

VISUAL ARTS GLOSSARY

aerial/atmospheric perspective: the observable effect of atmosphere. Lines and details blur and colours pale and are bluer with distance.

applique: method of decoration in which fabric is cut and attached to the surface of another material to make pictures or patterns.

appropriation: taking or copying images or ideas, generally to make new works or to present the images or ideas as one's own and usually without permission from the original work's creator.

art work: a product of art-making activity (for example, a painting, sculpture, photograph, drawing, installation, performance).

assemblage: a three-dimensional art object made up of found materials or objects.

bas-relief: a composition in shallow relief on a flat or curved surface (for example, on a coin).

body of work: a collection of developed and assembled works (usually by one artist) that represents an investigation or study.

cartoon: a single caricature or comic drawing. Prior to the 19th century it referred to a full-size preliminary drawing for a painting or tapestry.

collage: this technique involves the assembling and gluing down on a flat surface of assorted materials, selected for their pictorial meaning, or textural qualities.

collagraph print: a relief printing process. A block, which has been created by gluing differently textured materials to the surface, is sealed and then printed in the usual way. Alternatively the separate textural components can be inked in different colours and re-assembled for printing.

communication: conveying or transmitting meaning within a particular context.

composition: 1. an art work; 2. the arrangement of subjects, elements (for example, shapes, lines, colours) within the structural framework of an art work.

conventions: established procedures, in making art works, that use particular pictorial devices, techniques or processes to represent, organise, or interpret ideas.

cropping: cutting off or masking out an unwanted area of an image.

culture: understandings, patterns of behaviour, practices, values, and symbol systems that are acquired, preserved, and transmitted by a group of people and that can be embodied in art works.

design brief: a given or negotiated task that clearly identifies a design problem for investigation and resolution, often in accordance with required specifications.

drawing: 1. a sketch, plan, photograph, computer-generated image, diagram, or model created in order to develop an idea or as an end in itself. 2. The processes of investigation, information gathering, generation of ideas and their development in art making.

drypoint: an intaglio printing process. Marks are scratched directly into a surface, such as metal or mylar film, which is then covered with ink. The surface is cleaned and the ink, which remains in the grooves, makes a printed image on dampened paper when pressure is applied.

electronic media: media (for example, computers, digital cameras) in which images are created and manipulated electronically.

elements of the visual arts: the basic qualities of two-dimensional, three-dimensional, and time-based compositions (for example, line, point, tone, texture, colour, form or mass, shape, space, time).

form: 1. the physical shape and three dimensional mass of an object within an art work; 2. a particular field or genre within the visual arts (for example, painting, printmaking).

found materials: objects found in the environment and used as tools or media in making art works.

framing devices: the use of formal or informal borders, such as patterns or aligned objects (for example, trees, abstract shapes or areas of colour) which surround and thus frame component parts of an image.

frottage: a sheet of paper is placed over a rough surface and rubbed with pencil or crayon to record the image of texture of the surface.

genre: 1. a type of art work that has a tradition or history and is identifiable by specific characteristics (for example, portrait, landscape, still life, abstract painting); 2. pictures of scenes from daily life.

geometric abstraction: an approach in non-representational art which plays with the relationships between geometric shapes, forms,

colours and textures. In some instances compositions are generated from observed forms.

hatching: creating tonal or shading effects with closely spaced parallel lines. When such lines are placed at an angle across the first, it is called cross-hatching. Artists use this technique, varying the size, closeness and other qualities of the lines, most commonly in drawing, linear painting and engraving.

icon: a symbol, image, motif, emblem, or object that is generally recognised as representative of a person, place, era, or culture, and as being imbued with a particular spiritual or cultural significance.

idea: a visual, auditory, or kinaesthetic concept, or a combination of these, within an arts discipline.

impasto: texture due to the thick application of paint.

installation: a two-dimensional, three-dimensional, or time-based art work (or a combination of these) made specifically for a chosen site or environment and often involving interaction between itself, its audience, and the site.

interpretation: analysis or appreciation of meaning in an art work by a viewer.

kowhaiwhai: painted rafter patterns associated with the Māori meeting house, also applied in other contexts – canoe paddle blades etc.

koru: a design based on the fern frond (pitau).

layering: applying one layer of opaque or transparent material (for example, tissue papers, paint, glazes) on top of another.

layout: the arrangement and positioning in a design of text, illustrations, photographs, diagrams, and so on.

linear perspective: converging real or imagined lines draw the eye to a vanishing point (horizon). Objects located on these lines diminish proportionately as they near the vanishing point.

maquette: a preliminary model in wax, card, wire, or clay, made in preparation for a larger three-dimensional work.

materials: any physical substances used to make art works, including media (for example, wax, crayons, oil paint, modelling clay) and found objects (for example, leaves, shells, wire).

meaning: culturally or individually constructed understandings conveyed through art works; or what a viewer understands and interprets from an art work.

media: material or materials commonly used to make art works; they include two-dimensional media (for example, graphite, ink, paint, photographic paper, canvas), three-dimensional media (for example, fibres, clay, wood, metal, glass, bone, plastics), and time-based media (for example, film, videotape).

mixed-media: this technique uses a range of different materials to develop an artwork (for example, ink, paint, newspaper, card, cut paper, pencil, or pastel and can incorporate photographs, computer printouts, newspaper articles). Some, or all of these are used in layering, smudging, textural rubbings (frottage), scratching (sgraffito).

monochromatic: consisting of only a single colour or hue; may include its tints and shades.

monoprint: a unique one-off print. There are three common approaches. An inked plate can be wiped and variously altered then printed. A piece of paper can be placed over the inked plate, and drawn upon, thus picking up ink from the plate to create a print on the underside of the paper. A plate can be directly painted using oil paint or ink and then printed.

motif: a distinct, often repeated idea or feature within a two-dimensional, three-dimensional, or time-based art work.

performance art: an art event (body art, a staged event, or sequence), which happens for an audience. Dates from the 1960s.

perspective: the method of representing a three-dimensional object or a particular volume of space, on a two-dimensional surface.

pictorial device: a technique in which a visual strategy or an aspect of design is used for a particular picture-making purpose (for example, using linear perspective and tonal devices to give the illusion of space in a drawing).

pitau: 1. a young succulent shoot of a plant, especially a frond of a fern. 2. perforated spiral carving.

plein air: painted out of doors in the "open air".

polychromatic having many colours; multi-coloured.

popular culture: contemporary culture as defined by the objects, images, artefacts, literature, music, and so on of "ordinary" people.

poupou: 1. (singular: pou or epa) the upright posts forming the solid wall framework of a whare (Māori meeting house). When carved to represent the human form, they are regarded as places where the ancestral spirit could dwell to comfort and protect the living. 2. (singular and plural) the large carved free-standing posts (often with multi-figures) which support the roof of the whare.

principles of the visual arts: concepts such as balance, harmony, rhythm, tension, and contrast, achieved in an art work by organising and arranging visual arts elements.

procedure: a particular way of carrying out an art-making investigation, for example, the generation of ideas, and subsequent developmental stages leading to the making of art works.

process: a specific art-making method; for example, etching is one of several printmaking processes.

relief print: any method of printmaking where the surface to be inked is raised or in relief.

scale: proportion or measurement.

sequence: a series of images, drawings, or art works that shows the development of an idea or story line.

sgraffito: a technique that involves scratching through one layer to reveal another.

shallow relief construction: see bas-relief.

silk-screen printing: a method of printmaking in which ink is forced through a stencil supported by a fine-mesh screen onto a textile or paper surface.

sketches: a preliminary drawing of a composition.

social text: an art work that refers to the society or culture in which it is made and that reflects the dynamics within that society or culture.

storyboard: a sequence of images or drawings that describes the planned content of a film or video.

style: the distinguishing characteristics of a particular period, movement, or school of painting, sculpture, design, and so on; *or* the distinctive personal mannerisms or traits of a particular artist as evidenced in their work.

symbol: a recognised sign, object, or image that represents something other than itself within a particular cultural context.

tāniko: ornamental border of a mat or cloak formed by a close knotting process. Patterns consist of repeated triangular motifs which have symbolic traditional meanings similar to those found in tukutuku panels.

tapa: a cloth that is made in Pacific nations from pounded bark and that has distinctive designs.

technique: a particular way or method of using tools or materials to achieve a specific effect (for example, using the point of a pencil to create a fine line; using a pencil sideways to create light and dark tones).

technologies: equipment used to help create, present, explain, document, view, interpret, analyse, or learn about visual arts works, including tools (for example, chisels, palette knives), materials (for example, paper, fabric, clay, ink), and film and electronic media (for example, video, computers).

text: any expressive work (artistic or otherwise) that can be "read", whether it uses words, images, or sounds.

time-based art: art works that are sequenced through time, that change as we view them, and that may be ephemeral (for example, video, kinetic sculpture, performance works).

tivaevae: appliqued quilts from the Cook Islands.

viewpoint: a compositional device used in depicting space and objects in space (for example, high and low viewpoints, side-on views, close-ups, distant viewpoints).

wahi tuturu: traditional places of cultural or spiritual significance for Māori.

wakahuia: traditional Māori taonga. Small, ornate, carved wooden containers used by Māori to store precious objects.

warp: strips the same length used as the base for weaving.

weft: strips used for weaving through the warp.

wet and dry media: art-making media with wet properties (for example, paint, ink, dyes, washes) or dry properties (for example, pencil, charcoal, conte, crayon).

whare whakairo: carved Māori meeting houses.