

# Glossary

## A

**Abstract** In art, objects or figures that are depicted in a simplified or stylized way yet remain recognizable. Nonobjective or nonrepresentational.

**Achromatic** Having no color, a neutral such as black, white, or gray.

**Additive** Descriptive of a sculptural method in which form is created by building up materials.

**Aesthetic** Dealing with art theory or issues of appreciation in art; the beautiful as related or contrasted to the good, the true, or the useful.

**Arch** A curved construction which spans an opening. Usually consists of wedge-shaped blocks and found in a variety of shapes.

**Asymmetrical Balance** Balance in which the two imaginary halves of a composition have equal weight but are disposed unevenly.

## B

**Balance** A principle in art. May be formal or symmetrical, informal or asymmetrical.

**Baluster/Balustrade** Balusters are upright posts or spindles that support a handrail. A balustrade is a series of balusters under a handrail.

**Bas Relief or Low Relief** Sculpture in which the figures are attached to a background, projecting only slightly from it.

**Base** 1. A low thickened section of a wall. 2. Wider part of a column upon which the shaft of a column rests.

**Beadboard** Wood paneling with vertical grooves missed so it looks like board and batten walls.

**Blind Arch** An arch in which the opening is permanently closed by wall construction.

**Biomorphic** Taken from nature; structure based on life.

**Bracket** 1. Any overhanging member projecting from a wall or other body to support a weight (such as a cornice). 2. A decorative detail attached under the overhanging edge of a stair tread.

**Broken Pediment** A pediment that has been broken at its apex. The two sloping sides do not meet each other.

## C

**Capital** Topmost member of a column, pilaster, etc. Typically decorated but may carry an architrave or arcade.

**Coffers** A ceiling with deeply recessed panels which can be created using various materials.

**Color** An element of art. Also referred to as hue.

**Color, Analogous** Closely related colors; neighbors on the color wheel: green, blue-green, yellow-green for example.

**Color, Monochromatic** All the tints and shades of a single color plus its neutralized possibilities.

**Colors, Complimentary** Colors found opposite one another on the color wheel: red and green for example.

**Colors, Primary** One of the basic colors on any color wheel, which it is assumed cannot be mixed from other colors, but which serves as a basis for mixing all combinations on the wheel.

**Colors, Secondary** A color created by mixing two primary colors on any color wheel.

**Composition** An ordered relationship among parts or elements of design.

**Conceptual Art** A work of art or an event that depends primarily upon an intellectual concept conceived by the artist.

**Content** The subject matter of a work of art, including its emotional, intellectual, symbolic, thematic, and narrative connotations.

**Contour Drawing** A line drawing delineating the outer and inner contours of a posed model, still life, landscape, or other selected subject matter.

**Cove** A concave interior corner molding, especially at the transition from wall to ceiling or wall to floor.

**Cresting** On a roof, an ornamental screen, generally rhythmic and high decorative.

**Cupola** A roof structure, often on a circular base, typically set on the ridge of a roof

## D

**Dentils** A band of small, square, tooth-like blocks. Forms part of the characteristic ornamentation of the classical orders.

**Dormer** A structure projecting from a sloping roof which usually houses a window or ventilating louver.

## E

**Emphasis** A principle in art. Where important elements in a composition are emphasized.

**Engaged Column** A column partially built into a wall; Not freestanding.

**Entablature** In classical architecture, the elaborated beam member carried by the columns. Horizontally, it is divided into the architrave (bottom), frieze (center), and cornice (top).

## F

**Fanlight** A semicircular window over the opening of a door radiating bars in the form of an open fan

**Fenestration** The design and placement of openings in a building envelope.

**Finial** An ornament which terminates the point of a spire, pinnacle, etc.

**Form** 1. The underlying structure or composition in a work of art. 2.. The shape of outline of something. 3. The essence of a work of art – its medium or mode of expression. 4. The substance of something, as solid or liquid form.

## H

**Harmony** A combination of objects or design motifs that pleases and individual, contrasted to a clashing or unharmonious arrangement.

## I

**Intensity** The relative purity or grayness of a color.

## J

## K

## L

**Line** And element in art. The basic skeletal foundation of a design or composition.

**Lintel** Horizontal member above a door or window or between columns.

**Luminosity** The actual or illusory effect of giving off light.

**Luster** The glow of reflected light

## M

**Medium** 1. The material used for a work of art. 2. The basis for a paint, such as oil. 3. The form of expression in a work of art, such as painting or sculpture.

**Modular** Characterized by repetitive and or interconnecting units that can be assembled in different ways, especially in furniture or architecture.

**Motif** An element, frequently the theme of a work of art, which may be repeated or elaborated on.

**Mullion** Vertical piece in an opening dividing the space. Forms divisions in windows and doors.

**Muntin** Small bar separating glass panels in a window sash.

## N

**Neutral** A color not associated with any particular hue, such as gray or tan.

**Nonobjective** Having no resemblance to natural forms or objects.

**Nonrepresentational** See non-objective.

## O

## P

**Palate** 1. The range of colors used for a painting. 2. The range of colors characteristically used by a single artist or group of artists. 3. The surface on which an artist mixes paint.

**Parapet** The portion of an exterior wall that projects above the edge of the roof area.

**Pattern** Decorative design that is repetitive or textural in quality.

**Pilaster** A shallow rectangular column that projects slightly beyond the wall into which it is built and conforms precisely to the order or style of the adjacent columns.

**Plane** A flat surface.

**Plastic** 1. Capable of being molded or shaped. 2. Solid, sculptural, three-dimensional. 3. Any of numerous synthetic substances composed principally of carbon compounds in a long molecular chain.

**Plasticity** The ability of a material to be molded or shaped.

**Portico** An open-sided porch with a column supported roof.

**Positive/Negative** Positive shapes in a composition are the solid objects. Negative shapes are the unoccupied empty spaces between the positive shapes.

## Q

**Quions** A brick or stone used in masonry to reinforce an external corner or edge. Often decorative distinct from adjacent masonry. May be imitated in non-loadbearing materials.

## R

**Refraction** The bending of a ray of light as it passes through a prism or a lens.

**Representational** Resembling in appearance the known likenesses of objects in nature.

## S

**Scale** Size of weight relationships in a structure or between structures.

**Shade** A variation of any color that is darker than its normal value.

**Shape** A two-dimensional area defined by lines, colors, or values.

**Sill** Lower structure of an opening across the bottom of a window.

**Simultaneous Contrast** The tendency of complementary colors to intensify each other when placed side by side.

**Soffit** The exposed undersurface of any overhead component of a building, such as an arch, balcony, beam, cornice, lintel, or vault.

**Split Complement** A combination of colors involving one hue and the hues on either side of its complement on a color wheel.

**Space** In art, the area and/or air occupied by, activated by, or implied to be, in an artwork.

**Structural Design** Design concerned with the creation of basic form in an object, as distinguished from its surface enrichment.

**Subtractive** Descriptive of a sculptural method in which form is created by carving or cutting away materials.

## T

**Tint** A variation of any color that is lighter than its normal value.

**Tonality** The interrelation of tones at work.

**Tone** A softened color achieved by mixing a pure hue with gray or its complement.

**Transom** 1. A cross-bar that separates the door from the window or fanlight above it. 2. A horizontal bar of wood or stone across the top of a door or window.

**Turret** A smaller tower, typically corbeled from a corner.

## U

**Unity** A principle of art. When everything in a composition falls into place through use of fundamental principles of art, unity is achieved.

## V

**Value** The lightness or darkness of a color.

## W

## X

## Y

## Z