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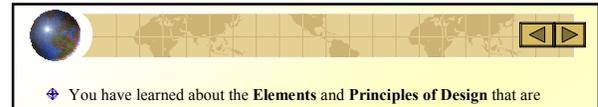


Composition And Style

Exploring the Visual Arts of
Non-Western Cultures

Composition & Style Art 244

End



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✦ You have learned about the **Elements and Principles of Design** that are the building blocks of any artwork.



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Composition & Style Art 244

End



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✦ You will now take a close look at the interesting ways that artists use:

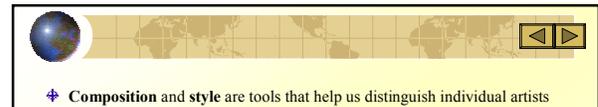
- **Composition** – presentation of the subject
- **Style** – distinctive use of the elements and principles



3

Composition & Style Art 244

End



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✦ **Composition and style** are tools that help us distinguish individual artists and identify art from specific time periods or geographic areas.



4

Composition & Style Art 244

End



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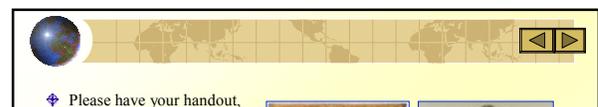
✦ By analyzing **composition and style**, you will see additional aspects of the artwork. It can help you better understand the artwork, the artist and the place and the time in which it was created.



5

Composition & Style Art 244

End



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✦ Please have your handout, “**Formal Analysis of Visual Art**” nearby while you view this presentation. You will want to refer to it as we explore **composition and style**.



6

Composition & Style Art 244

End

Let's look at how artists around the world used composition and style. The Art Tools Gallery at the end of the presentation has information about each of the art works used in this lesson.



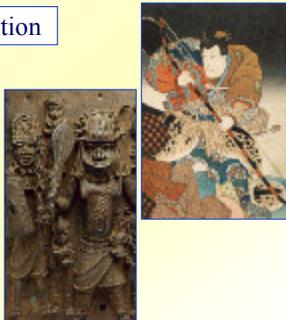
Mandala of the Six Cakravartins, 1400-1500, Unknown Artist, Tibet

7 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Elements of Composition

Composition is the manner in which the artist presents the subject of the artwork:

- Framing
- Pose
- Placement
- Background
- Lighting



8 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Composition: Framing

Framing is how the subject – person, place or thing – is shown in the artwork. This includes:

- Cropping
- Point of view



9 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Cropping refers to how much of the subject an artist chooses to show. It can show just a part of the subject, such as in a portrait. The Indian artist focused on Maharana Singh's face, hiding his body behind a carpet draped on a window. He is surrounded by symbols of power – the sword, rich clothes and many jewels.



Maharana Singh, 1810, Workshop of Chokha, India

10 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Or the whole figure of the subject can be the focus. A Maori artist shows the ancestor's awesome face, large hands and powerful legs. This *tekoteko* figure protected the home and storehouses of his children and grandchildren from harmful spirits.



Standing Ancestor Figure, 1800-1840, Unknown Artist, New Zealand

11 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Point of view refers to the position of the viewer to the subject - looking up, down, from the side or front. This point of view is an aerial view. Japanese artists frequently used this viewpoint – as if the viewer were flying overhead, looking down on the event – seeing everything at once. The gold clouds between the scenes were also a common Japanese compositional technique.



Butterfly Dance, 1585, Tosa Mitsuyoshi, Japan

12 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

13

◈ Here in this lovely illustration from a Mughal court romance, we the viewers are at the same level, **looking straight at the subject**, the young couple. It's as if we were invited into the scene to share their happiness.



A Lady and a Gentleman Converse, 1589, Unknown Mughal Artist, India

Composition & Style Art 244

End

14

Composition: Pose

◈ **Pose** is the position of a living subject, such as a person or animal:

- Standing or sitting, quietly or in motion
- The facial expression



Composition & Style Art 244

End

15

◈ The pose may be very **formal**. The Chinese had strict rules for showing the Buddha and his saints – the halos, hand gestures, and larger size of the Buddha compared to the saints. Each figure is standing almost straight, just leaning slightly forward, toward the small figure on the lower left, the deceased person whom they are welcoming to paradise



Buddha Amitabha, 12th century, Unknown Artist, China

Composition & Style Art 244

End

16

◈ The **pose** may be **informal**. An artist in 4th century Gandhara, Afghanistan carved this woman kneeling gracefully with her head to one side. She is smiling and may be a follower of Buddha with an offering of fruit in her left hand. She looks relaxed and confident of her faith.



Kneeling Figure, 4th – 5th century, Unknown Artist, Afghanistan

Composition & Style Art 244

End

17

◈ Kunisada was famous for dramatic paintings of Kabuki actors in popular plays. Here he shows an **action pose** – perhaps a fight scene. The bodies and arms of the actors show agitation and the clothing is in disarray.



Scene from a Kabuki Play, 19th century, Utagawa Kunisada, Japan

Composition & Style Art 244

End

18

◈ Subjects' **facial expressions** are a very important part of pose. A person's expression can tell much about the story in an artwork. Here two Kabuki actors are captured at the high point of a domestic drama. We may not know the plot of the play, but we can easily see by the actors' faces - especially the eyes and mouths - that there is great conflict.



Hanshiro IV and Nisaemon VII, 1796, Utagawa Toyokuni, Japan

Composition & Style Art 244

End

Composition: Placement

✦ The **placement** of the subject within the artwork is another important tool of composition:

- Grouping
- Proximity
- Sight lines

19 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

✦ Artists organize two or more figures or subjects of an artwork by **grouping** them. The Eskimo artist used a **triangular grouping** – the polar bear and the two hunters form the points of the triangle. Do you see how the spear lines up with the bear's eye?

Bear Tracks, 1992, Mary Okeena, Canada

20 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

✦ The Indian artist Sur Das also used a **triangular grouping** in his painting. But the top of the triangle is Prince Salim, the most important person in the group. Everyone else's head is below the Prince's head, to show respect for a royal person.

Prince Salim with Courtiers, 1600, Sur Das, Mughal Artist, India

21 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

✦ **Proximity** describes how close or far away persons or objects are from each other. The two attendants stand **close**, shoulder to shoulder with the African chief, showing loyalty to their leader. Four smaller servants keep the chief's ritual objects at hand.

Warrior Chief and Attendants, 1500-1600, Benin Artist, Nigeria, Africa

22 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

✦ The two Kabuki actors in Toyokuni's print are **close**. But while they are in **close proximity**, there is no togetherness. The man towers over the woman in a threatening manner, yet she leans into him and seems determined to win.

Hanshiro IV and Nisaemon VII, 1796, Utagawa Toyokuni, Japan

23 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

✦ Asavari has gone into the jungle to look for her lover in this illustration from a 17th century Indian song book of romantic ballads. The monkeys, tiger and peacocks surround her in a circle but they are **not in close proximity** to the heroine. It appears that they are surprised at her actions and do not want to get too near her.

Asavari Ragini, 1400-1500, Unknown Rajasthani Artist, India

24 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

❖ **Sight lines** describe lines that organize the artwork. The horses and edges of the hills in this hand scroll follow **horizontal** lines (side to side), which are calming.



Six Horses (detail), 13th – 14th century, Unknown Artist, China

25 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

❖ **Vertical lines** (up and down) are **formal**. A Khmer artist created a mini-temple of vertical pillars and a tall roof over the compassionate Buddha to direct our thoughts upward to heaven. His back is straight, lifting his head high. Originally the statue was covered with jewels.



Buddha Enthroned, 1180-1220, Unknown Artist, Cambodia

26 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

❖ Compositions organized on **diagonal lines** (on a slant) imply action. Hokusai used many diagonal lines to emphasize the cascading water twisting and turning down the mountain. The blue and white lines emphasize the movement.



Horse Washing Falls, 1831-32, Katsushika Hokusai, Japan

27 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Composition: Background

❖ The **background** is an important element of every artwork. Backgrounds can:

- ❖ Help tell the story in an artwork
- ❖ Place it in an historical location or time period
- ❖ Focus us more on the subject



28 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

❖ This artist recorded history with the **background** of his painting where a warlord surrenders to a Mughal general. You see the walled city by the river, the occupying army's tents behind the general and his officers and a line of people waiting to see the victor. Each detail of the background helps to tell the story.



Da'ud Receives a Robe of Honor, 1604, Hiranand, Mughal Artist, India

29 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

❖ Here are close-ups of this detailed background.



Da'ud Receives a Robe of Honor, 1604, Hiranand, Mughal Artist, India

30 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Art lovers in 19th century Tokyo, Japan would instantly recognize this **location** in their city, near the Suido Bridge with Mt. Fuji in the distance. The fish kites mean that it is May 5, Boys' Day. You can see other banners in the background. The fish, a carp, symbolizes strength and perseverance. Families still fly one kite for each son on this special holiday.



Suido Bridge, 1857, Utagawa Hiroshige, Japan

31 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

This artist followed a Chinese ink painting tradition by showing the subject with **no background**. His composition focuses us on the **subject** – the delicate bamboo leaves and rough rock “paired alone in harmony,” as described in the poem on the far left.



Bamboo and Rocks, 1760, Bangajiao Zheng Xie, China

32 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Composition: Lighting

Lighting is another compositional tool that can spotlight the subject or add to the mood of the artwork. There are three types:

- Flat
- Contrasting
- Dramatic



33 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Most Non-Western artists use **flat lighting**. The subjects, such as the horses, rider and trees in this Chinese hand scroll, do not cast shadows which could distract us. Without shadows, they also seem to float in the scene.



Six Horses, 13th – 14th century, Unknown Artist, China

34 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Unlike Western artists, Non-Western artists don't use **contrast** between light and shadow to give depth to a painting. Patrons did not feel it was necessary to have a realistic likeness. Here the painter shows the moon in the Maharana's portrait as a **symbol** of the Udaipur royal family, not as a source of light.



Maharana Singh, 1810, Workshop of Chokha, India

35 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Look carefully at artist Michisei's self-portrait. Like many modern Japanese artists, he studied Western art and choose to use **dramatic lighting**, as if he was in a spotlight, the center of attention. Notice the light comes from his left side and the shadows are on his right side.



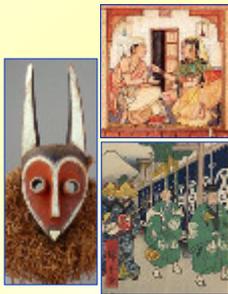
Self-Portrait, 1917, Kohno Michisei, Japan

36 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Elements of Style

✦ **Style** is the distinctive way that artists use composition and the elements and principles of design:

- Use of color
- Use of shapes
- Use of details
- Use of perspective



37 End
Composition & Style Art 244

Elements of Style

✦ The word **style** is used two ways. It can refer to:

- Artworks from a certain place and period of time or
- A group of artists who use the same techniques.



38 End
Composition & Style Art 244

Style: Use of Color

✦ **Color** is one way that artists or groups of artists distinguish themselves:

- Monochrome
- Multi-colored
- High key
- Low key



39 End
Composition & Style Art 244

✦ Over hundreds of years, the Chinese developed ink brush painting techniques. It is a **monochrome** (one color) method, using just black ink on white paper. The artist can express his ideas by changing the values, creating many tints and shades of gray, showing depth and delicacy.



Bamboo and Rocks, 1760, Bangqiao Zheng Xie, China

40 End
Composition & Style Art 244

✦ The Japanese adopted the **monochrome** ink brush painting technique from the Chinese. Shunbun used many tints of gray to create a dramatic landscape on two large folding screens.



Four Seasons (Left screen), 15th century, Shunbun, Japanese

41 End
Composition & Style Art 244

✦ Indian artists from the Rajasthani kingdoms from the 15th to the 18th century developed a style of painting that was **multi-colored**. They illustrated poems set to songs about romance with brightly colored scenes showing the action of the story. Ragas were men's songs and Raginis were women's songs.



Asavari Ragini, 1400-1500, Unknown Rajasthani Artist, India

42 End
Composition & Style Art 244

43

Composition & Style Art 244

End

✦ Mughal artists created **high key** paintings of the royal court's events and famous people. This illustration from "Tales of the Parrot," uses colors that are all light and bright (or **high**), with only a few accents of darker colors. High key paintings can be happy and light-hearted.



A Lady and a Gentleman Converse, 1589, Unknown Mughal Artist, India

44

Composition & Style Art 244

End

✦ A **low key** artwork is one that uses mostly **dark** colors and shades. A chief of the Kwakiutl clan in Canada wore this mask of Dz'onokwa, the night goddess of wealth, at a potlatch to impress his rival chiefs with his great power. Do you think that he wanted to frighten them?



Mask, 19th century, Unknown Kwakiutl Artist, Canada

45

Composition & Style Art 244

End

Style: Use of Shapes

✦ The artist can communicate values or add interest by changing the **size** and **shape** of parts of the composition:

- Distortion
- Angular shapes
- Curved shapes



46

Composition & Style Art 244

End

✦ Exaggerating or distorting the **size** of a subject is used as a tool of composition by many cultures around the world. There are four servants surrounding the African chief. They are not important, therefore they are much smaller than the large chief.



Warrior Chief and Attendants, 1500-1600, Benin Artist, Nigeria, Africa

47

Composition & Style Art 244

End

✦ Artists who use all straight lines or sharp **angular shapes** can give it edginess or hardness. This mask is for funerals and mourning. Lines running down from the eyes are tears. The forehead designs represent the scarification marks for African tribal identify. Many African tribes used angular shapes to add power to an image.



Ngady Maawash, 19th century, Unknown Kuba Artist, Africa

48

Composition & Style Art 244

End

✦ When a painter or sculptor uses all **curved lines** and **rounded shapes**, that softens the composition. This Buddha has a round face and the graceful curves in his robe are gentle carved parallel lines. These flowing lines communicate calm serenity to those who pray before him. A characteristic tradition of Southeast Asian artists was to use gentle rounded shapes.

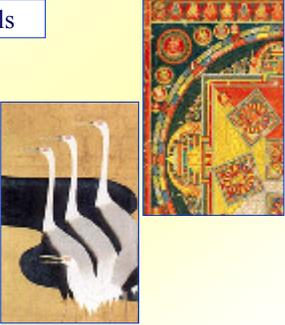


Standing Buddha, 12th century, Unknown Artist, Sri Lanka

Style: Use of Details

Artists carefully choose the amount of **detail** in their artworks:

- Simple details
- Detailed
- Highly detailed
- Decorative



49 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Japanese painters developed many different styles over the centuries. This two panel screen uses **simple details** and geometric forms. This followed the traditions of the Rimpa School of painting, making forms two-dimensional on a brilliant gold background.



Cranes, late 17th century, Sakai Hoitsu, Japan

50 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**



Flock of Cranes, 18th century, Ishida Yutei, Japan

This six-panel screen is more **detailed**, following the Kano School of painters from the 17th and 18th centuries. You can see the patterns of the feathers and markings as the birds groom and trumpet.

51 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

The Japanese artist Katsushika Hokusai created **highly detailed** woodblock prints. Each feather and pine needle are outlined in black and stand out against the snow. The blue and red highlights the stately birds. Hokusai studied cranes closely to get those details so that his work would appeal to the merchants and commoners who enjoyed realism - and bought his prints.



Two Cranes on a Snowy Pine, 1830-35, Katsushika Hokusai, Japan

52 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Sometimes so many details are added that the artwork becomes **decorative**. This 15th century Tibetan Mandala shows Buddha's divine temple with four gates protected by thunderbolts and a rim of flame with many other details. All the details were added to hold a worshipper's attention while they prayed.



Mandala of the Six Cakravartins, 1400-1500, Unknown Artist, Tibet

53 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Each **detail** illustrates the teachings of Buddha, in this case, the rewards for the good person who achieves enlightenment. It shows all the wonders of the many palaces in heaven where the faithful are rewarded for their good deeds, correct thoughts and faith in the Buddhist way. The worshipper would follow a path around the mandala as they prayed.



Mandala of the Six Cakravartins, 1400-1500, Unknown Artist, Tibet

54 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

Style: Use of Perspective

✦ **Perspective** is the way that artists show depth in artwork that has only two dimensions. It can also help us distinguish styles or time periods:

- No perspective
- Linear perspective
- Atmospheric perspective
- Visual perspective



55 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

✦ Few Non-Western artists used perspective until after 1800, when trade with the West became common. Artists then saw how Western artists used perspective to show depth. The Maharana painting is a good example of Non-Western style. There is **no perspective**, the Maharana almost appears flat in a flat landscape.



Maharana Singh, 1810, Workshop of Chokha, India

56 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

✦ With **linear perspective**, lines of roofs, buildings or roads in the artwork lead back to a single point on the horizon as in this print by Hiroshige. The lines of the buildings lead us back to see Mt. Fuji in the distance. The Japanese learned about perspective in the 1790s from art books brought to Japan by Dutch traders.



Mt. Fuji from Suruga, 1858, Ando Hiroshige, Japan

57 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

✦ The red lines show how the edges of the roof and the building's front converge on the distant horizon to show **depth**. Perspective makes us feel like we can walk down the street and it invites us into the scene, to be part of the action. Tokyo people who bought this print wanted that feeling of excitement.



Mt. Fuji from Suruga, 1858, Ando Hiroshige, Japan

58 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

✦ Many ink paintings use **atmospheric perspective** – colors get lighter as objects get farther away from you. The mountains to the right are far away, just light tints of gray, while the rocks in the front are closer and dark.



Four Seasons, 15th century, Shunbun, Japanese

59 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

✦ Artists who use **visual perspective** show close objects as large while things that are far away are small. Hiroshige's print may be an extreme example, but it clearly illustrates the technique. The carp kites get smaller as they are farther away. Hiroshige wanted to show that the celebration was in every corner of the city.



Suido Bridge, 1857, Ando Hiroshige, Japan

60 Composition & Style Art 244 **End**

61

◆ You will use these skills of **formal analysis** in our classroom discussions, your section tests and for your research paper and presentation.



Kneeling Figure, 4th – 5th century, Unknown Artist, Afghanistan

Composition & Style Art 244

End

62

◆ You will analyze the artwork for **composition**:

- ◆ Framing
- ◆ Pose
- ◆ Placement
- ◆ Background
- ◆ Lighting



Scene from a Kabuki Play, 19th century, Utagawa Kunisada, Japan

Composition & Style Art 244

End

63

◆ You will identify the artwork's **style**:

- ◆ Use of color
- ◆ Use of shapes
- ◆ Use of details
- ◆ Use of perspective



Two Cranes on a Snowy Pine, 1830-35, Katsushika Hokusai, Japan

Composition & Style Art 244

End

64

Gallery

◆ The next slides are the Gallery. You can study each work that was used in the presentation to review the terms and tools that you just learned.



Butterfly Dance, 1585, Tosa Mitsuyoshi, Japan

Composition & Style Art 244

End

65

◆ **Warrior Chief & Attendants**

- ◆ Edo Peoples, Africa
- ◆ 16th – 17th century
- ◆ Metropolitan Museum of Art
- ◆ What is distorted and why?



Composition & Style Art 244

End

66

◆ **Mask with Head Cloth**

- ◆ Zaire, Africa
- ◆ 19th century
- ◆ Michael C. Carlos Museum
- ◆ What ideas do the angular shapes communicate?



Composition & Style Art 244

End

67

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✦ *Standing Buddha*

- Sri Lanka, S. India
- 12th century
- Phoenix Art Museum
- What shape is dominant - angular or rounded - and why?



End

Composition & Style Art 244

68

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✦ *A Lady and a Gentleman Converse*

- Mughal, India
- About 1580
- Worcester Art Museum
- Why is this high key? What feelings did the artist want to communicate?



End

Composition & Style Art 244

69

◀▶

✦ *Prince Salim with a Courtier*

- Sur Das, India
- About 1600
- Freer & Sackler Galleries
- What makes this a triangular grouping?



End

Composition & Style Art 244

70

◀▶

✦ *Da'ud Receives a Robe*

- Hiranand, India
- About 1604
- Freer & Sackler Galleries
- What does the historical background show?



End

Composition & Style Art 244

71

◀▶

✦ *Asavari Ragini*

- Central India
- About 1640
- San Diego Museum of Art
- Why is this a multi-color painting? What does the proximity show?



End

Composition & Style Art 244

72

◀▶

✦ *Maharana Bhim Singh*

- Chokha, India
- 1810-20
- Freer & Sackler Galleries
- Is this dramatic or flat lighting? What type of perspective did the artist use?



End

Composition & Style Art 244

73

Composition & Style Art 244

Buddha Amitabha

- Khara-Khoto, China
- 12th century
- Hermitage Museum
- What poses did the artist use? Why?



End

74

Composition & Style Art 244

Six Horses

- China
- Late 12th century
- Los Angeles County Museum of Art
- What do horizontal sight lines communicate?



End

75

Composition & Style Art 244

Mandala of the Six Cakravartins

- Tibet
- 1400-1500
- Philadelphia Museum of Art
- Why did the artist use decorative details?



End

76

Composition & Style Art 244

Bamboo and Rocks

- China
- About 1760
- Minneapolis Institute of Art
- Why is there no background?



End

77

Composition & Style Art 244

Kneeling Figure

- Afghanistan
- 4th – 5th century
- The Asia Society
- Is the pose formal or informal? Why?



End

78

Composition & Style Art 244

Buddha Enthroned

- Thailand
- 1180-1220
- Kimbell Museum of Art
- What direction are the sight lines? What does that communicate?

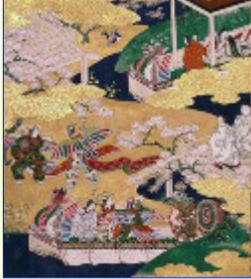


End

✦ *Butterfly Dance*

- Tosa Mitsuyoshi, Japan
- About 1585
- Minneapolis Institute of Art
- What is the point of view? Why did the artist use it?



79 End
Composition & Style Art 244

✦ *Four Seasons*

- Shunbun, Japan
- 15th century
- Tokyo National Museum
- Why is this monochrome? What type of perspective did the artist use?



80 End
Composition & Style Art 244

✦ *Flock of Cranes*

- Ishida Yutei, Japan
- About 1780
- Metropolitan Museum of Art
- How much detail is there - simple, highly detailed, decorative? Why?



81 End
Composition & Style Art 244

✦ *Two Panel Folding Screen*

- Sakai Hoitsu, Japan
- About 1800
- Worcester Museum of Art
- Why did the artist use simple details?



82 End
Composition & Style Art 244

✦ *Scene from a Kabuki Play*

- Utagawa Kunisada, Japan
- About 1840
- Freer & Sackler Galleries
- What type of pose was used? Why?



83 End
Composition & Style Art 244

✦ *Iwai Hanshiro IV*

- Utagawa Toyokuni, Japan
- 1796
- Minneapolis Institute of Art
- Why is there close proximity? What feelings did the artist capture from the play? What do the facial expressions tell the viewer?



84 End
Composition & Style Art 244

85

Composition & Style Art 244

End

◆ *Horse Washing Falls*

- ◆ Katsushika Hokusai, Japan
- ◆ 1831-32
- ◆ Minneapolis Institute of Art
- ◆ Which sight lines were used and why?



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Composition & Style Art 244

End

◆ *Two Cranes on a Snowy Pine*

- ◆ Katsushika Hokusai, Japan
- ◆ 1830-35
- ◆ Minneapolis Institute of Art
- ◆ Why is this highly detailed? Who did Hokusai want to appeal to? Why?



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Composition & Style Art 244

End

◆ *Suido Bridge*

- ◆ Utagawa Hiroshige, Japan
- ◆ 1857
- ◆ The British Museum
- ◆ Which perspective did Hiroshige use - linear, visual or atmospheric?



88

Composition & Style Art 244

End

◆ *Mt. Fuji, Suruga Street*

- ◆ Ando Hiroshige, Japan
- ◆ 1858
- ◆ Minneapolis Institute of Art
- ◆ Is this linear or visual perspective and why?



89

Composition & Style Art 244

End

◆ *Self-Portrait*

- ◆ Kohno Michisei, Japan
- ◆ 1917
- ◆ Freer & Sackler Galleries
- ◆ Why did Michisei use dramatic lighting? What tradition was he following?



90

Composition & Style Art 244

End

◆ *Standing Ancestor Figure*

- ◆ Maori, New Zealand
- ◆ 1800-1840
- ◆ Kimbell Art Museum
- ◆ How did the artist use shapes - angular, rounded or distorted? Why?



91

Composition & Style Art 244

End

Mask

- Kwakiutl, Canada
- 19th century
- Detroit Institute of Art
- Is this high or low key and why? How was this mask used?



92

Composition & Style Art 244

End

Bear Tracks

- Mary K. Okeena, Canada
- 1992
- Virtual Museum, Canada
- What placement did Mary Okeena use and why?



93

Composition & Style Art 244

End

You should now be better prepared for our classroom discussions, tests, your research paper and presentation.

