Principles of Organization

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2D Design – Art 112
Structure of Art in 2D Design

- Components of Art - Analyzed by the Degrees of Representation
  - Subject Matter
  - Content
  - Context
  - Form
    - Elements of Design
      - Line
      - Shape & Space
      - Value
      - Texture
      - Color
      - (Type)
    - Principles of Organization
      - Balance
      - Emphasis & Focal Point
      - Rhythm
      - Scale & Proportion
      - Unity
Composition

- **Composition** in 2D Design is the overall arrangement and organization of formal elements on the two-dimensional surface.

- Line, shape, space, value, texture, color and type are the elements of design that make up a two-dimensional composition.

- A good composition utilizes these elements of design and follow the principles of organization to create a visually interesting and unified whole.

**Why?**

- Communication
- Create Order out of Chaos
- Foundation
Principles of Organization

- **UNITY**
- **EMPHASIS & FOCAL POINT**
- **SCALE & PROPORTION**
- **BALANCE**
- **RHYTHM**
Principles of Organization

Unity
Principles of Organization

**Unity** creates an integrated image in which all the elements are working together to support the design as a whole.

A **unified design** is greater than the sum of its parts; the design is seen as a whole first, before the individual elements are noticed.

**Unity** can be compared to harmony, integrity or wholeness.
Unity

- Unity means there is an agreement among all the elements in a design.
- All elements of the image belong together.
- All elements work together to create a harmonious image.
- If an image is not harmonious, elements appear separate or unrelated.
- The image to the left uses line, shape, and color, as well as an organized direction of these elements to create a harmonious & unified composition.

• The overall composition should be dominant over its individual parts.

• Unlike in a scrapbook, this collage utilizes images to create a unified composition rather than placing emphasis on each individual item.

• The content (idea) or subject matter of each individual image does not create visual unity. It is the visual elements and tools utilized that have the capability of creating a unified image.

Robert Rauschenberg
What elements of design in this composition help unify the composition?
In this painting, visual unity is created with repeated shapes (rectangles), texture, and color.

This can be done in both representational and non-representational compositions.
Unity

CRAP in Unity

- Continuation
- Repetition
- Alignment
- Proximity
Edward Hopper finds lines that seem to connect naturally. Look at the man's left arm and how it almost seamlessly connects to the dresser and the woman's knees.
• Repetition means to repeat something.
• Repetition can be used with any element of design: line, shape, space, value, texture, color and type; and their characteristics, such as direction, character, etc.
• Repetition should not be used to create a predictable composition, but rather create a harmonious image.
• Create interesting variations when using repetition.
To unify the figures sitting at the table, Caravaggio places them in proximity to each other. The small shapes of light against the black background belong to a group of objects. To place an emphasis on Jesus, he is set aside from the figures at the table.
A gestalt is created because the mind simplifies and organizes information. It does this by grouping elements together to create new wholes.

Understanding how the mind groups elements helps us understand how unity can be achieved.

http://nwrain.net/~tersiisky/design/unity.html
Gestalt Laws

**Closure**
Visual Grouping explains why incomplete figures are perceived as complete or whole.

**Common Fate**
Describes how objects moving together are perceived as belonging together.

**Continuity**
Objects aligned along a line or curve are perceived as belonging together, and we will perceive the simplest, smooth path, rather than a complex path.

**Figure/Ground**
Refers to the relationship between positive elements and negative space. The eye separates whole figures from their background in order to understand what’s being seen.

**Pragnanz**
We organize our perceptions into the simplest possible experience. The Law of Simplicity.

**Proximity**
Objects near one another in space or time are perceived as belonging together.

**Similarity**
Objects with similar characteristics, such as form, color, size, and brightness, are perceived as belonging together.

**Symmetry**
Explains our tendency to perceive symmetric objects as figures on a background.
Overview: Unity

- Harmony
- Visual Unity
- “CRAP-U”
- Continuation
- Repetition
- Alignment
- Proximity
- Gestalt
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Emphasis & Focal Point
Emphasis & Focal Point

A **Focal Point** is the location in a composition that attracts the viewer’s attention and may repeatedly draw attention back to itself.

A **Focal Point** is where the artist has deliberately placed emphasis within their composition.
Creating a Point of Emphasis/Focal Point

- Contrast
- Convergence
- Isolation
- Placement
- The Unusual
Contrast

Use of contrast.

It refers to difference.

Any specific type of difference in the composition can result in that element becoming a focal point.

Difference or contrast can be achieved by changing the characteristics of the Elements of Design: line, shape, value, texture, color and Principles of Organization such as movement, direction, etc...
Use implied lines to direct a viewer's eye to an object or element.
This technique is known as "convergence".
Isolate an element from others.

Whenever one shape or element is separated from a group or area, it becomes isolated and in turn, becomes a focal point.
Placement

Objects that are placed in the center of the picture plane or near center, will become a focal point.

Most of the time, a non-centered focal point is preferred.

By placing an object or element just off center, you can make a focal point through placement without affecting the aesthetics of the artwork.

See Rule of Thirds!
The Unusual

Introduce an object or element that is unusual to the composition.
This element stands out and gets the viewer's attention.
Rule of Thirds
Rule of Thirds

When the picture plane is divided into thirds both vertically and horizontally as a tool to arrange and organize elements of a composition. Important compositional elements should be placed along those lines or at their intersections.

Rule of Thirds

Avoid placing any strong elements in the center, this creates a static image and works against establishing a visual flow.

Power Points: best placement for Focal Point
Rule of Thirds

Place key elements of your composition at Power Points

http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/rule-of-thirds-powerpoint/
Rule of Thrids

Place key elements of your composition at along **horizontal lines**

http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/rule-of-thirds-powerpoint/
Rule of Thirds

Place key elements of your composition at along vertical lines

http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/rule-of-thirds-powerpoint/
Rule of Thirds

Place key elements of your composition at along Power Points and simultaneously on dividing (vertical and/or horizontal) lines.
Visual Flow
A good composition is designed to lead the viewer’s eye around the picture plane.

Visual Flow creates movement and avoids stagnant areas.

Visual Flow can be created using Unity and Emphasis & Focal Point:

1. Proximity
2. Repetition
3. Continuation
4. Directional Line
5. Converging Lines
6. Value & Color
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Albert Oehlen, *Descending Hot Rays*, 2003

Converging Lines & Directional Force
Proximity, Repetition, Continuation, Directional Lines, Light Among Dark, Color among Black and White, Large Among Small
Repetition, Continuation, Texture Contrast, Large Among Small, Recognition Interest
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Rule of Thirds
Visual Flow
Student Examples