

A painting, like a person, has its own voice and personality and we respond in unique ways to each one. Abstract art provides a way to show what we feel about our world.

Locate the painting ‘*Faraway Eyes*’.

- What do you think this painting is about?
- Does the paint whisper, sing, shout or move?
- How does the language of art – color, shape, texture and line – express mood, feelings or ideas?

Locate the two paintings ‘*Colors of the Wind 2008* and *2010*’.

- What do these paintings say to you?
- How do you think **George Mendoza** would describe the colors of the wind?
- How would you paint the colors of the wind?

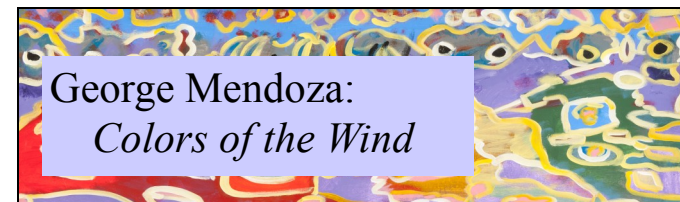


The most pathetic person in the world is someone who has sight, but no vision.
Helen Keller – deaf/blind writer

Abstraction allows man to see with his mind what he cannot physically see with his eyes.
Arshile Gorky – painter

I shut my eyes in order to see.
Paul Gauguin—painter

I am blind and ‘I see’ magnificence, triumph, genuineness and masterpieces every single day.
George Mendoza –painter



Abstract Art ...What do you see in it?

Abstract images are images that have been simplified or distorted to the point they may not be easily recognized.

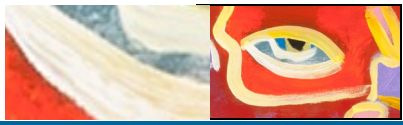
Abstract art focuses on basic shapes rather than fine details.

Abstract paintings include the elements of art – color, line, shape, and texture to express feelings, moods, ideas and visual relationships.

George Mendoza’s paintings speak the language of art with intense colors, various shapes, bold lines and sensuous textures. Find the painting ‘*Stop Light*’.

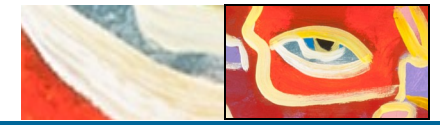
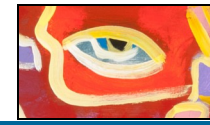
- Look carefully at the shapes in the painting. Imagine you are the artist and paint these shapes in the air.
- Where on the canvas do you start? How do you decide what colors to use?
- Do you plan the painting in your head first or do you let the paint lead you around the canvas? ‘Paint the shapes in the air’.





George Mendoza:

Colors of the Wind



Some people may feel that figurative art is 'good art' because it appears to look like an object, person, or scene.

We should not decide on the success or failure of a painting based on how much it looks like the subject matter.

Creating an abstract painting may be just as much a challenge to one artist as creating a representational painting is to another.

Many times **Mendoza** uses his hands, an old stiff paintbrush, or a stick to paint with. Look carefully at '*Flight of Feathers*' to discover how he applied paint to the canvas.

- Do you see brush strokes? What might he have used instead of a brush? Why might he use other tools besides a brush to paint?
- Close your eyes and in the air, with your imaginary paintbrush, paint this painting.
- Are your movements big or small? Fast or slow? Would you use a paint brush or your fingers?
- How does the way you paint add to the meaning of the painting?

When you look at an abstract painting, don't begin by searching for an object you can identify from your world. Instead try to enter the world the artist created.

Find the paintings '*Earth and Sky V*' and '*IV*'. Let your eyes wander over the paintings' surfaces. Let your mind react to colors, lines, and textures. Let yourself be drawn into the illusion of space, the action of the lines and the mood of its atmosphere.

- Explore the brushstrokes and the paint. Imagine you are turning clouds into recognizable shapes.
- Look at the painting and describe what you see within the abstract forms.
- List the colors in the paintings. What words or adjectives describe the colors?
- What moods and feelings do these colors suggest to you?



As you study abstract art you may think, "Anyone can make that" or "It doesn't look real".

While your feelings may be valid, try to understand why the artist approached the subject or medium in a unique manner. This will help you appreciate what you see, regardless of your first impressions of the work.

Although **George Mendoza** is able to see very little today; he remembers physical sight and images from his past.

He has a slight amount of central vision, and a gray border of peripheral vision. The center of his viewing area he calls "**kaleidoscope eyes**" where he sees intense and changing visual images and colors.

His paintings reflect what he remembers as well as what he sees, his dreams, and emotional experiences.

Find the painting '*Kaleidoscope Eyes*'.

- What do you think the artist wants us to 'see' and 'experience' with this painting?

