or pattern of visual elements whose properties cannot be derived from a simple summation of its parts.
- Gesture** A line that does not stay at the edges but moves freely within forms. These lines record movement of the eye as well as implying motion in the form.
- Golden mean** A mathematical ratio in which width is to length as length is to length plus width. This ratio has been employed in design since the time of the ancient Greeks. It can also be found in natural forms.
- Golden rectangle** The ancient Greek ideal of a perfectly proportioned rectangle using a mathematical ratio called the Golden mean.
- Graphic** Forms drawn or painted onto a two-dimensional surface; any illustration or design.
- Grid** A network of horizontal and vertical intersecting lines that divide spaces and create a framework of areas.
- Ground** The surface of a two-dimensional design that acts as the background or surrounding space for the "figures" in the composition.
- Harmony** The pleasing combination of parts that make up a whole composition.
- Hieratic scaling** A composition in which the size of figures is determined by their thematic importance.
- Horizon line** The farthest point we can see where the delineation between the sky and ground becomes distinct. The line on the picture plane that indicates the extent of illusionistic space and on which are located the vanishing points.
- Hue** A property of color defined by distinctions within the visual spectrum or color wheel. "Red," "blue," "yellow," and "green" are examples of hue names.
- Icon** A religious image meant to embody the actual qualities of the depicted saint. More generally, a symbol or sign, especially one with strong emotional power.
- Idealism** An artistic theory in which the world is not reproduced as it is but as it should be. All flaws, accidents, and incongruities of the visual world are corrected.
- Illustration** *A picture created to clarify or accompany a text.*
- Imbalance** *Occurs when opposing or interacting forms are out of equilibrium in a pictorial composition.*
- Impasto** A painting technique in which pigments are applied in thick layers or strokes to create a rough three-dimensional paint surface on the two-dimensional surface.
- Implied line** An invisible line created by positioning a series of points so that the eye will connect them and thus create movement across the picture plane.
- Impressionism** An artistic style that sought to re-create the artist's perception of the changing quality of light and color in nature.
- Informal balance** Synonymous with **asymmetrical balance**. It gives a less-rigid, more casual impression.
- Installation** A mixed-media artwork that generally takes into account the environment in which it is arranged.
- Intensity** The saturation of hue perceived in a color.
- Interpretation** A subjective conclusion regarding the meaning, implication, or effect of an artwork or design.
- Isometric projection** A spatial illusion that occurs when lines receding on the diagonal remain parallel instead of converging toward a common vanishing point. Used commonly in Oriental and Far Eastern art.
- Juxtaposition** When one image or shape is placed next to or in comparison to another image or shape.
- Kinesthetic empathy** A mental process in which the viewer consciously or unconsciously re-creates or feels an action or motion he or she only observes.
- Kinetic** Artworks that actually move or have moving parts.
- Kitsch** Low or common art forms that appeal to sentimentality.
- Legato** A connecting and flowing rhythm.
- Line** A visual element of length. It can be created by setting a point in motion.
- Line quality** Any one of a number of characteristics of line determined by its weight, direction, uniformity, or other features.
- Linear perspective** A spatial system used in two-dimensional artworks to create the illusion of space. It is based on the perception that if parallel lines are extended to the horizon line, they appear to converge and meet at a common point, called the vanishing point.
- Lines of force** Lines that show the pathway of movement and add strong visual emphasis to a suggestion of motion.
- Local color** The identifying color perceived in ordinary daylight.
- Logo** A sign or image that is taken to be an easily recognized symbol representing a company or organization.
- Lost-and-found contour** A description of a form in which an object is revealed by distinct contours in some areas whereas other edges simply vanish or dissolve into the ground.
- Mandala** A radial concentric organization of geometric shapes and images commonly used in Hindu and Buddhist art.
- Medium** The tools or materials used to create an artwork.
- Minimalism** An artistic style that stresses purity of form above subject matter, emotion, or other extraneous elements.
- Mixed media** The combination of two or more different media in a single work of art.
- Module** A specific measured area or standard unit.

- Monochromatic** A color scheme using only one hue with varying degrees of value or intensity.
- Monocular** Pertaining to vision from one eye only.
- Montage** A recombination of images from different sources to form a new picture.
- Multiple image** A visual device used to suggest the movement that occurs when a figure is shown in a sequence of slightly overlapping poses in which each successive position suggests movement from the prior position.
- Multiple perspective** A depiction of an object that incorporates several points of view.
- Multipoint perspective** A system of spatial illusion with different vanishing points for different sets of parallel lines.
- Narrative** The story that is told in an artwork.
- Naturalism** The skillful representation of the visual image, forms, and proportions as seen in nature with an illusion of volume and three-dimensional space.
- Negative shape** A clearly defined shape within the ground that is defined by surrounding figures or boundaries.
- Negative space** Unoccupied area or empty space surrounding the objects or figures in a composition.
- Nonobjective** A type of artwork with absolutely no reference to, or representation of, the natural world. The artwork is the reality.
- Objective** Having to do with reality and fidelity to perception.
- One-point perspective** A system of spatial illusion in two-dimensional art based on the convergence of parallel lines to a common vanishing point usually on the horizon.
- Op Art** A style of art and design that emphasizes optical phenomena.
- Opaque** A surface impenetrable by light.
- Open form** The placement of elements in a composition so that they are cut off by the boundary of the design. This implies that the picture is a partial view of a larger scene.
- Optical mixture** Color mixture created by the eye as small bits of color are perceived to blend and form a mixture.
- Overlapping** A device for creating an illusion of depth in which some shapes are in front of and partially hide or obscure others.
- Pattern** The repetition of a visual element or module in a regular and anticipated sequence.
- Parallax** The resolution of two images from binocular (two-eyed) vision.
- Pentimenti** (plural) The artist's changes or corrections sometimes evident as traces in the surface. From the Italian and implying "the artist repents."
- Pictogram** A simple pictorial sign or group of signs intended to communicate without words.
- Picture plane** The two-dimensional surface on which shapes are organized into a composition.
- Plane** The two-dimensional surface of a shape.
- Pointillism** A system of color mixing (used in painting and drawing) based on the juxtaposition of small bits of pure color. Also called *divisionism* (see **Optical mixture**).
- Polyrhythmic** A complex pattern employing more than one rhythm or beat.
- Pop art** An art movement originating in the 1960s that sought inspiration from everyday popular culture and the techniques of commercial art.
- Positive shape** Any shape or object distinguished from the background.
- Primary colors** The three colors from which all other colors theoretically can be mixed. The primaries of pigments are traditionally presented as red, yellow, and blue, whereas the primaries of light are red, blue, and green.
- Progressive rhythm** Repetition of a shape that changes in a regular pattern.
- Proportion** Size measured against other elements or against a mental norm or standard.
- Proximity** The degree of closeness in the placement of elements.
- Psychic line** A mental connection between two points or elements. This occurs when a figure is pointing or looking in a certain direction, which causes the eye to follow toward the intended focus.
- Radial balance** A composition in which all visual elements are balanced around and radiate from a central point.
- Realism** An approach to artwork based on the faithful reproduction of surface appearances with a fidelity to visual perception.
- Rectilinear** Composed of straight lines.
- Repeated figure** A compositional device in which a recognizable figure appears within the same composition in different positions and situations so as to relate a narrative to the viewer.
- Repetition** Using the same visual element over again within the same composition.
- Representational** An image suggestive of the appearance of an object that actually exists.
- Retinal fatigue** Fading perception due to overexposure and resulting in an afterimage effect.
- Rhythm** An element of design based on the repetition of recurrent motifs.
- Saturation** See **Intensity**.
- Secondary color** A mixture of any two primary colors.
- Shade** A hue mixed with black.
- Shading** Use of value in artwork.
- Shape** A visually perceived area created either by an enclosing line or by color and value changes defining the outer edges.
- Silhouette** The area between the contours of a shape.
- Simultaneous contrast** The effect created by two complementary colors seen in juxtaposition. Each color seems more intense in this context.
- Site specific** A work of art in which the content and aesthetic value is dependent on the artwork's location.
- Spectrum** The range of visible color created when white light is passed through a prism.
- Staccato** Abrupt changes and dynamic contrast within the visual rhythm.
- Static** Still, stable, or unchanging.
- Subject** The content of an artwork.
- Subjective** Reflecting a personal bias.
- Subtractive system** A color mixing system in which pigments (physical substances) are combined to create visual sensations of color. Wavelengths of light absorbed by the substance are subtracted, and the reflected wavelengths constitute the perceived color.
- Suprematism** A Russian art movement of the early twentieth century that emphasized nonobjective form.
- Surrealism** An artistic style that stresses fantastic and subconscious approaches to art making and often results in images that cannot be rationally explained.
- Symbol** An element of design that communicates an idea or meaning beyond that of its literal form.
- Symmetry** A quality of a composition or form wherein a precise correspondence of elements exists on either side of a center axis or point.
- Tactile texture** The use of materials to create a surface that can be felt or touched.
- Tertiary color** A mixture of a primary and an adjacent secondary color.
- Texture** The surface quality of objects that appeals to the tactile sense.

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