



Module 4

Unit 1: Static arts

Core video transcript

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Transcript

Slide 1

This is Chris Taylor from the University of Trieste and in this unit I shall be going over some general points regarding what we call static arts. This is Unit 1 (Static Arts) in Module 4 (Semi-live or recorded AD for static arts and environments).

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Firstly we'll make a distinction between two-dimensional art, that is paintings, drawings, frescoes, etc. and three-dimensional art which includes sculpture, architecture, modern art installations and so on.

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Let's begin by looking at paintings and other manifestations of two-dimensional art.

You need to know a little about art and art history and at the end we'll recommend some reading on this subject. For now you need to be able to recognise basic distinctions between, for example, ancient, Renaissance, impressionist and abstract art. These are probably the four most important periods.

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You need to look at 2D static art works and analyse the images, the colours,

the light effects and so on. On top of this you need to know something about the historical context of the work, the artist's background and what he/she is attempting to portray.

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In the case of ancient art, most works are of a religious or pseudo-religious nature (gods, pharaohs, emperors, etc.) and the actual artists are often unknown. There are however some very famous artefacts displayed in museums and exhibitions around the world which are useful to know. They may provide useful reference points for describing lesser known works in local galleries.

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Ancient art works are often found in the form of mosaics (Ravenna and Aquileia in Italy, Westminster Abbey in London), and frescoes in churches, as well as actual paintings. It is important to be able to recognise major works, their historical and geographical provenance, and where to find the works now.

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The art produced in the Renaissance is recognised as a great contribution to European civilization starting with works by grand masters such as Veronese and Botticelli. Veronese, like most Renaissance painters, concentrated on religious subjects. The paintings served also as a means of communication to the mass of people who were illiterate but needed to know about religion. Botticelli's most important works, on the other hand, deal with the mythical world of gods and goddesses.

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Renaissance art, as exemplified by Veronese, Botticelli, Michelangelo, etc. has given us a great many masterpieces, spread around the world in museums and galleries. It is important to know something of the historical and geographical provenance of these works and where they are to be found. Of course, the same also applies to lesser known works which may be found in local institutions.

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Impressionist art, as exemplified by Monet, Millais, Cézanne, etc. has given us also a great many masterpieces, spread around the world in museums and galleries. And also, in this case it is important to know something of the historical and geographical provenance of these works and where they are to be found, and the same also applies to lesser known works which may be found in local institutions.

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Abstract art, as exemplified by Picasso, Mondrian, Klee, etc. has also given us a great many masterpieces, spread around the world in museums and galleries. Also in this case it is important to know something of the historical and geographical provenance of these works and where they are to be found, and the same applies also to lesser known works which may be found in local institutions.



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Now we move on to three-dimensional art. Again a basic knowledge of art history is important to distinguish different periods and styles.

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Ancient sculptures can be found in many museums, made of wood, of stone, of bronze. The ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans carved images of pharaohs, of animals, of gods, of emperors and so on.

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Major and minor works can be found, some very famous in major museums, others unknown to most but abundant in local institutions everywhere. The historical and geographical provenance of such items is important to know, as well as their current location.

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The same applies to modern abstract sculpture.

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Important landmarks include monuments such as Nelson's column, buildings such as the Colosseum, symbolic constructions such as the Atomium in

Brussels, and so on. Recognise (or research) major landmarks: historical background, geographical location, physical details.

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Recognise (or research) minor landmarks or objects of interest such as a London letter box: find out about the historical background, geographical location, and physical details.

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Know (or research) what major art galleries and museums contain. This will provide a general overview of the world of static art. This knowledge and methodology will be useful also in the case of lesser known works and lesser known museums.

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So, choose some two-dimensional and three-dimensional art works and landmarks to study and analyse. This is a useful first stage leading to the competences required to describe art works for people with sight loss. And this is the final slide in Unit 1.

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