

Three Properties of a Work of Art

{ Comprehensive Art

An artwork has three basic properties, or features they are the subject, composition and content.

The subject is the image that the viewer can easily identify in a work of art.



What is the subject of this painting?



Sometimes art has no recognizable subject matter this is called Non-objective Art. When you have an artwork like this the elements of art become the subject matter.

The second property of art is the composition of the work. The composition is the way the principles are used to organize the elements of art.



Look again at Munter's artwork. Notice how he used the reds to separate the indoors from the outdoors. The woman is placed with her back toward to viewer, so the viewer and her look in the same direction toward the birds. As we continue in this class you will learn how to use elements and principles to compose your artwork.

The third property used in an artwork is content. Content is the message the work communicates. The message can be a theme or idea, such as patriotism or family togetherness. It may be an emotion, like pride or love. Sometimes you know the intention of the artist and the message is clear. However, at other times, you may not be certain of what the work means, and you have to consider all the possibilities. Many artist can paint the same subject, a woman looking out a window, but each painting may have a different message.



What do you think is the content of Munter's painting?



Write in your journal what you think the content of this painting is?