

The Formal Elements of Art

These elements, sometimes termed the principals of composition, describe the way the sensor, elements are organized.

Emphasis The focal point of an artwork-: the point where the artist wants the viewer's attention to be.

Variety The differences found in a work, of art: the thickness of lines. the sizes of objects, the colors used. The differences can be related, a variation on a theme.

Unity The whole or total effect of a work of art resulting from the way the elements have been put together. A work has unity when all its parts are linked together in some way.

Balance The way parts of a composition are placed together to create a sense of unity.. Balance may be symmetrical with one half of a design being almost a mirror image of the other half. Or balance may be asymmetrical, with two halves that are very different.

Pattern The repetition of a fine, shape or color. A repeated pattern is made up a unit sometimes called a **motif**. repeated at regular divisions of space.

Rhythm The movement created by the repetition of such visual elements as lines, shapes and colors.

Movement Any flow of elements in a painting or sculpture that leads the eye across a single plane or between planes in space. Arrangement of color, line and shape can create movement in a work of art.

Contrast The use of opposites in close proximity. There can be contrast in color, shape, line or texture. Bold contrast - black and white. subtle contrast - soft colors.

Harmony An overall agreement between all the parts of a work of art. Harmony often involves the use of similar elements with slight variations.

Proportion The size relationship between the parts and the whole, or between one part and another. An artist uses proportion to convey a sense of space of depth, and may also use it for emphasis.