

# Art history style and medium



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Style is the term used to determine when and where art is created by analyzing the uniqueness of an individual artist or a groups of artists within a certain time and place. Style can be categorized into different parts consisting of period style, regional style, representational style, and abstract style. Period style is the particular period in time in which the artwork was created. Regional style identifies where in the region the artwork was created.

Representational style describes the appearance of art in ways that make it seem lifelike which includes realism, naturalism, idealization, and illusionism. Abstract style expresses art in ways that mimics lifelike appearances and includes nonrepresentational art and expressionism. Medium or media (plural) is the material in which an artists uses to create artwork. This material is either made up of two dimensional mediums or three dimensional mediums. Two dimensional mediums include artwork such as drawings, etchings, photography, and paintings.

Three dimensional mediums include artwork such as architecture, sculptures, jewelry, and containers. This ancient Greek sculpture comes from the Hellenistic Period, generally between 323 to about 31/30 BCE. Currently located in the Vatican Museum in Rome this miraculous sculpture was discovered during the Italian Renaissance in the ruins of Titus' palace in Rome in 1506. Created by three sculptors from the Greek Island of Rhodes, Hagesandros, Polydoros, and Athenodoros during the first century BCE it stands at eight feet tall and is made entirely of smooth marble (stone).

The sculpture shows Laocoon, the Trojan priest of Apollo and his two sons, Antiphantes and Thymbraeus strangled by sea serpents sent by Athena after

attempting to expose the secrets of the Trojan Horse. The artists developed a vision different from Classical Greek ancestors focusing on individual emotion by expressive themes and poses. The anguished faces of the struggling figures and the intricate diagonal movements attempts to elicit an emotional response from the viewer defining the abstract style of expressionism.

The suffering pain revealed in the figures is not only expressed in the facial expressions but also in the detail of every contracting muscle and vein in their bodies. Although it was composed to be seen from a close frontal view, Laocoon and His Sons was sculpted in the round (free standing) and depicts lifelike movements throughout the sculpture as describes by the author of the following video. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=oqLOYRnsQZg>

Your definition of style is very thorough and encompasses the broad styles and periods that one needs to take into consideration when identifying a piece of art. However, I would add to it illusionism as many artists use this style to create a physically convincing illusion and though it is like expressionism it is separate. Also, I would include in your definition painterly. This style is used often as well, and can be identified when brushstrokes dominate and outlines, shadows and highlights are brushed in freely. I believe this artist is using a bit of idealism.

They choose to smooth out the marble, and make the Laocoon look as if he has zero ounces of fat on his body. Bulging his muscles and giving him abs that are well defined help in the idea that this man is the strongest man alive. To me, it looks as if the sons are struggling more than the father and

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the father is going to get away. Another example of expressionism and this period of artwork is "Old Woman". She also was sculpted in the Hellenistic period out of marble. Her cheeks are sagging and face is left in a blank stare.

The disheveled robe suggests a hardworking woman who had lead a long life. Another form of medium is the Ephemeral arts, this one often being the most profitable in modern time. Examples of this type of art is; Movies, ritual dances, performance arts, and any other form of digital art. As mentioned in the video, the author of the clip mentions a depiction of movement in this sculpture. I do agree with her, when you look at it first you are forced to look up at Laocoons face and then down and around to the boys because of the wrapping of the sea serpents.