

# Elements of Art

## Principles of Design

### Understanding the Language of Art

The elements of art and principles of design are the basic visual symbols artists use when creating all forms of art. We will be using these terms throughout the class. We will also be implementing them in our art.

#### Elements of Art

**Line-** A continuous mark made with a tool. Lines can be of varied width and texture, but often lead a viewer's eyes around the image.

**Shape-** A two dimensional element that encloses space. Shapes can be geometric or free-form

**Form-** A *three dimensional* element that encloses space. It usually refers to a *sculpture*.

**Space-** Element of art that refers to *emptiness or area between shapes*. Space can create the illusion of depth on a flat surface.

**Value-** The element of art that refers to the *lightness or darkness of a color*.

**Color-** element that is derived from reflected light. Color is very subjective: different people experience it in different ways.

**Texture-** Texture refers to the way a surface *feels* when touched. Texture can be real (a rough surface on a sculpture) or it can be simulated (a painting of fur on a fox).

#### Principles of Design

**Rhythm & Movement-** Principles of design that *repeat elements* in a specific order to create the illusion of movement. Visual rhythm is created by positive and negative spaces. It can be described as regular, alternating, flowing, progressive, or jazzy.

Movement refers to a way of combining visual elements to produce a *sense of action*. This helps the viewer's eyes to sweep over the entire piece in a specific manner.

**Balance-** A principle of design that deals with arranging elements in a work of art equally. There is symmetrical and asymmetrical balance in art.

**Proportion-** A principle of design that deals with *size relationships* between elements. Proportion compares ~~the~~ size of elements in relationship to each other and the entire piece.

**Variety-** A principle of design that deals with *difference and/or contrast* of elements.

**Emphasis -** A principle of design that *stresses one element* or area of the artwork. It is used to focus the viewer's attention. The emphasis in a piece of art could also be called the 'dominant' element.

**Pattern-** *repeated* use of lines, textures, shapes, or other elements.

**Unity-** A principle of design that allows the viewer to see a combination of elements, principles and media (art materials) *as a whole*. This principle creates a sense of 'oneness' throughout the piece.