



## Abstract Painting - Abstract ... What does the Word Mean?

Webster defines abstract as: a. considered apart from a certain instance, b. expressing a good in addition to the object or c. having only intrinsic form with little or no pictorial representation. Put simply; taking a thing and emphasizing its core fundamentalness. [best abstract artists](#) All three definitions effortlessly fit abstract painting in showing, telling, drawing and painting ab muscles essence of the item without actually depicting the thing itself.

So how exactly does an abstract painter arrive at an abstract design? Many stated they started with a representational motif, that the motif was something readily identifiable. Then they dissected the motif so to speak, searching for the bare bones, the very essence of the object. They expressed this essence with colorful shapes, some beautiful, some drab, and some just plain ugly.

In any type of painting the artist is creating a statement. It's easy to state pretty pink flowers in a representational painting. What the abstract artist has to say must be said with his/her simple means; brush marks, color and interesting shapes. Also, since color is arbitrary, color is at the artist's whim, and may or may not be pretty and has nothing to do with the painting's success.

To make a meaningful statement without a recognizable subject is daunting. It's not just a matter of simply looking and drawing. He or she must use each of their wiles to activate us in dialog making use of their art, being limited, or we ought to say, unlimited, with unrecognizable shapes and unrelated (to the object) color. The artist must interest and talk to the viewer through form and color.

A poor, wishy washy, pretty pink flower painting says, "Weak, wishy washy pretty pink flowers!" Bright, bold colors, without form and substance within an abstract painting says, "No form and no substance!" Neither painting is successful.

So..... here we stand facing the artwork, having no understanding of abstract art, its purpose and intention. We want to respond but we're without a clue. So, we hesitate in front of the art work, we don't know very well what to express, we don't respond to the colour or design, so, we disappear saying, or at least thinking, "That artist must be nuts!" And wondering what the painting was all about. The thing that was its purpose? Was it good art or not?

There are a few folks who are of the opinion that the painting should be representational to be good art. And if they cannot see every hair on the pinnacle and every leaf on the tree, then your art isn't good. That simply is not true. You may like the see every hair but that's certainly not a sign of good art.

What guidelines do we have in judging abstract paintings merits? The guidelines that representational painters must follow are the exact same for the abstract painter. The task will

need to have readable values, color harmony and dominance, repetition with variety in shapes, colors and lines, all that pertains to good art must also maintain abstract art.

An accumulation wild colors and shapes does not at all times total up to good art in abstraction or representational art. An excellent abstract could be more challenging to pull off than representational art as the artist is counting on his imagination and intuition to make something meaningful and of value. (not necessarily monetary value)

In attempting to understand abstract (non-representational) art, approach it with the theory in your mind to simply appreciate what is before you. Sometimes the title can give us an idea in regards to what the painting is about. That helps. Then look and observe how it affects you.

Does along with speak to you? Are you currently lifted up or cast down by along with? You may have some a reaction to a bit of art work, it will move you in some manner, perhaps not much, perhaps a great deal. Identify what it is. Good art, whether abstract or representational, sets a mood, tells an account, however subtle, intrigues and interests the viewer, and as a result, each painting must certainly be appreciated on its own merits.