

The following are the annotations from the in-class presentation during session 2. The images are also online at  
<http://homepage.newschool.edu/~quigleyt/vcs/fall05/images-wk2/index.html>

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## Visual Analysis

### Questions Raised by Taylor

Why is the verbal description of a painting not equivalent to the painting?  
[51]

Hypothesis: The visual form of a painting is incommensurable with any possible verbal description, no matter how detailed and comprehensive the description may be.

How can the visual form of a painting in itself have meaning? [51]

To understand how "meaning" arises in a non-verbal way, we must first distinguish two things:

#### SUBJECT MATTER

the object and events represented

#### EXPRESSIVE CONTENT

the combined effect of subject matter and visual form.

Taylor works back from the effects produced—the expressive content—to the pictorial elements that produce those effects.

To test the claim that subject matter and expressive content are distinct, Taylor compares and contrasts two different visual representations with the same subject matter.

### ANALYSIS

#### Color Scheme

- Based on primary colors (red, yellow, blue)
- Balance of warm and cool
- Low level of saturation
- Exception = highly saturated red robe
- Colors linked to emotional response

Equilibrium and clarity affect emotional quality

## Modulation of Value and Saturation

Consider how the feeling changes when the color balance and relations are altered.

## Effect of Changes in Color Balance

Cf. an altered version of Perugino's painting with all reds de-saturated.

Clarity and contrast are lost, leveling out the relations among various elements in the picture and altering the expressive content.

## ANALYSIS

Eye relates similar colors.

Strong contrast attracts attention.

Gradual changes in value (modeling) move the eye smoothly through various parts of the picture.

## Line, Movement, and Composition

Proportion and overall shape of the painting

Space

Rhythm (line and shape)

## ANALYSIS

### Color Scheme

Based on secondary and tertiary colors (variations of violet, orange, & green)

Less clarity of color key

Less contrast of color (hue, saturation, value)

Produces more rapid eye movement

Movement reinforced by broken planes and jagged shapes.

## Line, Movement, Composition

## Proportional Relation of Parts

## Expressive Relation of Bodily Proportions

Taylor comments on the lack of finality that one tends to feel after a descriptive analysis of a work of art. He claims it is a virtue. Perhaps this points to the ineffable and the sublime in art.

There is always that which escapes analysis and explanation in a work of art—that pre-linguistic experience of the work that lies outside the symbolic.

#### Elements of Formal Analysis

- Color (hue, saturation, value)

- Point

- Line

- Plane

- (Implied) Movement

- Rhythm

- Volume (Mass)

- Pictorial Space

- Composition

- Texture

- Shape

- Style (individual & collective)

T.R. Quigley, 2005