

Excerpts of writing from *Drawing: Space Form & Expression*, by Wayne Enstice & Melody Peters

Subject Matter refers to what artists select to represent in their artwork.

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Form is the set of visual relationships artists create within a work to unify responses to subject matter. The drawing's total visual composition; the quality of visual order that sets the drawing apart as a complete and unique object, independent of the real-world subject matter it represents. *It is the filter through which you view subject matter.*

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Content is the meanings inferred from subject matter and form.

TRADITIONAL SUBJECT MATTER:

Human Figure

Landscape

Still Life

The Interior

Subject-meaning is the literary meaning interpreted from the depiction of a story, event, or allegory.

Pictorial Shapes, pictorial lines, etc. are what we actually experience in visual art, and go beyond the service of pure description.

Form-meaning is the content derived from the form of an artwork. The visual character of a work of art provokes it.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS (to ask while working on aesthetics of a piece):

Goal #1: accurate depiction

- do the areas that you want to read as 3-dimensional volumes look flat? Are they outlined or do they have unchanging tones?
- Is the spatial arrangement accurate (accurate depth placement)?
- Is the light source consistent?
- Consistent eye level? Accurate vanishing point?
- Accurate scale and proportion?
- Does each individual form have tonal integrity/ local value? Or are they splintered into too many different tones? Are all the highlights the same, or do they change with the actual colors of the objects?

Goal #2: visual organization

- Is it subdivided so all areas have either actual or implied shape or line.
- Are there enough variations among the elements to create tension?
- Is it unified? Varying levels of complexity, patterns of emphasis and de-emphasis to change the speed at which our eye views the drawing?
- Sufficient value range?
- Do the marks and lines function expressively as well as descriptively? Are linear elements grouped together to form larger entities/ motives?
- Where is your drawing going? Does it clearly show your aesthetic and expressive intent? Or has it become muddled? Are there visual clues that can lead to richness in form and content? i.e. Can you intensify the mood by changing the tonal range, stressing a particular movement?

Goal #3: Content

- Is the idea communicated clearly?
- Is the idea communicated in multiple ways?
- Is the imagery abstracted as intended?
- What is the artist's intent?
- How do we take into account for the audience?
- Does the form and subject matter fit the content?
- Representational vs. abstract vs. non-objective, which is most appropriate for your idea?