

## Glossary

**Abstract** – A term associated with early 20<sup>th</sup> century art which communicates meaning through lines, forms, colours, textures, rather than imitating material objects.

**Abstracted**- Taken from something we can recognise but often simplified or distorted, not represented in a realistic manner.

**Abstract Expressionism**- American painting movement of the 1940's and 1950's associated with abstraction and self-expression, for example in the work of Mark Rothko

**Academicism**- relating to traditionalism, often based on classicism and a formal rule-bound appreciation, especially in the arts.

**Acrylic Paint**-A synthetic, quick-drying and versatile medium, capable of being applied thickly or thinly, but perhaps best suited to areas of flat unmodulated colour.

**Antiquity**-Referring to the classical past or period, before the Middle Ages. Also known as classical antiquity. Comprises the interconnected civilisations of Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC to the fall of the Roman Empire in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD.

**Atmospheric or Aerial Perspective**- A term that describes the changes in tone and colour that occur when objects recede towards the horizon line. Colours tend to fade and appear bluish at their furthest point from the viewer. Atmospheric/Aerial perspective refers to the effect of an object being viewed in the distance through atmosphere.

**Avant-Garde**- Art and artists regarded to be at the forefront of artistic development because their work challenges established conventions and norms.

**Canon**- authoritative rule or criterion; the accepted standard.

**Canonical**- Included in a group of officially recognised and accepted works.

**Collectors**- people who collect things of interest, in this context, art. A collector's item is an object associated with monetary value and/or beauty.

**Complementary Colours**- Pairs of colours which are opposite to each other on the colour wheel, when placed next to each other, create a strong contrast. The optical strengthening of such combinations was explored by the chemist, Michel Eugène Chevreul. He wrote *The Principles of Harmony and Contrast of Colours, and Their Applications to the Arts* in 1839.

**Contract**-A written or spoken agreement between two parties intended to be a binding commitment enforceable by law. Contracts between artists and patrons often dictated the content, materials, costs and timescale of the work to be produced.

**Contre-Jour**-A French photographic term used to describe photographs taken into the light. The effect is often a rim of light around the objects of the camera's lens. In painting, the term is used for an object seen against the light.

**Critic**-Someone who writes and publishes their opinions on art and artists. They can be very influential, raising or lowering artists' status.

**Daguerrotype**- The first widespread photographic process introduced in 1839. A chemical reaction on a highly polished silver surface formed an image. The process was invented by Louis-Jacque-Mandé Daguerre.

**Delineating**- - Describing something precisely, eg. Drawing using line to create a crisp, hard-edged finish.

**Draughtsmanship**- Ability to draw with great skill.

**Expressionism**- When referred to with a capital 'E' it relates specifically to two early 20<sup>th</sup> century movements: Die Brücke (the Bridge) and Die Blau Reiter (The Blue Rider). Both groups employed a non-naturalistic use of colour and presented the world from a subjective and emotional viewpoint. When the term is used with a small 'e' it refers more generally to art which expresses emotion or to the works of forerunners to Expressionism such as Edvard Munch and Vincent van Gogh.

**Fauves**- Early 20<sup>th</sup> century French avant-garde movement characterised by bold, disharmonious colour palettes and dark outlines for expressive effect. Henri Matisse was their leading figure. The critic Louis Vauxcelles labelled the group 'Fauve' (Wild Beast) derogatorily at the Salon d'Automne where the Fauves exhibited in 1905.

**Formal Analysis**- A consideration of an artwork in terms of the following elements: composition, line, colour, light, shape, space, scale.

**Fresco**- water based painting applied onto wet lime or gypsum plaster, often on to a wall.

**Genre**- French term meaning 'kind', 'type', or 'category'. In painting a genre might be 'still life', 'landscape', 'portrait' or 'history painting'.

It can also mean 'a scene of everyday life'.

**Glaze**- A thin and transparent layer of paint applied over the top of an opaque layer.

**Hierarchy of Genres**- Formalization which ranks different genres/subject matter in an art form in terms of their prestige and cultural value.

**Hierarchical Scale**-A hierarchy of size or proportion is a technique used by artists to manipulate scale to show the relative importance of subjects.

**Iconography**- The study of the symbolic meaning of images in a work of art, such as particular objects, animals, plants, physical gestures.

**Idealisation**-the representation of subjects, people or things in an ideal or perfect way.

**Ideology**- A sociological concept that refers to a set of ideas (that of the dominant class) that are presented as the only way of seeing things and therefore accepted despite their being based on a partial truth.

**Impasto**- Thickly applied paint (usually oil) that stands up above the surface to which it has been applied.

**Impressionists**- Members of the French Impressionist movement. Unlike other movements (eg Pre-Raphaelites) they were not a clearly defined school with unified objectives and style. They were a loose association of artists whose common aim was to reject the established or 'academic' art by exploring new subjects and techniques. Many artists were only Impressionists for part of their career. Fifty different artists exhibited in the eight Impressionist exhibitions. Their work is characterised by bright palettes, loose painterly brushwork, scenes of contemporary Paris and landscapes.

**Linear Perspective**-The method of representing solid, three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface using the optical impression that parallel lines converge as they recede to a vanishing point on a horizon or eye level line. The geometry allows the artist to plot the relative size of objects.

**Medium**-The type of material used by artists, such as oil, watercolour, acrylic.

**Modelling**-In two-dimensional work, the way artists achieve volume and a sense of three-dimensional realism by shading from light to dark. It is often used inter-changeably with the more technical term chiaroscuro, although this implies a dramatic use of extreme light and dark.

**Modernity**- The condition of being modern, up to date, but used by the French writer and art critic Charles Baudelaire to describe a particular aspect of the modern –the fleeting experience of life in the urban city of Paris in the nineteenth century.

**Monochromatic**- A term referring to objects or images with a narrow range of colours. The term is often applied when black and white is used.

**Mythological**-concerning a body of myths from Greek and Roman mythology.

**Mythology** – Stories relating to superhuman beings (gods and goddesses) from Antiquity.

**Naturalism**-In art, depicting the natural appearance of things.

**Neo-Classical**-describes a style in European art of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries that drew inspiration from the art, architecture and ideas of ancient Greece and Rome. It was considered to offer a 'pure' style.

**Oeuvre**- The collective works of an artist; their entire body of work.

**Oil Paint**- A type of slow-drying paint that consists of particles of pigment suspended in a drying oil, commonly linseed oil. The viscosity of the paint may be modified by the addition of a solvent such as turpentine or white spirit, and varnish may be added to increase the glossiness of the dried oil paint film.

**Orthogonals** – Lines that recede and help linear perspective.

**Opacity**-describes being unable to see through, lacking transparency.

**Painterly**-Brushstrokes that are clearly visible.

**Palette**- Range of colours used by a particular artist or in a particular picture.

**Patrons**-Patrons commission, support or collect works of art and architecture (clients). In commissioning a work they may exert influence over its creation and specify what they want, what materials should be used and the timescale for its completion.

**Picture Plane** – The flat surface of a picture from which the illusory three-dimensional space appears to recede.

**Picturesque** - Visually attractive, beautiful scene. An aesthetic ideal introduced into English cultural debate in 1782 by William Gilpin.

**Pigment**-A substance, usually dry, used as colouring when mixed with a liquid binder.

**Plein Air**- A French term meaning 'open air' used to describe painting outdoors.

**Polychromatic**- Many-coloured.

**Post Impressionism**- A term used to describe the work of a generation of painters who came after the Impressionists, rejecting the naturalism and optical qualities found in Impressionism. It is an umbrella term for a wide variety of styles.

**Primary Colours**- In pigments, red, yellow and blue are the colours from which all other colours are derived.

**Raking light**-A light applied to the picture plane at an acute angle.

**Romanticism**-A movement in all the arts that emerged at the same time as Neo-Classicism. Romantic artists focused on emotion, imagination, irrationality and man's relationship to nature.

**Salon**-Refers to annual or biannual art exhibitions held in Paris under the auspices of the French Royal Academy from 1725 and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century sponsored by the French government.

**Scumbling**-A painting technique where a thin, broken, speckled or scratchy layer of colour is added over another so that patches of the colour beneath show through. It is done using a dry brush, or by dabbing at the surface with a rough sponge or crumpled cloth dipped in paint.

**Secondary Art Market**-The resale art market. A sale achieved after the original (primary sale).

**Secondary Colours**- Colours made by mixing two primary colours to form green, orange and purple in pigments.

**Techniques and processes**-Describes the various ways artists and architects handle the materials they use.

**Tempera**-A permanent and fast-drying medium also known as egg tempera because pigment is mixed with egg yolk, which acts as a binder.

**Thinner**-A liquid used to dilute paint, making it flow more easily. In oil-based paint, this is generally turpentine, which can also be used as a cleaning agent.

**Tondo**-An Italian word for 'round', used to describe a circular painting or relief sculpture.

**Tone**-Relating to the quality of brightness; a shade of colour.

**Wet-on-wet**-A painting technique in which wet paint is applied on to layers of wet paint or wet ground. For the technique to be effective, the paint must be applied quickly before the first layers have dried out. Also known as 'au premier coup' and 'alla prima'.