

# Handout #13

## How To Look At Art: Part A

### The Tools of the Artists

Every artist and craftsperson uses some or all of these tools as they create their works of art. As we look at art to see how the artist used these tools, it helps us focus on the work, to see more details and we have common terms to discuss the artwork with others.

#### I. Elements of Design

##### A. Line

1. Outline – edge, silhouette, lines that define the shape and space
2. Variations – more than one type of line: straight, curved, thin, thick, solid, sketchy, horizontal, vertical

##### B. Color

1. Hue – primary colors (red, yellow, blue) and secondary colors (orange, green, purple), cool colors (blue, green, purple) and warm colors (red, yellow, orange)
2. Value – tints are light colors (mixed with white), shades are dark colors (mixed with black)
3. Saturation – intensity of the colors, they are bright or dull

##### C. Texture

1. Real textures – those which can be felt to be smooth or rough
2. Implied textures – those painted or drawn to look soft or hard

##### D. Space

1. Two dimensional – having height and width, as in a drawing or painting
2. Pictorial depth – different ways of showing depth, from overlapping to perspective; some objects look close and others look far away
3. Three dimensional – having height, width and depth, as in a relief, sculpture or building

#### II. Principles of Design

##### A. Repetition

1. Repeating one or more elements - line, color, texture or shape in two or more parts of the artwork.
2. Pattern is repetition of the same elements to create an overall design.

- ##### B. Emphasis – making one part of the artwork stand out by it being the largest, brightest or darkest.

### C. Balance

1. Symmetrical or formal – if you draw an imaginary line down the middle, the right side of the artwork is the same as the left side
2. Asymmetrical or informal –it is unequal or not the same on each side of an imaginary middle line.

### D. Unity

1. Proportion – the pleasing relationship of all parts to each other and to the whole of the design.
2. Variety – there are differences in size, surface, line, value and shape that give interest to a composition.

- E. Contrast – shows differences between the elements of the design, such as thick versus thin lines, bright versus dull colors, or light colors versus dark colors

## III. Content

### A. Subject Matter

1. Representational – we can clearly identify the person, place or thing in the artwork.
2. Non-representational – the artwork is made of lines, forms and shapes that do not represent actual people, places or things.

### B. Ideas contained in the work

1. Social
2. Political
3. Economic
4. Religious
5. Artistic: continue traditions or experiment

### C. Intention of the artist

1. Record beautiful people or things
2. Honor a person or God, gods, or goddesses
3. Protest a condition in society
4. Create a beautiful object to enjoy every day; furniture, dish, etc.
5. Experiment with materials, colors, forms or subjects

### D. Symbols and symbolism

1. Myths and legends, ideas about the afterlife
2. Religious signs or ways of representing God, gods or goddesses