

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Abstract Art:** Abstract art takes ordinary things as subjects but emphasizes certain characteristics by changing or distorting the usual images. Pablo Picasso's paintings, for example, reduce people and familiar objects to angular forms and shifting planes. Art experts describe modern artists' work as nonrepresentational. Images are evident in Beverly Brodsky McDermott's illustrations for *The Golem*.

**Acrylics:** (a-CRILL-ik) A paint which uses liquid acrylic plastic to hold the color or pigments together. This medium can exhibit the strength of oils or the delicacy of watercolors. Brilliant colors, thinned with water. They dry to a durable finish much faster than oil paints

**Aesthetic judgment:** an opinion about art based on whether or not the art produces an aesthetic response. (See aesthetic perception.)

**Aesthetic perception:** A response to art or the environment involving positive thoughts, sensations and feelings.

**Allover:** A pattern that covers an entire surface, from one border to another.

**Analogous:** Colors that are closely related because they have one hue in common. For example, blue, blue-violet, and violet all contain the color blue. Analogous colors appear next to one another on the color wheel.

**Appliqué:** (ah-plee-KAY) A process of stitching and/or gluing cloth to a background, similar to collage.

**Architect:** A person who has been trained to design buildings or communities.

**Architecture:** The art of designing and planning the construction of buildings, cities and bridges.

**Armature:** (ARM-a-chur) A skeleton-like framework used to support other materials.

**Art Criticism:** The process and the result of thinking carefully about art. Art criticism involves the description, analysis and interpretation of art. It does not always include or state a judgment of worth or value.

**Artisan:** a person skilled in creating handmade objects.

**Artistic Style:** The way the artist uses line, color, shape, and texture. An artist has a style that distinguishes his or her work from other artists. It becomes the signature of the artist.

**Asymmetrical:** A type of visual balance in which the two sides of a composition are different yet balanced. The two sides are equal without being just the same; also called informal balance.

**Background:** Parts of artwork that appear to be in the distance or behind the objects in the foreground or front.

**Balance:** A principle of design that describes the arrangement of parts of an artwork. An artwork that is balanced seems to have equal visual weight or interest in all areas. It seems stable.

**Batik:** (ba-TEEK) A method of dyeing cloth that involves the use of wax to prevent dye from coloring certain areas of material. Wax is brushed on parts of the design where the color of a dye is not wanted.

**Block:** In printmaking, a piece of flat material such as wood, linoleum or metal used to make a print. In sculpture, any solid material can be used for carving.

**Block printing:** The process of making prints by creating a raised design on a flat surface. The design is inked or covered with color and stamped on a surface such as paper or cloth.

**Brayer:** A small, hand-held rubber roller used to spread printing ink evenly on a surface before printing.

**Brushstroke:** A line, shape or texture created by putting paint on a surface with a paint brush.

**Calligraphy:** (ca-LIH-grah-fee) Flowing lines made with brushstrokes similar to Oriental writing. It is also the art of using a pen or brushes to write beautiful letters and words.

**Caricature:** A picture in which a person's or an animal's features are different, bigger or smaller than they really are.

**Cartoon:** A full-sized drawing used as a plan for a painting, especially for a mural. A Cartoon can also be a funny drawing that tells a story.

**Center of interest:** The part of an artwork which attracts the viewer's eye--usually the most important part of a work of art.

**Charcoal:** A soft drawing material made from charred wood or vines.

**Collage:** (Coh-Lazh) A work of art usually created by gluing bits of paper, fabric, scraps, photographs or other materials to a flat surface. Collage is a word derived from the French word *coller*, meaning "to paste" or "to stock". Pasting and sticking are exactly

what artists do when using this medium. This method of illustration employs the use of materials such as cut or torn colored papers, cloth, found objects, real objects, created objects, all adhered to a flat surface to make a picture. It is a suitable medium for bold, colorful and flat art such as *Color Zoo* by Lois Ehlert. David Wisniewski's illustrations for *The Golem* and *Rainplayer* are excellent examples of the intricacies possible with cut paper collage. Leo Leonni cut up pieces of paper he had previously painted for his collages. Three dimensional art may just be photographed in order to be reproduced. There are works done in modeling clay, appliquéd for fabrics, quilting, etc.

**Color:** Color helps create mood and emotion when combined with line. Reds, yellows, and oranges are associated with fire, sun, and blood and may suggest warm feelings, friendliness, high energy, or anger. Blues, greens, and some violets are most associated with air, water, and plant life. Their coolness or coldness can suggest moods and emotions ranging from tranquility or melancholy. Warm colors move towards the viewer. Cool colors move away from the viewer.

**Colored Pencil:** This medium lends itself to drawing subtle nuances of color as opposed to painting them. Colored pencil includes crayons, and conte crayons. Sometimes you can see the strokes made from the pencils. Shading is effective when the side of the pencil is used.

**Complementary:** 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 make a neutral brown or gray. When they are used next to each other in a work of art, they create strong contrasts.

**Composition:** To create, form or design something by arranging separate parts to create a whole.

**Computer art:** Illustration done on a computer utilizing software programs that allows the artist to draw.

**Crackle:** Fine lines formed in a surface, usually while using specific materials and techniques.

**Crayon resist:** A drawing made with wax crayon and covered with a thin coat of paint. Since water does not stick to wax, the paint will not cover the crayoned part.

**Crosshatching:** Markings or shading done with an intersecting series of parallel lines.

**Design:** Design, or composition, is the way in which an artist combines the visual elements of line, color, shape, and texture into a unified whole.

**Dry Media:** Pencil, chalk, crayon and other media that are not wet and do not require the use of a liquid.

**Dry-point:** A method of intaglio printing in which the image is scratched into the surface of the printing plate with a steel needle. The point is also called a dry-point. The lines and tones in the printed image often look very soft.

**Dye:** A colored liquid that soaks into a material and stains it.

**Engraving:** The process of using a sharp tool to cut a design into a material, usually metal. Engraving is also an intaglio printmaking process based on cutting grooves into a metal or wood surface.

**Exhibit:** A temporary show or display of a group of artworks.

**Expressionism:** Expressionism is a later stylistic development in representational art. It uses visual elements to express artists' deepest inner feelings. Paintings by Vincent Van Gogh and Edvard Munch reverberate with the rhythm of intense emotion expressed through emphatic color, texture, and movement of line. It begins to move away from the representational into the more abstractly symbolic. These influences are evident in Toshi Maruki's illustrations for *Hiroshima No Pika (The flash of Hiroshima)*. Leonard Fisher's expressionistic paintings complement the mood in *A Circle of Seasons*.

**Fixative:** A thin liquid applied to a surface to prevent the smearing, flaking or fading of a medium, or to give a permanent finish.

**Focal Point:** An area of an artwork that attracts the viewer's attention.

**Folk Art:** Traditional art made by people who have not had art training in a school

**Foreground:** in a scene or artwork, the part that seems closest to you.

**Form:** Any three-dimensional object.

**Formal Balance:** Artwork in which the parts are arranged in about the same way on both sides, like a mirror image. Formal balance is also called symmetrical design.

**Fresco:** (FRES-coh) A technique of painting in which pigments are applied to a thin layer of wet plaster. The plaster absorbs the pigment and the painting becomes part of the wall.

**Geometric:** Mechanical-looking shapes or forms.

**Gesture Drawing:** A quick drawing to show movement.

**Glaze:** In painting, a thin layer of transparent paint. In ceramics, a thin coating of minerals fused to clay by firing. Glaze creates a permanent, glassy surface on clay.

**Gouache:** (gwash) Gouache is opaque watercolor (can't see through it, not transparent) made from pigments ground in water and mixed with a binder. It looks like school tempera or poster paint. If traditional transparent watercolor can be thought of as fluid, gouache can be described as solid. It's there. Vera B. Williams' *More, More, More* blends rich colors in her animated drawings.

**Harmony:** The placement of elements of a composition in a way that is pleasing to the eye. It is similar to a pleasing harmony in music.

**Highlight:** The area on any surface that reflects the most light.

**Hue:** The common name of a color in or related to the color spectrum, such as yellow, yellow-orange, blue-violet green. Hue is another word for *color*.

**Illustrator:** An artist who creates pictures to explain a point; to show an important part of a story; or to add decoration to a book, magazine or other printed work.

**Imagination:** The ability to picture things in the mind, often things that are not seen in the real world.

**Impressionism:** An approach to representational art initiated by French artist Claude Monet in the nineteenth century. Impressionists departed from the tradition of representing the world in complex detail. Instead, they focused on the play of light over objects in the natural environment. They experimented with breaking up colors and shapes to create an *impression* of the scintillating, changeable quality of light. Good examples of impression are; *The Lovely Present* illustrated by Maurice Sendak and Thomas Locker's *Sailing with the Wind*.

**Informal Balance:** See asymmetrical design.

**Ink:** A versatile medium that may be applied with brush, sponge, cloth, or even fingers, as well as with pen. Ink is a direct, strong, sparkling clean form of expression. Varying qualities of pen and ink line convey clean and bold expression. A good example is Wanda Gag's *Millions of Cats*.

**Intaglio:** (in-TAHL-ee-oh) A print-making process in which the image is carved into the surface. The line holds the ink.

**Intensity:** The brightness or dullness of a hue.

**Intermediate Color:** A color made by mixing a secondary color with a primary color. Blue-green, yellow-green, etc. are all intermediate colors.

**Landscape:** An artwork that shows natural scenery such as mountains, valleys, tree, rivers and lakes.

**Line:** Line suggests direction, motion, energy, and mood. Lines can be thin or side, light or heavy, feathery or jagged, straight or curved. *Horizontal lines* suggest calm, sleep, stability, and an absence of strife. *Vertical lines* and horizontal lines joined at right angles depict artificial elements different from the natural world. Two vertical lines connected by a horizontal line at the top give the feeling of a solid, safe place like a doorway, house, or building. *Diagonal lines* suggest loss of balance, uncontrolled motion, breakdown and destruction. *Triangular forms that rest on a horizontal base* suggest safety.

**Linoleum Cut:** A relief print made from a piece of linoleum.

**Lithography:** a method of printing from a prepared flat stone or metal plate.

**Matte:** (mat) Having a dull texture--not glossy or shiny.

**Media:** Plural of Medium. The materials used by an artist and the special techniques that make their use expressive.

**Middle Ground:** Parts of an artwork that appear to be between objects in the foreground and the background.

**Mixed Media:** Mixed Media allows broader freedom of personal expression. Artists may choose two or more media from the known media or invent some of their own. Ed Young combines painting in watercolor and drawing in pastel in *Lon Po Po* to achieve rich and vibrant images. In *Pish Posh Hieronymus Bosch*, the Dillons under-painted acetate with acrylics and then over-painted with oils. Each image was then framed with a piece of sculpture created by the next generation of the family, their son, Lee Dillon. In addition, it appears they used Conte crayons for the small decorative drawings which are seen through out the text. Another example: When Christopher Santoro was finishing off a large expanse of sand and water in *Snakes and Other reptiles*, he wasn't happy with it until he sprayed bleach over it with a toothbrush to give the illustration the sparkle is needed.

**Monochromatic:** (mah-no-craw-MAT-ik) Made of only a single color of hue and its tints and shades.

**Montage:** (mahn-Tazh) A special kind of collage, made from pieces of photographs or other pictures.

**Mosaic:** Artwork made by fitting together tiny pieces of colored glass, tiles, stones, paper or other materials.

**Motif:** (moh-TEEF) A single or repeated design or part of a design or decoration that appears over and over.

**Oil Paints:** A relatively slow-drying paint made from pigments mixed with an oil base. When the oil dries, it becomes a hard film, protecting the brilliance of the colors.

Traditional, this medium was more common to the world of fine art but today increasing numbers of illustrators are using it because of its robust colors, durability, and correctable. Frequently the texture of the canvas is visible through the oil. The artist can achieve thick, textured applications with oils and can rework an area for an extended period of time. Special thinners are necessary when using oils. Paul O. Zelinsky's *Rapunzel* exhibits warmth and depth in his colors.

**Opaque:** (oh-PAYK) Not allowing light to go through.

**Painterly Style:** A general painting style in which patches of color and visible brushstrokes show, a painterly style allow the viewer to see the movements the artist made in putting on paint.

**Palette:** A tray or board on which colors of paint are mixed.

**Papier-mâché:** (PAY-per mah-SHAY) French for “chewed” or “mashed paper”. Papier-mâché pulp is a modeling material made by mixing small bits of paper in water and liquid paste. It is quite strong when it dries.

**Pastels:** These can be thought of as colored chalk. The medium is very fragile and dusts away easily. A coat of fixative can be sprayed on pastel drawing but many artists feel this procedure distorts the luminosity of color for which they are striving. Pastels are lumps or compressed sticks of pure pigment, unlike oils or watercolors. Oils are pigment mixed with linseed oil. Watercolors are simply pigments combined with water. Ann Grifalconi's *The Village of Round and Square I* is a fine example of pastel art.

**Pen and Ink:** Allows the artist to show more fine detail or present a more finished appearance. David Macaulay's *Cathedral* gives the reader a crisp and clear understanding of the artist's intentions.

**Pencil:** A wide variety of leads ranging from hard to soft are available to illustrators. Chris Van Allsburg's Conte pencil illustrations for *Jumanji* were printed in two colors, black and gray.

**Photography:** The artist uses light sensitive film and a camera to compose and capture images. He may use black and white film or color film. The use of filters alters the results of the image as does the use of perspectives and unique compositions. Some artists print negative images rather than the positive images or utilize other special techniques.

**Pigment:** Any coloring matter, usually a fine powder, mixed with a liquid or binder to make paint, ink, dyes or crayons.

**Point of View:** The angle from which the viewer sees an object or scene.

**Pointillism:** (POYN-till-iz-im) A style of painting developed by Seurat in which small dots of color are placed side by side when viewed from a distance, the eye tends to see the color as mixed.

**Primary Color:** One of three basic colors (red, yellow and blue) that cannot be made by mixing colors. Primary colors are used for mixing other colors.

**Print:** A shape or mark made from a printing block or other object.

**Printmaking:** Includes such techniques as wood engraving and wood and linoleum block printing. An illustrator may express many values with the delicate manipulation of very fine lines as seen in Barry Moser's wood engravings in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Woodblock and linoleum block push the artist to the use of heavier lines thus creating simple and bold images.

**Representational Art:** Representational Art, sometimes called realistic art, depicts subjects as they are seen in everyday life. Artists do not necessarily attempt to create photographically exact images of their subjects. Instead they create compositions that clearly refer to people, objects, or natural phenomena in realistic ways. Examples of realistic illustration can be found in *The Biggest Bear* by Lynd Ward, *The Polar Express* by Chris Van Allsburg, *Tale of a Tail* by John Sandford, and *Journey Home* by Dom Lee.

**Resist:** A process in which materials such as oil or wax are used because they will not mix with water. The resist material is used to block out certain areas of a surface that the artist does not want to be affected by dye, paint, varnish, acid or other substance.

**Rhythm:** A type of visual or actual movement in an artwork. It is created by repeating visual elements.

**Rubbing:** A technique used to transfer the textural quality of a surface to paper. Paper is placed over the surface. The top of the paper is rubbed with crayon, chalk, or pencil.

**Scratchboard:** Involves the use of a white board treated with a black surface. The image is created by scratching away small areas of the black surface. Both scratchboard and block prints are often enhanced with color treatment of the white areas. Brian Pinkney has done this successfully in *The ballad of Belle Dorcas* by applying watercolors over the scratchboard. You can sometimes determine the medium is scratchboard by the miniature flecks of black left in the illustration.

**Sculpture:** A work of art with three-dimensions; height, width and depth. It may be carved, modeled, constructed or cast.

**Secondary Color:** A color made by mixing equal amounts of two primary colors.

**Serigraphy:** (sehr-IG-raff-ee) a print, also known as a silk-screen print, made by squeezing ink through a stencil and silk-covered frame to paper below.

**Shape:** Lines join and intersect to suggest shapes, and areas of color meet to produce shapes. Organic shapes: Irregular and curving, found in nature. Geometric shapes: exact, rigid and often rectangular, usually have mechanical origins.

**Stained Glass:** Pieces of brightly colored glass held together by strips of lead to form a picture or design.

**Stencil:** A paper or other flat material with a cut-out design that is used for printing, Ink or paint prints through the cut-out design onto the surface below.

**Tempera:** Tempera is a form of opaque watercolor. It is a slightly chalky, opaque paint that thins in water. The paint is made by mixing pigments with glue, egg yolk (egg tempera) or another binder. It was popular before the invention of oil painting. Most of us remember its bold bright colors from grade school, but it's still in use today by several illustrators.

**Textile:** Artworks made from cloth or fibers such as yarn. These may include weaving, tapestry, stitchery, appliqué, quilting and printed fabrics.

**Texture:** Artists use line, color, and shape to create textural imagery. The image looks rough, smooth, sharp, prickly, soft, hard, etc.

**Tie-dye:** A textile technique in which the design is created by tightly tying or binding the cloth and dipping it in dye. The tied or bound areas do not soak up the colored dye.

**Tint:** A light value of a pure color, usually made by adding white.

**Transparent:** Allowing light to pass through so that objects behind the surface can be clearly seen.

**Unity:** A feeling that all parts of a design are working together a team.

**Value:** An element of art that means the darkness or lightness of a surface.

**Vanishing Point:** In a perspective drawing, one or more points on the horizon where parallel lines, that go back in space, seem to meet.

**Visual Elements:** The grammar of the artist.

**Wash:** A very thin coat of paint. It is also a color that has been thinned with water (or turpentine if the paint is oil). When it is brushed on paper, canvas or board, the surface beneath can still be seen.

**Watercolor:** This is one of the most commonly used media in book illustration and perhaps the most difficult. It can be applied in various ways--from thin, transparent

washes to thick pigments. The echoic depends on the effect that the artist wishes to create. The process involves the building up of thin and usually transparent washes of color on white paper. The flow of the paper reflected back through the paint produces a brilliant and luminous quality not easily duplicated in other media. Watercolors are simply pigments combined with water. The artist sometimes uses really wet surfaces and brushes to do washes and thus creates “pool” like qualities or “runs” in the painting. These along with transparencies are tell-tale signs of watercolor. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to correct. *Owl Moon* illustrated by John Schoenherr demonstrates the delicate yet seemingly accidental quality of brush work characteristic of watercolor. His drawing is reinforced by occasional pen lines. Ted Rand uses watercolor with a wetter, softer edge look. Another good example is David Wiesner’s *Tuesday*. The paintings go from the transparency of a curtain to the heavy leaves and trees of the outdoors setting. Artists use pen or even pencil, either before or after the application of paint, to enhance (or better define) the final images.

**Wet Media:** Woodcuts are among the oldest and most influential artistic media in both Western and Eastern cultures. The artist may create black and white or full color illustrations. To create a woodcut, an artist draws an image on a block or wood and cuts away the area around the design. After rolling ink onto this raised surface, the artist presses the woodblock against paper, transferring the image from the block to the paper. Color prints require a different woodblock for each color in the picture. Woodcuts can be printed in colors with varying degrees of transparency, and the grain and texture of the wood can add to the effect of the composition. Their strong lines and bold colors create simplicity. Good examples of woodcut illustrations are: *A Story, A Story* by Gail Haley; *Antler, Bear, Canoe; A Northwards Alphabet Year* by Betsy Bowen; *Snowflake Bentley* (1999 Caldecott Award winner) by Mary Azarian.

(Glossary originally compiled by Wenda Clement)

**Sources:**

- Chapman, Laura H. *A World of Images*. Davis Publications, 1992.
- Mayer, Ralph and Steven Sheehan. *The Artist’s Handbook of Materials and Techniques*. Viking, 1991.
- Norton, Donna E. and Sandra E. Norton. *Through the Eyes of a Child; An Introduction to Children’s Literature*. Prentice Hall Publishers, 1999.
- Shulevitz, Uri. *Writing with Pictures*. Watson-Guptill Publishing, 1997.
- Sylvia Frezzolini. “Glossary of Terms in Art and Design of Children’s Books”