

KEYWORDS for the *Art Makes You Smart!* (AMYS) video

Betsy Eby

Creativity - It is the use of imagination or original ideas in the creation of an artwork, literary work, and more. Our creativity is often based in our own experiences, Eby notes that, "...we are born into a place and each place has its set symbols... It is the job of the artist to observe, interpret..."

Symbolizing - This term is applied when an object, thing, or person represents something else.

Language - When creating an art piece, you may create your own language or system when voicing your concepts, or ideas. This language may be based on your life experiences or understanding of the concept.

Observe - When you observe, you notice or perceive the characteristics of an object, thing, or a person. Through these observations, you can note definable features that can be applied or used when making preliminary sketches or a finished piece.

Interpret - To interpret is to look at something and attribute or assign a meaning to it based on your own personal experience, views, and/or information about the piece. In the video, Eby mentions interpreting a language and making it your own, allowing for it to be a part of your art.

Expression - An expression is the way you choose to showcase emotions in a medium (i.e. words, actions, visuals). In the video, Eby states that expression, "...could be something that you or has never been expressed before."

Communication - When you communicate, you are verbally, physically, or visually relaying information to an audience. With your art and its language, you are hoping to communicate specific ideas, feelings, or visuals to affect your audience in some way.

Reduction of color - In a piece that has a reduction of color, the colors used are from a limited palette. An example of a limited palette is the Zorn palette, which is made up of ochre, ivory black, vermilion, and titanium white. If you were painting a piece that had blues and you were using the Zorn palette, you would have to choose a different color for the blue as it cannot be mixed with the available paints. As Betsy Eby grew up in Seaside Oregon, where it was very grey with limited color, she was influenced by this reduction of color.

Restraint - By limiting the amount of colors used, this can allow for further restraint in compositional or color choices, which may spark further creativity.

Polychrome - The Greek poly- means “many;” while the Greek -chrome means “color.” In a piece of art, polychrome refers to the use of multiple colors in a bold fashion.

Tonal - A tonal range is the range of light to dark of an object or objects in a painting. In tonal painting, a somewhat limited palette is used as the artist relies more on the value, temperature, and hue versus the saturation. In Betsy’s pieces, she stays within a tonal range.

Focal point - In painting, focal points are an area of any shape, size, or color that the viewer’s eyes are naturally drawn. It is the area of greatest interest and can be achieved through formal components, such as being determined through compositions or layouts of content.

Process - This is how you approach your work or process of creating a piece of art. Typically, an artist will develop a process that they will use and follow each time they create a piece. This process may comprise of the research, collection of materials, and production method(s).

Abstraction - In abstraction, you are often dealing with ideas and are portraying them in a manner that is not realistic. To Eby, abstraction is universal. She recommends that when you are trying to find your way through it, “Don’t think, feel.”

Intersection - An intersection is when different elements meet at a point.

Mass - This refers to three-dimensional space taken up by the object or things, or it can refer to the illusion of space or weight filled by an object or things. The illusion of mass is created by the shading and use of the elements of value or color.

Shadow - The areas on an object that receive little to no light. Value is used to determine and differentiate between areas of light and shadow.

Light - It stimulates sight and allows for objects, things, or people to be visible. Whenever, a light source hits an object, the area where the most light is visible is called the light shape. The lightest of lights are the highlights. There is also the reflective light, which complements the cast shadow and tends to be present along the outline of the object.

Emotions - It is important to pay attention to what creates emotions in us because the things that excite us is what should be important.

Encaustic - This medium dates back to 4th century BC. During the Greco-Roman Egyptian era, they used a template and customized the portraits based on the individual, encaustics were used. It is made of beeswax and damar resin; when baked together, a wax-like material is created. It is the material that Betsy Eby uses in her paintings.

Beeswax - A natural wax produced by bees. Its yellow or brown color is the product of the bee pollen mixing in with the white wax. When pigment is suspended in beeswax, it stays archival.

Pigment blocks - The pigment blocks are designed specifically for the encaustic process. Instead of squirting paint oils out, the blocks are used.

Cold wax - It is a mixture of wax in a solvent, more of a paste form, and it is used in oil painting. Some cold wax is a mixture of beeswax mixed with small amounts of solvent and resin.

Depth - In painting and drawings, different perspective techniques are used to create an illusion of depth or three-dimensionality.

Illusion - Through the use of shading or related techniques, an illusion allows for the artist to create a perception that the object(s) appear real or three-dimensional. In the video, Eby states that she goes between cold and hot wax to create different illusions, like a marble surface.

Archival - Something that is archival can be stored or on view over time without signs of decay or related damage. The materials used tend to be stable and long-lasting. With oil paints, the pigment will stay at the same saturation as painted originally.

Saturation - This term refers to the intensity of color, specifically its degree of visual difference from grey.

Suspended - When a material is suspended, it is dispersed throughout the bulk of a fluid. Another definition is the state of a substance when its particles are mixed with but undissolved in a fluid or solid.

Proportions - The spatial, size, color, or similar relation that two elements have in a piece of art.

Diptych - A painting made of two pieces or panels is a diptych. Historically, diptychs were a painting or relief carving made of two parts that were joined by hinges. While their size varied, diptychs were often used for private devotion.

Balance - A balance can be achieved through the presence of lights and darks. Betsy states, "With every painting, what we are after is balance." Harmony is achieved after balance is found.

Harmony - In art, harmony is achieved when all of the elements present come together in a unified manner. In music, harmony is achieved when musical notes are produced simultaneously to create chords or chord progressions that are pleasing to the ear.

Exercise - An exercise is a form of experimentation with a medium or subject matter. An exercise is typically not about a product or an intended story. In the video, Betsy Eby creates a walnut ink exercise.

Primed - A painting is primed with an undercoat before additional materials are applied to the surface. A primer is used to allow for better adhesion of the oil or similar paints to the canvas or associated surface. A surface can be primed by acrylic gesso, an acrylic medium, and more.

Gesso - It is a mixture of animal glue binder, chalk, and white pigment. It is a type of primer that acts as a barrier between the canvas and oil paint. When painting with oils, it is beneficial to use a primer first to protect the canvas from the linseed oil.

Calligraphy - It is a decorative form of penmanship, in which lettering is created by using a broad-tipped pen or a brush. Betsy likens it to calligraphy in its ability to create sharp but duluating edges and lines.

Ephemeral - This term often refers to something that is short and fleeting or not long lasting.

Visual field - Also known as field of vision, visual field is the entirety of what can be seen when a person is looking straight forward.

Gestures - Quick, fluid brushstrokes or marks on a surface to showcase emotion or to capture the action, form or pose of the piece. In her process, Eby often lays down the gestures that she really wants to sacrifice as they will be pushed back in the visual field as more paint is added. Eventually, those first gestures will appear like echoes.

Palette - A palette can refer to the surface on which you place and mix paints. It can also refer to the range of colors that you use for a piece.

Extender - An extender is a substance added to a product such as paint, ink, or glue, to dilute its color or increase its bulk.

Impromptu - Something impromptu is done without any planning or prior rehearsal.