

Polasek Art Vocabulary List

Before you visit the Albin Polasek Museum & Sculpture Gardens it is advisable to go over the following art terms with your students in preparation. Many of the terms and concepts will be explored on their historical tour, but knowing these term prior, will help deepen students overall understanding and appreciation of what they are seining. A short quiz after your visit can further integrate what they learned.

Primary Grade Terms:

Bronze: mixture of metals (mostly copper) used for casting sculpture. Very hard and durable material for outdoor sculpture.

Casting: a copy or a reproduction of the original (clay) sculpture. There can be multiple castings of the same work of art and are made using a mold.

Marble: hard limestone used in sculpture

Masterpiece: major work by any great artist

Nude: not covered by clothing or drapery

Painting: a picture created with paint

Portrait: likeness of a person

Sculpture: a carved figure of stone, wood; a modeled figure in clay or wax; a cast figure in metal

Sketch, or a Model: Typically a simple drawing or painting; a rough draft. Can also be used to describe sculpture.

Texture: tactile, touchable quality of an object

Myths/mythology: A collection of stories and characters of a certain group of people. Myths can be used to explain nature, history, region, and customs. Albin Polasek used sculpture as a way to share Greek and Slavic myths.

Secondary Grades:

Abstract VS Representational Sculpture: Representational artwork aims to represent actual objects or subjects from reality, but do not have to necessarily be true to life. Subcategories of representational art are: Realism, Impressionism, Idealism, and Stylization. While abstract art is not intended to depict objects in the natural world, but instead uses color and form in a non-representational way.

Allegorical Sculpture: refers to sculptures that symbolize and personify an abstract ideas as in allegory or a metaphor. Albin Polasek's "Spirit of Music" figure is an example.

Bas Relief: a sculpture with a background from which the figures project

Classical Sculpture: Refers loosely to sculpture from Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, as well as the Hellenized and Romanized periods. Civilizations under their rule or influence from about 500 BC to around 200 AD. More precisely it refers to Ancient Greek sculpture from around 500 BC to the onset of the Hellenistic style around 323 BC.

Commission: An order to pay for an artist to create a work of art

Copy: a reproduction

Dimensional: 2-D is having length and width; 3-D is having length, width and height

Liturgical Sculpture: Works that have a religious theme and are specific to a particular religious group. Many of Albin Polasek's works are Catholic or Christian in nature.

Maquette: French word for scale model.

Original: prototype or initial work from which copies are made

Patina: The thin layer that forms on the surface of stone, wood and metals and appears to be colored or tarnished. Can be produced natural by age, by the oxidation process or other chemical processes. Patinas can provide a protective covering to materials that would otherwise be damaged by corrosion or weathering. They may also be aesthetically appealing. Finished surface on sculpture.

Patron: a person who commissions a work of art.

Portrait Bust: work of art showing the upper part of the human body

Proportion: mathematical relationship of the parts of a work to each other.

Advanced Concepts:

We suggest you explore these topics as individual lessons with your class after their visit. These are great topics for research writing or group projects. Have your students create models or presentations using technology or let them select a prominent artist, work of art, or patron to research.

- The Lost-Wax Casting Process
- The Gilded Era of Sculpture. Period on America characterized by; increased interest in and travel to exotic cultures, finely decorated homes and country estates housed art collections, the development of much of our Museum collections, European art and culture a strong influence, and a time of great artistic patronage.
- Classical Sculpture, and other periods; Archaic (Egyptian, Cycladic, etc.), Greek (Early, High, Neo, etc), Romanesque, Hellenistic, Renaissance, and Modern. Specifically, Albin Polasek was trained during an exciting time in sculpture when the Neo-Greek academicism period of the 1800s and met with Rodin pioneered modernism in the late 1880s and early 1900s, his artist style reflects this attitude.
- Contemporary or “Modern” Sculpture: Art Nouveau, Cubism, Geometric Abstraction, Constructivism, Dadaism, Surrealism, Futurism, Formalism, Pop-Art, Minimalism, Post minimalism, Land art, Conceptual art, Found Art, Kinetic art, and Installation art.